New Zealand Institute of BUILDING SURVEYORS

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The Journal

30 Year Anniversary of NZIBS

The Annual Conference was a special occasion to acknowledge the commitments building surveyors have made to the industry over the past three decades, and delved into what the future may hold for New Zealand's built environment.

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FRONT COVER: *Special guest and former All Blacks captain, Kieran Read, shared his lessons and learning opportunities in the leadership space. Being involved in establishing team culture and performing under pressure, his insights were invaluable to NZIBS Conference attendees.*

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

DAVID CLIFTON
NZIBS PRESIDENT
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Together we can get the mahi done!

As we look ahead to the next decade at the NZIBS, I'm excited about the journey we are set to embark on together. We are witnessing a refreshing influx of next-generation surveyors who bring enthusiasm and innovative ideas – all aimed at enhancing our built environment.

The recent work showcased in our APC assessments highlights the evolving nature of our membership and the broader contributions we make within the construction sector. It's also encouraging to see a growing recognition from both the construction industry and government of the valuable expertise contained within our ranks.

In the coming two years, I am committed to working towards change and growth in the following key areas.

- Promoting and improving educational opportunities, such as supporting Victoria University of Wellington with the new Major in Building Surveying and reviewing the ability for the NZIBS to support the pilot project for an apprenticeship degree in building surveying to provide further education options for those that come from non-tertiary education, alongside raising awareness of our Level 6 Diploma across other professions.
- Completing an operational review to ensure we optimise our resources to enable us to deliver better provision of services. This may include implementing an upgraded membership system for better efficiency and function.
- Supporting and promoting *The* (wonderful) *Journal*, and inviting your contributions for articles and subjects to enhance our collective knowledge and spark interest in the sector.
- Expanding our chapter structure and activities through active engagement with regional leaders, to foster discussions and professional

development opportunities, as well as giving each region a platform to showcase the local building surveying profession and share insights and learnings.

- Establishing a support network to assist members during challenging times, helping to address the emotional toll that crises can take on professionals in our field. We all know members who have suffered during health or natural crisis, and as building surveyors at the frontline offering advice and support during events such as Cyclone Gabrielle and the Christchurch earthquakes, establishing a support structure like the RICS Lionheart foundation is, for me personally, one of my key objectives.
- Building a strong sponsorship network to assist in funding more activities to benefit our membership, extend our public reach, and advocate for improved government policies.
- Finally, encouraging the growth and engagement of our membership, which is critical to strengthening NZIBS's voice in the construction sector and influencing positive change in the built environment.

Our goal is to make a meaningful impact in the building and construction sector. Together with our membership, Executive Committee and support teams, I am confident we can make great progress in achieving this goal. Here's to the next decade!

Our industry is one based on people

On September 20, 2024, the New Zealand Institute of Building Surveyors marked a significant milestone by hosting its 30th Anniversary Annual Conference under the intriguing theme of Tradition, Transformation & Transcendence.

With around 100 delegates in attendance, the event featured a compelling keynote address from Pamela Bell of the New Zealand Institute of Building and recent NZ Construction Industry Council Chair.

Texas-based Waefey Swelim captivated participants with insights into the future of construction through his exploration of 3D-printed buildings, seamlessly harnessing the power of modern technology.

The heartfelt *Living Legends* panel – comprising esteemed long-time members Don Frame, Chris Phayer, Dianne Johnson, and William Hursthouse – provided a nostalgic reflection on the evolution of the industry, leading to an engaging session with special guest Kieran Read discussing resilience and adaptation alongside three promising students from Key Stone Trust.

The afternoon energised delegates with technical presentations addressing the future of insulation, seismic resilience, and sustainability, culminating in a site tour of a recently upgraded heritage building that proudly displays a 6-Star Green Star Rating.

The Harbourside Function Venue, with its unique industrial character, served as the perfect backdrop for this celebratory gathering, receiving rave reviews from attendees. A heartfelt thank you goes out to all the contributors, sponsors, and trade stands who made this milestone event possible.

The new executive committee for 2024/2025 comprises:

David Clifton – President

Scott Dunnett – Vice-President

Darryl August – Immediate Past President

Max Harlow – Training Chair

Malcolm Arnold – Technical Chair

Chris Phayer – Special Projects Chair

Leon Goodwin – Industry Chair

Dr Dirk Stahlhut – Membership Chair

Sarah Hohaia – Marketing Chair

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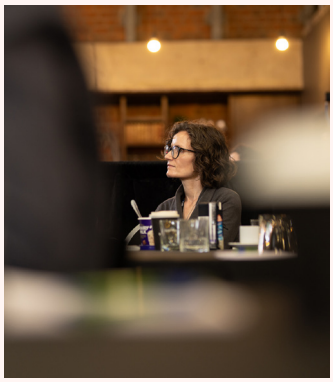







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better built
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ROSEHILL COLLEGE












WARREN NEVILL
TRAINING OFFICER

A changing of the guard

Except this time, it happened quietly. No slapping of rifle butts, no wobbling bearskins, no ankle snapping Corgis; not even a "both Camilla and I". He just simply said "I've had enough". Slipping out with as little fanfare as he'd slipped in. That was William: my friend, mentor, and fellow presenter, advising me he wasn't able to continue with Module 1.

These situations inevitably occur from time to time. Unexpected. Unwanted, alterations to the fabric of what you know, and have come to depend on so well. Left in the lurch, so to speak. Only giving me like, maybe, six months' notice, I began pondering how this situation could have come about.

A few years earlier I had contemplated a new, revised flagship module for our program. One which was a little more challenging and better fitted to our intended diploma-level upgrade. One which was also definitely more expansive than the one so many of you might remember. I think I sort of conveyed this to William upon asking him if he would like to take over, and sure, there was a tad of ego-bolstering salesmanship involved. But I'm sure I mentioned I wanted the content expanded to include more than just the Building Act – yes both Acts and all the hundreds of revisions. I just might have forgotten to mention I also wanted just about every other piece of building-related legislation I could think of included.

Cutting to the chase, William appeared really excited about the prospect, but to be fair sort of went quiet when he received my page

and a bit list of desired inclusions. However, somehow, over many discussions, he managed not only to cover almost all of my requests but to do so in a manner that perplexed our certification auditor, "I'm concerned about the amount of content in this module, the extent of pre-course reading and the ability of the candidates to take it all in." "Yes," I responded, "but would you care to take a look at his examination success rate?"

I also had the dubious pleasure of sitting next to one of our Transitional Members on a flight somewhere or other. "How do you find the module presenters?" I queried. "They're quite good but one really stands out." "Oh yeah, who?" says I, prematurely puffing out my chest. "William of course," he replied. Hmmm. And yet, so it was until the balloon was popped.

So how do you replace the irreplaceable? The veritable Icon. Well, it seems sometimes surprisingly easy. Don't let me down here Ulricke.

On occasion, a presenter's nightmare will occur. Unexpected. Out of left field. The time when you have to be in two places at once. Just as Sarah finished her introduction, the phone call I had been expecting since 10 pm the previous evening came through

and I had to take it. In front of me is a class of students I've never met before. On the phone is a consultant expecting to discuss the inevitable (not mine). Never make eye contact. But one woman in the class did. "Here, take this," I said, thrusting a bundle of papers into her hand. "See if you can stall them for 15 minutes," and I walked out the door.

When I returned some considerable time later, she was on her feet prowling the room. And the class was buzzing with enthusiasm at whatever she had them engaged in. And so, when William made his announcement, you don't get the Powerball prize for guessing who immediately sprang to mind. I didn't even have to cajole, plead or get down on my knees. Just a bit of argy-bargy with her boss to get her the time off and she said, "Yes." Straight away. No hesitation. In fact, since having co-presented with William on his last performance has mentioned the words "I'm really, really, excited," and "looking forward to improving both the module and its examinations."

Anyway, please welcome, the new Module 1 presenter: Ulricke Gibbs. Mother of three, one no longer a teenager, but you'd never guess, more qualifications than you could poke a stick at, experience here and overseas, and on both sides of the fence. And better than all that: foolishly wildly enthusiastic.

Other than the lucky Aucklanders, most of you probably won't get to meet her other than at conference, chapter meetings and the like, and of course the other side of the litigation table. Unless of course, you realise that your current understanding of 'The Building Act and Related Legislation' (that's the name of the new module by the way) is probably not quite as up-to-date as it could be. So why not pop along and take a refresher. Or sit in on the SOSEC seminar presentations next year, where hopefully Ulricke will be presenting some 'teasers' for our Diploma program.

Great to have you as part of the presenter team Ulricke.

Reforming the building industry a complex task

The New Zealand construction sector is undergoing significant change. With new initiatives announced by the Minister for Building and Construction, the Government hopes to modernise the industry, streamline processes, and address housing challenges. From fire safety updates to reforms in consenting and insulation standards, these changes could redefine how the industry operates.

At almost every announced proposal, the NZ Institute of Building Surveyors (NZIBS has urged caution. With its extensive experience in quality assurance, the Institute emphasises that reforms must prioritise education, safety, and sustainability to truly benefit the sector.

