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Christchurch - A damaged pavement

NZ Specialists

When considering migration there are so many questions that need to be answered. We will try, but if we don't know the answer then we will probably know someone who does. Some of the topics other migrants have asked for information on include:-

- Buying a House
- Renting property on your arrival
- Banking
- Tax & Trusts laws (UK to NZ)
- Child care and schooling
- Moving money to NZ
- Moving Pets to NZ
- Relocating your belongings
- Buying and Driving a car in NZ
- Kiwisaver (NZ pension scheme)
- Tax advice on keeping a UK rental property

If you would like information regarding the above topics or you have other topics to suggest then please email us and request the info. We have teamed up with a number of specialist providers who have built businesses helping people like you.

New Zealand market update

Welcome to the latest Catalyst newsletter! I hope you all enjoyed your bank holiday; we have a long weekend approaching to celebrate the Queen's Birthday and so most are looking forward to a lie in on Monday 6th. As we head towards winter we're getting our fair share of mixed weather but the ski season starts in the next few weeks so everyone's attention is now on the snow reports.

With the winter comes the drop in temperature and our thoughts are with those in Christchurch who are still battling with a broken city and difficult conditions. On a recent trip down to the city we were encouraged by the resilient attitude shown by the locals in such adverse conditions; that said everyone deserves to stay warm at night. Andy will go into more detail in his piece on our visit but three key decisions will be made in the next few months that will shape the way the reconstruction goes from here.

- **Building Design Codes:** a decision is pending on the level of new design codes for the city. Obviously there is a need to make buildings more resilient to earthquakes, especially vertical acceleration, and once this is decided then the commercial builders can go forward with confidence.
- **Land remediation:** with so much of Christchurch suffering from liquefaction extensive geotechnical reports are being produced to show which areas of the city are suitable for construction. The information in these reports will also confirm if some badly damaged suburbs are relocated to other areas.
- **Infrastructure:** all the main contractors are in place to complete \$2b worth of infrastructure

work around the city. Once they know what work they'll be responsible for they will know their staffing requirements; hopefully this will be confirmed soon.

Until these three decisions are made the city is on hold; a frustrating situation but one that hopefully won't last for long!

Throughout the rest of New Zealand the horizon is starting to look brighter. The \$1.6b Waterview Project was signed off this week in Auckland. This is one of the largest civil projects in New Zealand for some years and with a start date some time before the end of the year the industry is holding its breath to see who wins the contract. Needless to say whoever is successful will be recruiting heavily in order to have the staff available for the start date. The \$450m Tauranga Eastern Link is also due to start, a project that will take 4 years to complete. Both projects are Roads of National Significance and part of the government plan to move the country out of recession.

In the building sector the "leaky building problem" looks to be coming to some resolution which will mean a significant increase in construction work (commercial, institutional and residential) in Auckland and other regions. Also, in its latest budget, the government pledged \$1.6b to infrastructure over the next 4 years. This money will be used in a variety of areas including rail, schools and broadband development.

All of this promises a good future in the industry and in time significant opportunities for overseas based professionals looking to work in New Zealand. As always contact us if you're planning a visit or making the move and we'll do all we can to help.





Boom ahead for Christchurch

PM John Key assures

Prime Minister John Key has rejected "Armageddon" scenarios predicted for Christchurch.

At a speech to the regional National Party conference at the Copthorne Hotel Commodore today, Prime Minister John Key said he was tired of predictions by the Labour Party,

"Our good friends in the Labour Party, who want to exaggerate everything, run around telling you the worst sort of Armageddon picture," he said.

Labour had predicted there would be 20,000 people left unemployed because of the disaster.

"Actually there's about 1000," he said.

No-one really knew how many people would leave Christchurch due to the earthquake, said Key.

He believed in the long-term more people would come to live in the city than before the earthquake, as they were attracted by a construction boom.

"Economic activity here is going to be enormous. Basically you are spending \$25bn over a five year period, that's the equivalent of the entire construction industry around New Zealand every year for five years. It's going to be phenomenal," he said.

"I think you are going to see a lot more people trained. I think you will see internal migration. Look at something like EQC, they've gone from having 29 people to something like 1500; that is a growth business."

Internationally people would also be attracted to