Modern construction materials and design trends often challenge existing regulations. Updating the fire code is essential but must avoid unintended consequences like increased costs or impractical compliance requirements.

NZIBS advocates for collaboration with industry experts to ensure the new standards are effective and feasible.

Building consent system

The proposed overhaul of the **building consent system** is a bold initiative. While delays and inefficiencies frustrate professionals and homeowners alike, NZIBS President David Clifton warns against cutting corners.

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"Improving the system is necessary, but we cannot compromise on oversight," he says. For NZIBS, the solution lies in better education and a phased approach to self-certification (see page 20 for more on this story.

Remote building inspections

Remote building inspections represent a promising but risky development.

Minister Chris Penk says remote inspections offer "significant productivity gains that make it easier and cheaper to build". Due to their lack of consistency, with some councils being reluctant to use it, he announced his Government's progress to make remote inspections the default approach across New Zealand.

He touted the following benefits:

- Lowering costs by removing the need for inspectors to travel to site. This is particularly important in congested cities and in rural areas with large travel distances.
- Reducing delays by enabling more inspections per day and allowing inspectors to work in other regions remotely to support a region with greater demand.
- Reducing transport-related emissions.
- Better record keeping and documentation meaning more quality assurance for homeowners.
- Reducing the time wasted by increasing flexibility for both inspectors and building professionals on the day of inspection.

And while the announcement was cause for cautious optimism from the Institute, lessons from the leaky home's crisis highlight the dangers of inadequate oversight. "Remote inspections are not a one-size-fits-all solution," NZIBS Past President Darryl August says.

"Our members see first-hand the financial impact, stress, misery and illnesses caused by the construction of defective buildings. So, we need to be especially sure of the risk profile for New Zealand building owners and occupants.

"The system may not be an appropriate 'size fits all' process and could have dire consequences for how cost, time, and quality are maintained to ensure successful projects are delivered. If the remote inspection process is flawed, we could see the result being the diminished value of our improving building stock – or another leaky homes saga."

"Feedback from our members indicates that European standards are too expensive to purchase and update, often requiring searches for free explanatory documents online," the submission reads.

In saying that, the Government's example of its effectiveness in the remote McKenzie District is impressive, and a similar concept deployed during COVID-19 was useful for some building elements, (albeit physical inspections of more complex building elements were still required.

Insulation standards

Equally contentious is the debate over **H1 insulation standards**, with the Minister earlier this year stating his intentions to potentially roll back insulation standards to save a new home an estimated 40% on heating costs.

Upgrades to insulation and glazing requirements in May 2023 were the first significant improvements to insulation standards in New Zealand in more than a decade.

Rolling back these requirements would undermine efforts to create energy-efficient, healthy homes. James Biscaldi of NZIBS argues that education is the key to overcoming compliance challenges. "Upskilling builders ensures we meet standards without undue financial burden," he states.

"Improved insulation is a cornerstone of modern building practices, reducing energy consumption and providing healthier living environments.

"The benefits of adhering to the updated insulation standards far outweigh the costs associated with their implementation. And we're at a critical juncture where the quality of our homes directly impacts the health and well-being of our citizens.

"Rolling back insulation standards is not the solution; instead, we need to focus on educating our builders and industry professionals to ensure compliance and efficiency."

Many of the perceived difficulties and costs associated with the new standards stem from a lack of understanding and proper training, James says. By providing comprehensive training and resources, the Government can ensure that the industry is well-equipped to meet these standards without significant additional costs.

In the past, the industry faced similar challenges with weathertightness and fire safety regulations which were successfully overcome through targeted education and industry collaboration. The NZIBS calls on the Government to engage with industry stakeholders and prioritise educational initiatives over regulatory rollbacks.

By investing in education and training, James says New Zealand can build a more knowledgeable workforce capable of constructing homes that meet modern standards of comfort, efficiency, and sustainability.

"We urge the Government to reconsider its proposal and instead focus on upskilling our builders. This approach will not only help in meeting insulation standards but also ensure that we are building homes that are fit for the future."

Proposed legislative changes have been given significant focus, compared with previous governments' attention, with removing barriers to overseas building products another area the Minister sought to increase competition and drive down prices for building products.

Building production certificate

Essentially, the **Building (Overseas Building Products, Standards, and Certification Schemes) Amendment Bill** aims to do three things:

- Enable recognition of overseas standards and certification schemes, removing the need for designers, builders, or Building Consent Authorities (BCAs) to verify standards.
- Streamline the citing of international standards with the new Building Products Specification, which can be used with Building Code documents to show compliance with the Building Code.
- Require BCAs to accept building products certified overseas and recognised by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

Calling for submissions, the Institute agreed in principle with the aims yet highlighted the building and construction industry faces daily challenges with New Zealand-accredited products already in use when designing and constructing buildings despite familiarity with current standards.

Therefore, ensuring the overseas standards are accessible to BCAs and designers will be critical for enabling them to demonstrate and confirm compliance.

"Feedback from our members indicates that European standards are too expensive to purchase and update, often requiring searches for free explanatory documents online," the NIZBS's amedment bill submission reads.

"Additionally, European standards are not user-friendly, as they are often performance-based, with manufacturers stating compliance without providing the actual test methods. In contrast, American standards tend to be very product-focused rather than system-oriented. Additionally, there is a lack of familiarity with the terminology and the conversion of imperial to metric units for ASTM standards.

"While the government's proposals may offer potential cost and time savings, our geographic isolation and limited local demand/population may reduce these benefits. It will also be necessary to ensure that imported materials align with New Zealand's unique environmental and seismic requirements. Clear warranties and protocols will be essential to manage product failures and ensure compliance with the New Zealand Building Code."

The Institute says the success of the bill depends on MBIE's ability to support the legislation in a timely manner.

Fire safety provisions

Another pressing reforms involves **fire safety provisions**. This review of the fire safety provisions in the Building Code to improve the fire safety of all buildings follows the tragic Loafer's Lodge fire in 2023 that killed five people and injured 20 others.

It is the first full review in more than a decade and aims to make it easier for people to make decisions when considering fire provisions in the Building Code, and maintain or improve the health, safety and fire safety facilities for people who use buildings.

Other initiatives

In the last 10 months, the Government has announced a range of other initiatives from small changes to large structural reforms – these include:

- Commencing a major reform of the structure of the Building Consent system to improve efficiency and consistency across New Zealand.
- Increasing the use of remote inspections to reduce delays in the consenting process.
- Allowing Granny Flats and other structures up to 60sqm to be built without a building or resource consent.
- Extending deadlines for earthquake-prone buildings to give building owners certainty.
- Reviewing the earthquake-prone building legislation to ensure the settings effectively balance the risk of life safety with the real-world implications on building owners and communities.
- Strengthening registration and licencing regimes, including penalties.
- Exempting small building projects like home renovations from paying the building levy.
- Streamlining building consent changes by defining minor variations.
- Making it possible to customise multi-proof designs, which are pre-consented building consents with a fast-tracked approval process.
- Removing compliance costs for councils by reducing the frequency of competence assessments for building control officers.

The path ahead is complex, but with collaboration and commitment, New Zealand's building sector can emerge stronger, more sustainable, and better equipped to meet the needs of its community.

RHYS ELLERY
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Rethinking smoke sealing for remediation of fire damaged buildings

Whether it is the loss of a home or a business or personal possessions, fires can be devastating. While the numbers vary every year, about four residential fires causing structural damage to buildings occur every day across New Zealand, with a similar number occurring that do not cause structural damage. And then there are commercial and industrial building fires which also seem to be a common occurrence. All up there are quite a few building fires every year.

Much of my work involves assessing the extent of damage and then determining remediation strategies for fire damaged buildings. From a building surveying perspective, it is fascinating. While often lumped together as "fire damage", fire damage only relates to the combusted building elements. In addition to this, there is heat damage, smoke damage, water damage from both firefighting activities and a compromised building envelope, and impact damage from firefighting activities as well as any emergency works and strip out of the building. All these items need careful consideration.

While there is plenty of information, guidance, rules and regulation for fire engineering to ensure the safety of people, there is precious little information for remediating fire damaged buildings. Yet remediation of fire damaged buildings is just as much an exercise in keeping people safe. It is easy to underestimate the complexity of the issues needing consideration and frequently this leads to poor remediation strategies being proposed for the building, thereby putting people at risk.

An example of this occurred in October. A major house fire occurred in a two-storey building where the fire had multiple paths burning out through all elevations of the building. The heat damage was significant, being sufficient to melt the Colorsteel cladding, flashings and aluminium window shades in multiple locations. Smoke had penetrated throughout the building including the wall, floor and ceiling voids. Thousands of litres of water had been used to extinguish the fire and the building envelope was compromised. The building had multiple sources of damage. However, the fire was brought under control with the timber structure still standing, and on this basis, a senior and well experienced Loss Adjuster, who should know better, was pushing the "industry standard" method of smoking sealing the timber and patching the building back up. A method not at all suitable for this damaged building.

While fire, heat, water and impact damage are worthy of their own discussion, this article relates to smoke damage as it is often the biggest cause of damage in building fires. It can also be difficult to observe beyond surface residue and therefore is often poorly considered.

Just like how building surveyors understand moisture, with fires,

building surveyors need to understand smoke. Smoke is not just an unpleasant odour. Smoke is a collection of airborne particles and gases that result from the incomplete combustion of materials.

Complete combustion produces only water and carbon dioxide. However, incomplete combustion, as is the case with building fires, produces a wide range of chemicals including carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxide, sulphur dioxide and volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Dry smoke results from oxygen-rich fires that burn fuel more efficiently and completely leaving a drier looser residue. Wet smoke results from slower burning, oxygen-starved fires where combustion rates are poor. These residues condense to form a solid layer or film over a substrate and can appear as a stain.

For the building itself, smoke poses the risk of damaging materials. The chemicals in smoke can react with materials, particularly metals, potentially impacting their durability and performance.

In addition, the smoke can penetrate building materials like how water penetrates porous materials. Any contamination from the gases, compounds and chemicals in the smoke is then impregnated in the material. Due to the pressure differences between voids in a building, smoke can penetrate areas of the building that are well away from the source and path of the fire. It is not uncommon to see smoke residue pumped out between weatherboards and eaves on an otherwise undamaged part of a house.

Aside from damage to the building, more importantly, smoke poses serious immediate (acute) and long-term (chronic) health risks to occupants of a building.

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It is widely known that the combustion process of fires can create and/or release toxic and carcinogenic VOCs from the building materials and that these can contaminate the environment. The Ministry of Health state that "Chemical conversions will occur both during the fire, as a result of combustion and mixing with water (or foam), and after, when chemicals enter the wider environment."

In buildings these processes contaminate the air quality as well as both settling contaminants onto the surface and penetrating building materials. The VOCs infuse porous building elements like how a piece of fish or meat is infused when smoked. After a fire is extinguished, the compounds remain in the building materials and can continue to release back into the environment in a natural process called 'off-gassing'. This is what people often identify as the smell of smoke. This process can take years, with the contaminated air continuing to pose an on-going health risk to occupants.

While people identify the odour of some VOCs as the smell of smoke, smelling smoke is subjective and not all VOCs have a noticeable odour. Gases are also not visibly noticeable. Accordingly, testing for VOCs should be undertaken to confirm whether an environment is safe after a building fire, or the building should be considered as hazardous with appropriate Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) used by anyone entering or working in the building.

It should be noted that hundreds of chemicals and compounds can be released by a building fire. Studies in both municipal fires and experimental fires in the United States of America have identified significantly increased levels of VOCs including propene, benzene, xylenes, 1-butene/2-methylpropene, toluene, propane, 1,2-butadiene, 2-methylbutane, ethylbenzene, naphthalene, styrene, cyclopentene, 1-methylcyclopentene, isopropylbenzene. All these

compounds are known to be toxic and/or carcinogenic to people.

Health risks from VOCs may include eye, nose and throat irritation; headaches, loss of coordination and nausea; damage to liver, kidney and central nervous system; haemolytic anaemia and some can cause cancer. Short term exposure to contamination, such as people working in the building, can cause acute illness in humans. Long-term exposure to contamination, such as living or working in the building, can cause chronic illnesses in humans.

Accordingly, remediating smoke in buildings is an item that needs careful and thorough consideration. In New Zealand, this consideration is widely lacking.

It is common to have loss adjusters, consultant and contractors state that smoke sealing is the "industry standard" method for remediating smoke damaged building elements. Typically, this process would involve a combination of 1) removing any burnt or charred elements; 2) cleaning surfaces with wet and/or dry wiping, brushing down, vacuuming and/or mechanical surface blasting; 3) thermal fogging, ozone treatment, or hydroxyl treatments; and 4) sealing surfaces to encapsulate any residue, gases or contamination. Note, there is no consideration of air testing.

This purported "industry standard" is proven to be flawed with many property owners having suffered from the smell of smoke in their properties, often months and years after the remediation has been completed, and when the loss adjuster, consultant and contractor are gone.

We have come a long way in addressing health hazards in construction such as asbestos and we should also reconsider the health risks of smoke damaged buildings and how we deal with them.

“For the benefit of doubt, there is no standard for the use of sealant products for smoke remediation in New Zealand. Furthermore, unlike weathertightness, flood remediation or asbestos removal, there is also no guidance from BRANZ, MBIE or the Insurance Council of New Zealand for the remediation of smoke damaged buildings either.”

For the benefit of doubt, there is no standard for the use of sealant products for smoke remediation in New Zealand. Furthermore, unlike weathertightness, flood remediation or asbestos removal, there is also no guidance from BRANZ, MBIE or the Insurance Council of New Zealand for the remediation of smoke damaged buildings either.

When challenged on the so-called "industry standard" a loss adjuster, consultant or contractor will likely state that smoke sealant has been used on countless other projects, conveniently or unwittingly neglecting to acknowledge the numerous times that this method has failed to conceal smoke odours. Anyone with experience in smoke remediation will be aware of projects where the smell of smoke (i.e. the off-gassing of VOCs) has returned to a building many months after a remediation project is complete.

When challenged about the lack of industry standard, the loss adjuster, consultant or contractor will inevitably pull out the manufacturers guidance that states the suitability of smoke sealants and attempt to justify the use of it for the remediation work. Various products are available for the purpose of sealing smoke into building products. Commonly used and specified products include Zinsser B.I.N, Dulux Precision, and Fiberlock Recon smoke odour sealants. However, this neglects the other factors that impact the suitability of smoke sealant in the remediation of a major building fire.

I do not question whether smoke sealant products have the capability of sealing in smoke odours, and it is useful in certain circumstances. However, the use of smoke sealants needs to be carefully considered with the first consideration being why it is even needed?

The assertion that smoke sealant is required, is confirmation that there is a problem in the building from smoke having penetrated the building materials. The smoke sealant is proposed to encapsulate the smoke, prevent odours from escaping the damaged materials, and thereby ensure that the people who use a building do not observe the unpleasant odour of smoke. The method is flawed at this point.

As described above, the odour of smoke is the natural 'off-gassing" process of releasing compounds back to the environment.

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As we are aware, these compounds will typically include VOCs which are toxic and harmful to humans. With a lack of air testing, the proposal of smoke sealant is really just the acknowledgment that there may be hazardous agents within the material that need remediating – it is not just an unpleasant odour.

outcome from this is that the air is confirmed to be within safe levels, thereby smoke sealing would not be needed at all.

However, if contamination is found to be at unacceptable levels, and if it is still proposed to be encapsulated within the building, consideration of Clause F2 needs to

“The assertion that smoke sealant is required, is confirmation that there is a problem in the building from smoke having penetrated the building materials. The smoke sealant is proposed to encapsulate the smoke, prevent odours from escaping the damaged materials, and thereby ensure that the people who use a building do not observe the unpleasant odour of smoke. The method is flawed at this point.”

At this stage NZBC Clause F1 becomes applicable as encapsulation is the storing of hazardous agents on the site. NZBC Clause F2 also becomes applicable for hazardous building materials as it is the materials that have become infused with the hazardous materials from the fire. Both clauses are intended to safeguard people from injury or illness caused by exposure to hazardous agents or materials, and while not written specifically for smoke remediation they are applicable when considering the use of smoke sealants.

If smoke damaged materials are proposed to remain in the building, then Clause F1 requires the site to be assessed to determine the presence, potential threat and likely effect of any hazardous agent. Regarding the known hazards from off-gassing and VOCs, this will require specialist air testing to be undertaken. The best

be made. Specifically, Clause F2.3.1 requires that “The quantities of gas, liquid, radiation or solid particles emitted by materials used in the construction of buildings, shall not give rise to harmful concentrations at the surface of the material where the material is exposed, or in the atmosphere of any space.”

If the encapsulation of the building element is not complete on all surfaces, then the hazardous agents are not fully contained, and the natural off-gassing process will recommence from the material. This can risk breaching the NZBC Clause F2.3.1 requirement.

For encapsulation to be complete, all external surfaces of the material will need to be sealed. Practicably, this is not possible for timber framed structures without dismantling all components. This is due to the junctions between building elements not being accessible for sealing, such as

where studs meet top and bottom plates and where nogs are fixed between studs. The cut ends of these timber elements are not exposed and therefore, cannot be sealed while remaining in place. Accordingly, the building elements are not fully encapsulated, and the theory of encapsulation fails.

The loss adjuster, consultant or contractor will then say that the junctions themselves are sealed over and therefore the whole area of framing is encapsulated. Again, conveniently or unwittingly, this neglects the materials training that anyone advising on construction should have been thoroughly trained in.

In simple terms, building materials continually expand or contract with changes in the environment such as temperature and humidity throughout the day. In addition, different types of materials such as timber and metal will expand or contract at different rates causing differential movement between the elements. Furthermore, impacts like wind and earthquakes cause buildings to move. All these factors allow junctions in buildings to open, the encapsulation over junctions becomes compromised and off-gassing can recommence. This is the reason why previously remediated buildings start smelling of smoke again months after the work is completed.

With consideration of the above, we do not view smoke sealing as an appropriate method for remediating smoke damaged building elements from major building fires. The appropriate method of remediating the smoke damaged element is to either remove and replace it, or undertake air testing to confirm that the gases are within safe levels and the future occupants of the building are safeguarded from injury or illness. Neither of these methods require the use of smoke sealants.

When looking at smoke damage, as building surveyors, we should lead the way with improving the remediation of buildings.

ConCOVE Tūhura expands degree-level apprenticeship initiative to Private Training Establishment

ConCOVE Tūhura is pleased to announce the expansion of its degree-level apprenticeship (DLA) initiative, with the commitment of the New Zealand Institute of Building Surveyors (NZIBS) and Vertical Horizonz New Zealand (VHNZ).

This marks the second of three planned pilot programmes, highlighting the initiative's role in fast-tracking work-ready graduates by integrating academic study with practical work experience.

The addition of NZIBS and VHNZ highlights the increasing recognition from the industry of the value of degree-level apprenticeships. By partnering with VHNZ, ConCOVE Tūhura aims to test and enhance the delivery model to ensure it meets the diverse needs of the industry. Katherine Hall, Executive Director of ConCOVE Tūhura, emphasises the importance of this collaboration.

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"Private training plays an important role in the wider vocational sector in Aotearoa New Zealand. In partnership with VHNZ, we can test and enhance the degree-level apprenticeship model through an alternate delivery mechanism.

"This collaboration is instrumental in scaling our programme to meet growing industry demand and ensure we develop a robust apprenticeship system that grows skilled graduates aligned with the industry's immediate needs," said Katherine.

Turning professional development into credentials

David Clifton, then Vice President of the NZIBS, remarked on the potential impact of this initiative.

"Our existing programme of professional development could greatly benefit from accreditation and turning into a recognised credential, providing another pathway to professional registration for people working in the industry and further enhancing the qualifications, to address the skills shortage in our sector."

Ben Johnstone, CEO of VHNZ, says the introduction of DLA in New Zealand represents a paradigm shift in tertiary education and workforce development. He shares his perspectives on what's holding back the widespread adoption of this innovative qualification pathway and what is needed to enable its success.

DLAs merge academic learning with practical work experience, offering a compelling "earn as you learn" model. This approach is particularly suited to individuals from lower socio-economic backgrounds who may not have the means to engage in full-time, campus-based study.

Internationally, DLAs have proven effective in equipping learners with industry-specific skills while meeting the immediate needs of employers.

"DLAs are a natural progression for New Zealand's vocational education framework," says Ben. "They provide a pathway for learners to gain advanced qualifications while contributing directly to their industries. This dual focus makes them invaluable for sectors like construction and infrastructure, where demand for skilled professionals is high."

Despite their potential, establishing DLAs in New Zealand faces several challenges. One significant hurdle lies in aligning the qualifications framework with industry needs.

"To formalise a DLA, the qualification must exist in the framework. This requires collaboration between industry and standard-setting bodies, as well as approval processes that ensure the qualification meets academic and practical standards," Ben explains.

He adds that the programme development process is equally rigorous. Tertiary providers must design offerings that achieve the qualification's outcomes, often involving degree panels, site visits, and consultations with industry stakeholders.

Moreover, the perception of apprenticeships remains a barrier. Historically seen as a lesser alternative to university education, apprenticeships have gained respectability over the past decade. However, lingering biases may still hinder the acceptance of DLAs as legitimate higher-level qualifications.

VHNZ's partnership with NZIBS demonstrates how DLAs can build on existing professional development frameworks. While they are working to elevate NZIBS's diploma-level professional learning and development programme into a formal degree-level apprenticeship, Ben emphasises this isn't a replacement but an evolution.

"We aim to enhance the existing PLD framework, providing professionals with targeted training that equips them to meet job demands from day one."

VHNZ's track record in vocational education underscores its capability to lead this initiative. The organisation already supports several national qualifications and apprenticeships, including programmes in scaffolding, roofing, and rigging.

But to fully unlock the potential of DLAs, New Zealand's tertiary education system must embrace greater flexibility. Ben says a responsive approach to vocational education is required, one that evolves alongside workforce needs.

"Jobs are changing, and education must adapt. DLAs offer a way to bridge the gap between academic qualifications and real-world skills."

Additionally, broader industry engagement is crucial. Employers need to see the value of DLAs not only as a means of addressing skills shortages but also as a pathway to fostering innovation and productivity within their organisations.

Oftentimes it comes down to public awareness. By shifting the narrative around apprenticeships, DLAs can gain the recognition they deserve as a viable and valuable route to higher education.

"DLAs are more than just a qualification," says Ben. "They're a solution to some of our most pressing challenges: skills shortages, workforce development, and social mobility. It's time to give them the attention and investment they deserve."

These new partnerships further solidify the programme's role in transforming New Zealand's construction and infrastructure industry through an earn-as-you-learn education delivery model. ConCOVE Tūhura is advancing the development of more degree-level apprenticeship pilots, with a third pilot programme underway and details to be announced soon.

For more information about degree-level apprenticeship comparative pilot, please visit ConCOVE website **here**

NZIBS CORE MODULE TRAINING CALENDAR 2025

NO	MODULE	AUCKLAND	CHRISTCHURCH	WELLINGTON
1	INTRODUCTION TO BUILDING LAW & RELATED REGULATIONS	Tue 4 Mar 2025	–	Tue 5 Aug 2025
2	PROPERTIES OF MOISTURE	Wed 5 Mar 2025	–	Wed 6 Aug 2025
3	THE BUILDING ENVELOPE & CLADDING SYSTEMS	Tue 1 – Wed 2 Apr 2025	–	Tue 9 – Wed 10 Sep 2025
4	CONDITION & COMPLIANCE REPORTING	Tue 6 May 2025	–	Tue 14 Oct 2025
5	RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY INSPECTIONS	Wed 7 May 2025	–	Wed 15 Oct 2025
6	FORENSIC BUILDING SURVEYING	Tue 17 – Wed 18 Jun2025	Tue 18 – Wed 19 Mar 2025	Wed 19 – Thu 20 Nov 2025
7	TECHNICAL REPORT WRITING FOR EXPERT WITNESSES	Thu 19 Jun 2025	Thu 20 Mar 2025	–
8	DECAY FUNG I& MOULDS	Tue 22 Jul 2025	Tue 15 Apr 2025	–
9	DURABILITY & MATERIAL PERFORMANCE	Tue 22 Jul 2025	Tue 15 Apr 2025	–
10	BUILDING REMEDIATION	Wed 23 Jul 2025	Wed 16 Apr 2025	–
11	CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION	Tue 26 Aug 2025	Tue 27 May 2025	–
12	ASSET MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE PLANNING	Wed 27 Aug 2025	Wed 28 May 2025	–
13	LEASE REINSTATEMENT (DILAPIDATIONS)	Thu 30 Oct 2025	Tue 15 Jul 2025	–
14	TECHNICAL DUE DILIGENCE FOR COMMERCIAL PROPERTIES	Fri 31 Oct 2025	Wed 16 Jul 2025	–

The essential role of independent oversight in New Zealand's building industry

Proceeding with the Government's **self-certification proposal** "will be a disaster", a former New Zealand Institute of Building Surveyor President says.

Kevin Longman – who was made an NZIBS Life Member in 2012 and helped found the Society of Construction Law New Zealand in 2005 – is worried a similar path of systemic failures is on the horizon if the potential shifts in the country's building certification processes come to fruition.

He's already had some experience in this; in the early 2000s, following the confirmation New Zealand was facing an extensive and expensive leaky building crisis, insurance companies began withdrawing from the construction market.

Building certifiers, created by the Building Act reforms of the early 1990s to compete with council inspections, needed insurance cover for 10 years to stay in business. If insurers refused to cover them, certifiers could not choose to carry on their business, as other professionals could because they were closed down by the then-independent regulator the Building Industry Authority (BIA).

In 2002, ACE Insurance announced it planned to exclude leaky building cover across the whole building industry. Kevin was president of the Institute at the time and told the NZ Herald – as more insurance companies pulled coverage and building certifier companies began losing business – "We're just at the mercy of the insurance industry".

Looking back at the scheme now, its downfall was wrought because of its dependence on insurance. Insurance companies would, and still do, insure what they perceive as reasonable risk.

"It is the perfect warning sign for any decision-makers looking to implement a similar scheme dependent on insurance companies; if insurance companies see a situation where it's high risk, they don't want to be there."

Kevin advocates for an independent regulator, as it provides necessary oversight, highlighting risks insurers might otherwise deem too high to cover. He believes that self-certification fails to address the industry's fragmented nature, where multiple subcontractors—handling elements like roofing, cladding, and foundations—operate under disparate standards.

"You need someone who isn't invested in the project's profits to ensure each component meets a durable standard," he argues. Without this, New Zealand risks seeing issues similar to those faced by the roading industry, where self-certified work often requires constant repair due to initial quality shortcomings.

Any framework aiming to expedite building processes should prioritise consumer protection and be underpinned by insurance backing to cover a period of the structure's lifespan, Kevin says.

"There's no means of holding those people to account, unless you have insurance, and insurance has to be very clearly tied up with long-term liability once you've completed the project.

"But that's the difficulty the industry faces when you try to implement something like this.

"Builders might liquidate after completing a project, leaving new homeowners without recourse for issues that arise later," he says. Only an insurance-backed, independently overseen system, he suggests, can ensure long-term accountability and quality assurance in residential construction.

"The best construction in our industry is when we have an independent overview of the construction process.

"You can only speed up the construction process by having more qualifications and a more streamlined processing systems by the regulator, but you still have to have the regulator."

Any regulatory adjustments must balance the urgent need for housing with enduring quality and risk management standards. Kevin recommends that the Government, rather than relaxing oversight, focus on resourcing regulatory bodies to streamline compliance without sacrificing thoroughness. By fostering a robust, insured oversight framework, New Zealand can address its housing needs without jeopardising future generations' security.

More continuous professional development and greatly improved education in the construction sector are required before a self-certification scheme can be trusted to solve our country's homebuilding woes.

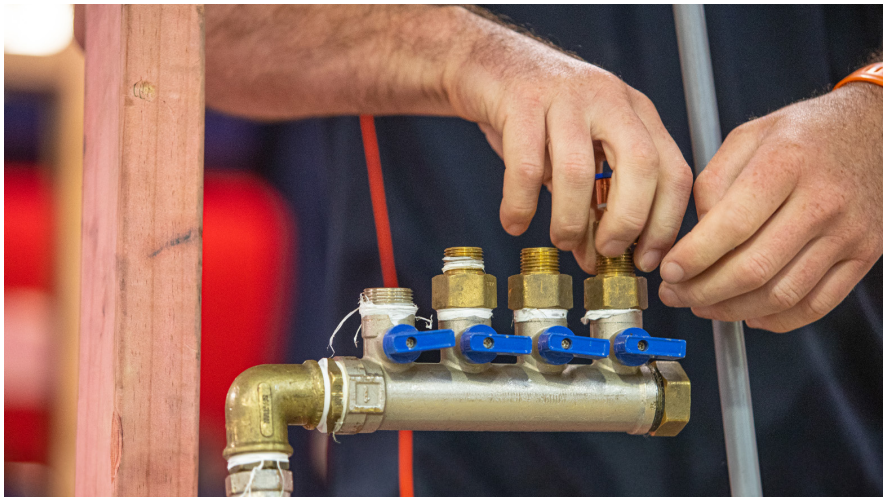
So says NZIBS President David Clifton, who is wary of the Government's proposed changes to allowing trusted building professionals and accredited businesses to carry out low-risk building work.

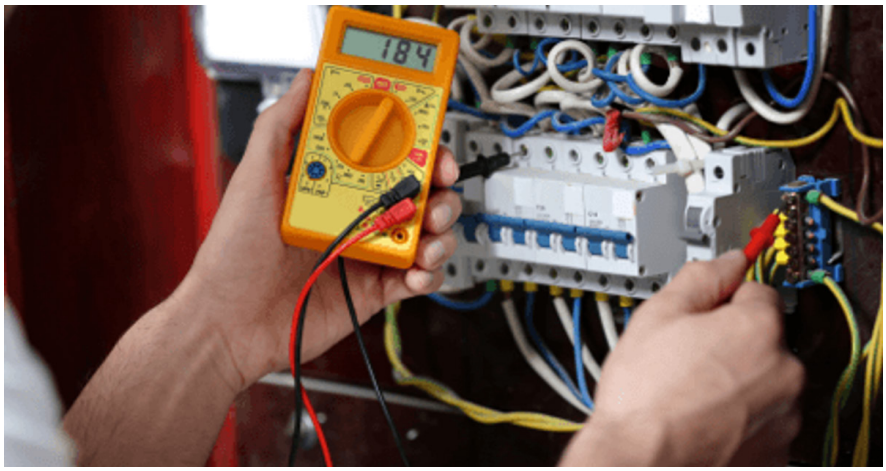
He told **Newstalk ZB's Mike Hosking** that self-certification is something that can be worked towards, but the sector's education processes need to be up to scratch first.

"There is huge value in refining the consenting process to address time and cost concerns.

"In fact, there are examples where the time and costs of the consent processing outweigh the cost of the actual work.

"But these are at the fringes of the process, and so these proposed changes must strike the right balance between oversimplifying the process and protecting homeowners, businesses, and councils."





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The sector already wrestles with an alarmingly high rate of failed inspections, so removing a Building Consent Authority's process of consenting could risk further failures. David says the priority should be improving the professional development and education of builders and consultants before culminating in self-certification.

"We believe that Licensed Building Practitioners need further training to be adequately prepared for any proposed change for self-certification.

"The market must have confidence the sector can deliver with minimal defects from design, to build and completion. This can only be achieved with the process of further education for the sector, and confirmation of this working via independent inspections."

> **We believe that Licensed Building Practitioners need further training to be adequately prepared for any proposed change for self-certification.**

Building and Construction Minister Hon Chis Penk prepared a report in September for Cabinet to explore self-certification options (publicly released in October).

"Insurance will play an important role in any changes to the assurance role of building consent authorities," the report states.

"However, as we have learnt from the weathertight homes issues, other key regulatory safeguards will also be required to reduce the risks of defects occurring in the first place, such as monitoring and robust oversight of self-certified work through auditing.

"As self-certification would remove or reduce the third-party review role of building consent authorities, it will be important to have other adequate mechanisms for maintaining confidence that self-certified work will comply with the building code."

The Minister sees three key safeguards as critical for the design of a potential self-certification scheme:

1. Strengthening the competency of building professionals;
2. Consumers have a remedy for non-compliant work; and
3. Careless or incompetent self-certifiers are identified and subject to disciplinary action.

An insurance perspective

by Duncan Colebrook
Director, Stamford Insurance Ltd

As an underwriting agent who has represented several insurers providing Building Defects Insurance in New Zealand over the past decade, Stamford has a first-hand understanding of the risks associated with the residential building industry and the financial consequences of the failure to meet acceptable standards.

For several years, contracts to remediate leaky buildings built in the 1990s were an important part of our business!

Our insurers have always valued the oversight provided by councils through their consenting and inspection regime as a way of reducing risk. Auckland Council estimates that between 25% and 35% of all inspections fail, so they are an important part of the quality assurance process.

Where no such regime exists in other territories, insurers generally insist on appointing their own professional building surveyors to ensure that the building will be built to an acceptable standard. This means that some self-certified work may not be insurable.

There is also doubt that insurance would be available and affordable to self-certifiers. The changes imply that they would be expected to buy professional indemnity insurance but the market for such insurance is limited and expensive.

The Government's stated aim is to reduce red tape, speed up the consenting process, and enable councils to limit inspections based on a risk analysis of the project. This is intended to increase the supply and reduce the cost of housing. However, the past few years have shown that housing supply and prices are driven primarily by market forces. Many developers have deferred projects due to recent market conditions.

The example being quoted is that of plumbers and electricians who self-certify their own work, suggesting that this could be the way forward. However, plumbing and electrical work rarely causes structural or weather-tightness failure. These performance failures are a serious financial risk to homeowners and where they need the most protection, both in terms of legislation and insurance.

Whilst the law can make self-certifiers liable for their own work, it is not a simple matter for a homeowner to hold a builder or other professional accountable for defective work. This generally involves engaging their own professional advisers – surveyors, lawyers, and others – to establish the cause of the defect and the person responsible. As the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has confirmed, seeking redress when things go wrong is difficult, complex, and costly for consumers.

The reliability of a robust building consent process and a professional inspection regime, backed up by holding their own first-response insurance policy, is the best protection for homeowners.

Independent building certifiers

McNamara, in their capacity as trustees, purchased a house in Remuera, Auckland, just after it had been built in 2004. The house leaked.

McNamara repaired the house and then sought to recover the costs and other damages from a number of defendants, including the Auckland City Council. Importantly, a private building certifier had been engaged to carry out the certification process in this case.

The council, therefore, argued that it was absolved from any adverse consequences that arose from the certification process (given the engagement of a private building certifier).

Relying on this argument, the council sought to have the claim against it struck out in the High Court but was unsuccessful. The council appealed that decision.

The interesting point in this case was the limitations on what the private building certifier could, in fact, certify. At the time when the developer engaged the private building certifier Approved Building Certifiers Ltd (ABC), ABC had general authority to issue Code Compliance Certificates (CCC) in respect of domestic dwellings.

However, on December 4, 2002, the Building Industry Authority (BIA) restricted ABC's ability to approve certification for certain types of exterior cladding. The exterior cladding used on the subject house was one such type of cladding that ABC was prevented from approving.

The BIA notified this restriction on its web site and in its newsletter. Notwithstanding this, between December 2002 and April 2004, ABC inspected the property and subsequently issued a CCC whereby approval was given to the use of an exterior cladding system that ABC was prevented from approving.

The council accepted ABC's certificate as evidence of compliance, and issued a LIM stating that a CCC had been issued.

In suing the council in negligence, McNamara submitted that the council owed a general duty of care to building owners whose properties were certified by a building certifier. In addition, it was argued that the council, in this case, owed a duty to them as it knew (or ought to have known) that ABC was not entitled to issue the CCC.

However, the council's main argument was that the wording of section 50(1) of the Building Act 1991 obligated it to accept ABC's certificate. The council argued that ABC's engagement as private certifier limited the council's responsibility and liability such that it was not required (nor able) to examine ABC's certificate and ABC's authority to issue it.

In refusing to strike out the claim against the council, the High Court reasoned that unless a private certifier is expressly authorised to certify that items of building work comply with the Building Code, then the duty remains with, and reverts to, the territorial authority.

The decision

The Court of Appeal disagreed, and accepted that the council had no liability in this case. In doing so, Baragwanath J provided a very succinct and well reasoned judgment.

At paragraph 24, Baragwanath J noted that the clear pattern of the Act was to give the owner an election between the use (in whole or in part) of a certifier and the use (in whole or in part) of the territorial authority.

Where the certifier was retained by the owner to perform the whole task, the authority's role was limited to an administrative function of receiving, and retaining at least a record of, the owner's advice of completion at the end of the works, together with the certifier's CCC.

At paragraph 25 the court went on to note that it was impossible to infer a statutory purpose that territorial authorities should act as "long-stop guarantor" to certifiers that issue a CCC in respect of building work.

Accordingly, a certifier which issued a certificate beyond its capacity, or which approved defective work, would be liable in negligence to the owner, and that liability would be backed by an approved insurer.

It was not contemplated by the Act that the territorial authority should then provide a further backstop for default by the certifier.

In summing up at paragraph 28, Baragwanath J noted that the Hamlin line of authority was focused on addressing a breach by councils of an obligation they had undertaken (inspection and certification of building work where the owner could reasonably expect to rely on its exercise of care when any defects would be covered up as the work proceeded).

In this instance, the only assumption of responsibility was by ABC. The council had not undertaken the inspection and certification process and had, therefore, assumed no responsibility.

The council was, therefore, not liable and was entitled to the substantive relief of summary judgment (and costs).

Originally published in Building Today November 1, 2010

Insights and challenges from the past to inform building surveying's future

The *Living Legends* panel at the NZ Institute of Building Surveyors conference brought together four seasoned professionals – Chris Phayer, Dianne Johnson, William Hursthouse, and Donald Frame. This engaging session reflected on the past, analysed the present, and debated the future of the New Zealand building surveying profession and construction industry.

From stormwater management to the impact of climate change and evolving professional standards, the panel provided a deep dive into key challenges and opportunities.

The evolution of building surveying

Yesterday: The panellists reflected on the evolution of the building surveying profession. Early practices were defined by simplicity, autonomy, and a reliance on hard-copy technical libraries. Donald shared anecdotes from his early career, recounting the Southland floods of the 1980s and the ingenuity needed to address flooding in hazard-prone areas. These stories underscored how basic practices were shaped by the challenges of the time, often without comprehensive frameworks for professional standards or safety.

Today: Modern building surveyors navigate a landscape dominated by technology, corporate structures, and complex regulatory environments. Dianne discussed the growing reliance on invasive investigations to understand systemic failures in residential and commercial buildings. The challenges of stormwater management, exacerbated by climate change, were a recurring theme. Dianne noted that despite advances, today's solutions often feel reactive rather than proactive.

Tomorrow: Looking ahead, William and others emphasised the need for the profession to embrace innovation while maintaining rigour. They highlighted the potential for localised remediation strategies as a cost-effective alternative to full-scale reclads, citing the Bianco Apartments case as a turning point in judicial thinking. The future, they argued, lies in balancing practicality, sustainability, and professionalism.

Stormwater management: Past, present, and future

One of the most pressing topics was stormwater management. Dianne illustrated how inadequate systems have led to escalating costs and failures. She advocated for updates to New Zealand Building Code Clause E1, which currently bases design standards on outdated rainfall intensity data.

Yesterday: Early stormwater systems were designed for smaller, less dense populations and often relied on soakaways rather than sewer pipes.

Today: Extreme weather events have exposed the limitations of current designs, with frequent flooding and water ingress into buildings.

Tomorrow: The panel proposed that NZIBS advocate for a national review of rainfall intensity standards and push for climate-resilient infrastructure. They also raised the potential for treatment plants to recycle stormwater, aligning with sustainability goals.

Professional standards and health & safety

Health and safety emerged as a critical area for discussion. Historically, building surveyors often worked alone, assuming full responsibility for site observations and their safety. Today, advancements in technology, such as drones, have mitigated some risks but introduced new liabilities.

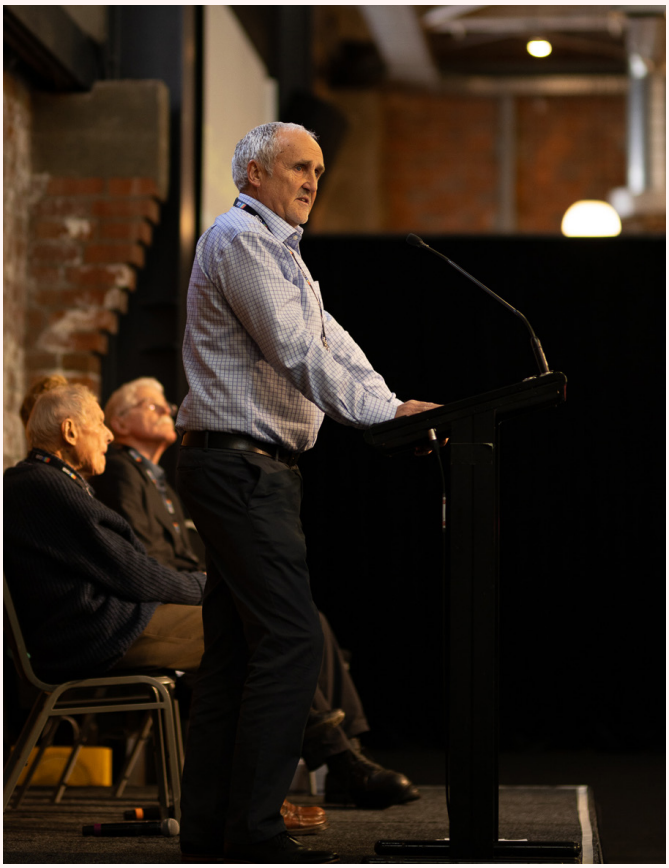
Yesterday: Limited safety oversight and professional training resulted in higher risks for surveyors and clients.

Today: The profession faces increased costs due to advanced tools and regulatory compliance.

Tomorrow: The panel suggested NZIBS develop updated guidance documents to ensure members are well-equipped to navigate evolving challenges, including the safe use of technology like drones and elevated work platforms.

Building materials: The knowledge divide

Access to technical information was another focal point. While the internet has made vast resources available, the panellists highlighted the risks of misinformation and inconsistent research.



Yesterday: Surveyors relied on hard-copy libraries, maintained by individual companies.

Today: The internet provides convenience but often at the expense of accuracy and relevance.

Tomorrow: NZIBS is exploring the creation of a Central Technical Library, a curated resource for members to ensure consistent, high-quality information.

Remediation: Balancing costs and standards

The panellists shared insights on remediation strategies, particularly in the context of the leaky building crisis. William and Chris questioned whether historical practices of full-scale reclads were always necessary. They argued for localised repairs where feasible, which would reduce costs and align with sustainable practices.

Yesterday: The leaky building crisis saw extensive demolition and reconstruction, driven by a conservative approach to risk.

Today: Modern High Court rulings, such as Bianco Apartments, advocate for a more nuanced approach.

Tomorrow: NZIBS was urged to lead the development of tools and guidelines for Section 112 analysis under the Building Act, promoting fair and reasonable standards across the industry.

NZIBS's role

The panellists agreed that NZIBS should take on a more prominent governance role to enhance public trust and professional standards. Key recommendations include:

Stormwater management: Advocate for the Ministry of Business, Innovation, and Employment to review and update Building Code Clause E1, ensuring standards reflect current and future rainfall patterns.

Health & safety: Develop comprehensive guidance on the use of emerging technologies and ensure all members have access to training and insurance frameworks.

Central technical library: Establish a curated repository of technical resources, supporting consistent and informed decision-making across the profession.

Localised remediation guidelines: Create templates and analysis tools to help members navigate the complexities of Section 112 and avoid unnecessary costs for clients.

Professional development: Shift the focus from training new surveyors to supporting existing members through governance and updated professional guidelines.

The *Living Legends* panel was a testament to the depth of knowledge and experience within NZIBS and the industry. It highlighted the pressing need for a proactive, collaborative approach to the challenges facing the construction industry. And by balancing innovation with professionalism, NZIBS can lead the way in shaping a sustainable and resilient future for New Zealand's built environment.

SASKIA SHELTON
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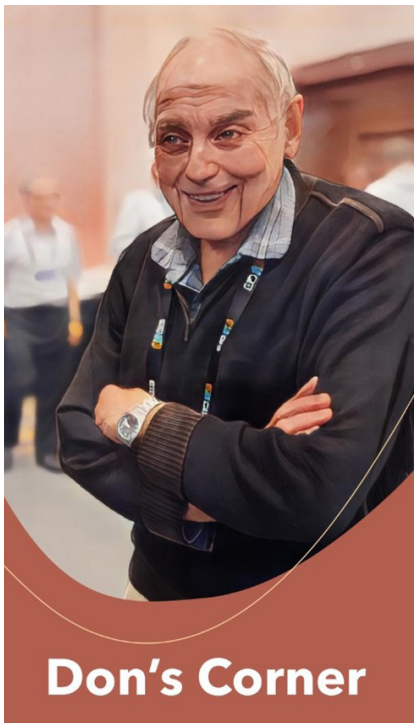


From rabbit hunter to Life Member

In the wee hours of a chilly August morning in 1935, Mr and Mrs Frame welcomed their third son into the world: Donald Frame. Don, the youngest of five children, has lived through almost nine decades and this year, shortly after his 89th birthday, he was awarded Life Membership at the Institute's 30th Annual General Meeting. I asked Don to take me back to his boyhood and share some of his memories.

The seven-year-old rabbit hunter

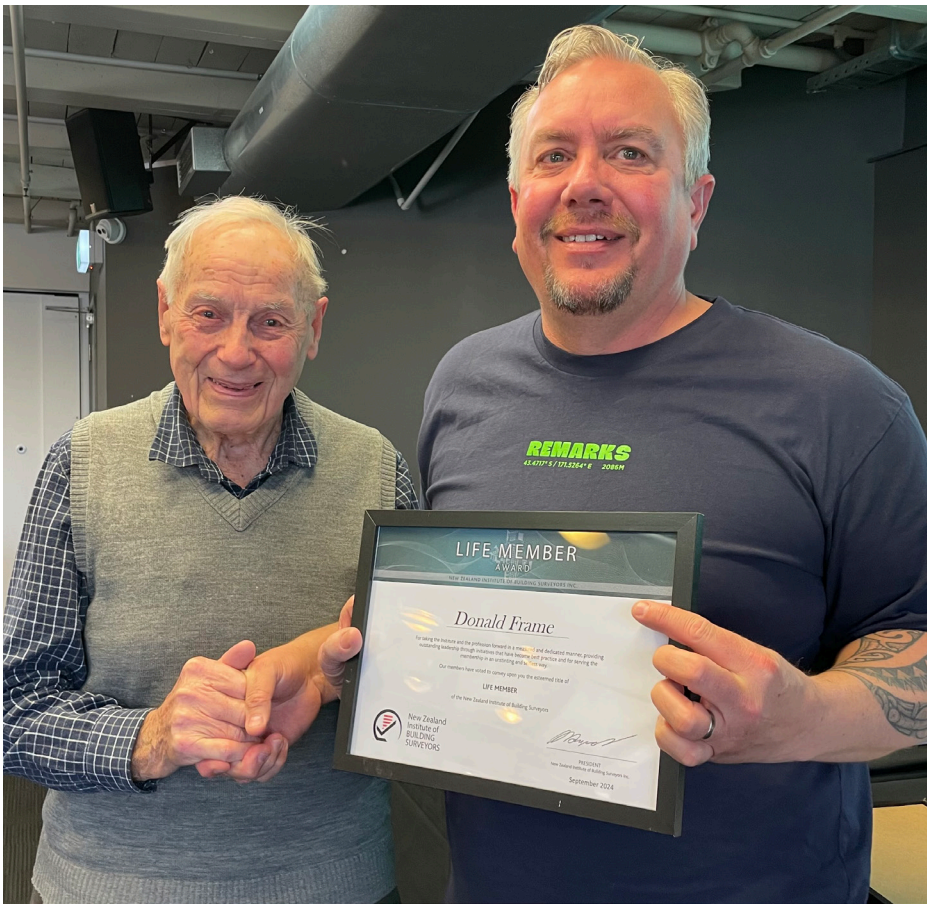
From the age of seven, Don started catching rabbits with his Collie dog, Sam. "I would get up early in the morning, unchain Sam, and set out to go around my trap line. I would usually catch between five and seven rabbits a day." Don described the gory details that went between the catching part and the selling part. I'll skip to the money-making part: "Once you had two dead rabbits, you would fold their legs to make a pair, take them to the roadside, and hang them over a rail. I was normally in my school clothes while doing this, which didn't impress Mum too much."

"I had to work quickly to get to school on time, so I would hurry off to reset the traps, head home for breakfast, and be on the school bus by 8:20am." Don remembers he got paid one and threepence for each rabbit. "If you had a good week, including the weekend, I could catch up to 100 rabbits. Over one Christmas holiday, I caught enough rabbits and earned myself a cheque for £85!"

An unlikely pet

The Frame family lived on a block of land in Central Otago that was part of the Moa Flat Sheep Station. One day, when Robert, Don's father, was out mustering sheep, he came across a baby fawn. "Dad brought the fawn home, and I fed it with a little lamb's bottle. I called it Bambi," Don recalls. "She followed me all around the place while at home, and even came with me to catch rabbits. I would place two rabbits over her back, and she would carry them home for me." Don took Bambi to the local Roxburgh A&P Show one year. "She followed me all around during the Grand Parade, and this attracted a lot of attention."

It turns out that the attention Don and Bambi received wasn't all good. Bambi was put down a few days after the A&P Show, and Don still recalls it like it was yesterday. "I still



We believe that Licensed Building Practitioners need further training to be adequately prepared for any proposed change for self-certification.

hear the bang of the shot, and the worst part is I wasn't even allowed to say goodbye to my friend." After hearing this story, I was quite tearful and quickly changed the subject to Don's school years.

1940: a world on the verge of war

One year before the official start of World War II, Don started school as a five-year-old. He said he really enjoyed Maths, History, Geography, and Woodwork. He enjoyed school and making friends while trying to learn how to spell and read, which were not his favourite subjects. Don remembers how they had to practise air raid drills in case of invasion. "When the alarm was sounded, we all had to get outside, get in a straight line, and quickly walk up the hill to the local reservoir. I enjoyed this as I would miss the spelling and reading classes." This made me giggle!

Although Don has aged a little, his character still shines brightly: a great sense of humour, an optimist, and an unwavering commitment to hard work. In the next instalment of Don's Corner, we'll dive into more stories, including his army day shenanigans, career adventures, and a Prefect Ford purchased for £585 using his rabbit money savings.

Changes to minor variations, new minor customisations and building forms

The Government's key priority for New Zealand's building and construction sector is to make it easier for Kiwis to build affordable homes. This will be achieved by reducing regulatory barriers and streamlining the building consent system.

New and amended building regulations commenced on 30 September 2024 to clarify the definition of a 'minor variation' in relation to building consents and create a definition of a 'minor customisation' for MultiProof approvals.

Building consent Form 2 has also been modified to enable pre-approval of alternative products and/or plans or specifications. These changes will make it easier for people to customise their building designs. Building Consent Authorities (BCAs) will still need to check the proposed building work to ensure it complies with the Building Code, but people won't need to make an application for an amendment to the building consent for most minor, straightforward product or design changes.

Minor change to Form 2 application for PIM and/or building consent

Form 2 has been changed and must be used by all building consent authorities and territorial authorities from 30 September 2024 onwards. The change enables pre-approval of alternative products, plans or specifications. **Read more about Form 2**

Updated guidance for minor variations and MultiProof

MBIE has published updated, detailed guidance on minor variations. **Read new guidance on minor variations**

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has also added new information on MultiProof approvals. This includes a detailed explanation of minor customisations as well as updated case studies and transcripts. **Read updated MultiProof guidance**

Marked gap between perceived and actual health of Kiwi homes, report reveals

In the only national study of its kind for 20 years, nine out of ten Kiwis consider their home to be a "healthy" place to live, even though many still experience cold, damp, condensation and mould, and wish their home was warmer.

The landmark study is collecting data from over 750 households across Aotearoa New Zealand. This includes a survey of 425 households, with 287 of these being monitored for energy usage and indoor conditions.

Data from the household survey and early data from a smaller group of 125 homes monitored over winter 2023 show that homes – especially bedrooms – are warmer than when BRANZ last conducted this study 20 years ago.

However, nearly half (48%) of the survey respondents said they had mould in their home (11% said it was larger than a sheet of A4 paper) and 33% said their home was damp at least some of the time.

Around 1 in 5 said they could see their breath inside and a similar amount said their home was cold enough that they shivered at least some of the time in winter.

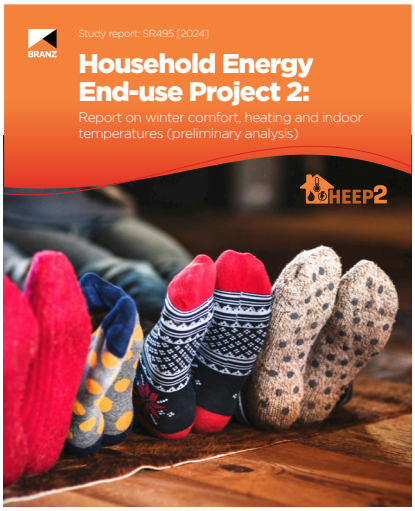
Homes warmer than 20 years ago

While average daytime and evening living room temperatures in the homes studied exceeded the recommended healthy minimum of 18°C, average night-time bedroom temperatures remain too cold, with some significantly below the ideal.

According to BRANZ General Manager Research Dr Chris Litten: "The overall results suggest that home temperatures during winter are better than they were twenty years ago, but issues of damp, cold and mould persist."

BRANZ is extending the scope of its original research to explore how energy can be used more efficiently, making living costs more affordable and reducing carbon emissions, while also making it easier to keep homes warm and dry.

Click here to read the report in full



Resene Construction Systems: Innovation, new market segments and efficiency

With over 30 years in the construction sector, I have to say the past four years have been very much a rollercoaster: from weeks of COVID lockdowns, affectionately referred to as 'mandatory holidays' for those North of the Bombays, through to historic low interest rates and the resulting spending sprees on new stuff.

Most of the 'stuff' was wanted versus needed which, to be fair to those wanting their first home, made complete sense – the cost of living was cheap. The flip side to the days of cheap money is now putting pressure on the entire economy.

Those under 40 years of age generally have not experienced the effects of a recession, or high interest rates since they entered the workforce. I do feel for those who have just entered the first home market, who were stretched with low interest rates and are now facing the very real potential of a mortgagee sale. Not a great start to the market.

But whoever said your first home should be a brand spanking new one? Most of my generation knocked down walls, learned how to paint, put up plasterboard, and even plastered.

Business in these times is about re-setting, understanding what is changing, and how the business looks in the 'potential future'. For us, the past few years have been about innovation, new market segments and efficiency not only with product offers but also with how we make our goods and bring them to market.

Some things can't be adjusted, but are a level playing field for everyone, such as governmental change and international shipping. No one had a choice but to pay cartel rates for imported goods, which were partially absorbed or fully passed onto the consumer.

One of the most important features of our business is our flexibility to adapt to the changing market which saw the introduction of our Intertenancy Walls and Insulated Foundation Systems. We also gained impressive efficiencies in our dry powder manufacturing when we implemented robotic filling, stacking and palletising of our dry powders. Output lifted, and accuracy improved.

Our commitment to innovation ensures that NZIBS members can always look forward to exciting and improved offerings from us. Our technical team are constantly reviewing and testing enhancements along with new solutions that will benefit the built environment.

As always, our successes very much lie in feedback from specifiers, builders, and our contractor network: listening to concerns and then looking for ways to better what is available.

Our systems approach, testing, onsite quality assurance programme, training and limiting supply to those who are qualified and competent to install our systems position us well to support the industry.

Thank you, NZIBS, for your continued support in improving New Zealand's built environment. Now it is time to enjoy a break away with family and friends before we get stuck into 2025.

Merry Christmas everyone - from Mike Olds.

New GIB® Fire Rated Systems Manual 2024

After extensive testing and development, we are pleased to announce an update to our GIB® Fire Rated Systems manual.

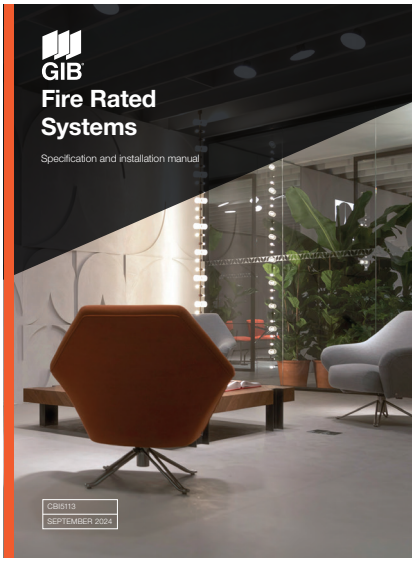
This technical manual, covering fire-rated wall systems, floor/ceiling systems, risers, shafts, ducts, protection of columns and beams, and construction details, is a core resource for designing, detailing and constructing of fire-rated systems in New Zealand.

This update includes a new two-way 90-minute FRR non-loadbearing steel frame wall system with new lining options allowing for a total of 3 layers as opposed to 4 layers.

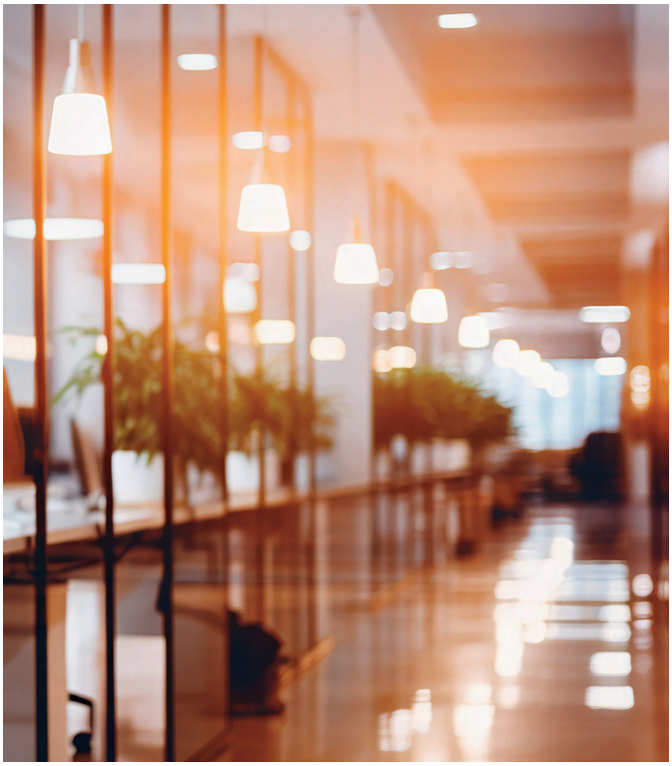
Also, we have developed 2 new systems to help address load-bearing walls within a fire cell that require protection from simultaneous 2-sided fire exposure. We have options for 30 or 60 minutes.

As requested by our customers, we have also developed mass timber encapsulation wall and floor systems. Additionally, we have included construction details for fire-rated boxes/bulkheads and junctions meeting at ComFlor, Double Tee and Stahlton Rib and Infill structural floors. Penetration details for brass wingbacks, shower mixers, structural members, and services through the top plate, as well as additional wall-to-floor/ceiling junction details that better reflect on-site construction methods, are also available.

The focus for this edition has been on simplifying and clarifying information to make it easier for designers and installers to use the GIB® Fire Rated Systems manual correctly and efficiently. Additionally, reducing costs of fire-rated systems and detailing has also been a key focus, resulting in new systems and details that emphasise our commitment to providing the lowest total cost solutions.



Download the updated GIB® Fire Rated Systems manual here.



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Re-roofing solutions

Roofspec Viking
Taking care of detail

It's become apparent when specifying membrane roofing materials for existing flat roofs, stakeholders aren't fully aware of all zthe options available to them.

Simply replacing the existing membrane or overlaying the existing material can be a compliant way of re-roofing your building without the cost and hassle of destroying, rebuilding or uplifting the whole roof assembly.

Virtually any existing roofing material, including metal, can be overlaid (provided the substrate is structurally sound, and over 90% of Viking Roofspec materials can be used as an overlay option, allowing old roofs to remain in place – minimising noise, dust, traffic pollution, and unnecessary waste in landfills.

If the existing membrane is still doing its job – i.e. sheds water, doesn't pond and is not leaking — but is tired and past the building code's minimum durability period of 15 years, then an appropriate membrane can often be laid over the top without the expense and labour of removing the old material*. Viking offers membrane-only solutions including Enviroclad FBS – a fleece-backed membrane that goes over old bitumen roofs amongst others. Additionally, a Viking WarmRoof; consisting of rigid polyiso insulation panels waterproofed by a CodeMark certified Viking waterproofing membrane system, is a practical solution for overlaying a tired, existing low-slope roof.

Another refurbishment method is membrane replacement – i.e. removing the old membrane and replacing it with a comparable material onto the existing substrate. This method often doesn't require building consent,
as you're simply replacing the material with a like-for-like system*. Despite the inconvenience and cost of having to remove the existing material, this solution still allows for the structure of the roof to remain in place. No rebuilding is required.

All Viking membrane systems are backed by a robust 20-year warranty and can only be installed by a Viking Approved Applicator.

For more information regarding re-roofing visit: **www.vikingroofspec.co.nz** and/or phone **0800 729 799** to talk with one of our technical experts.

(* conditions apply)

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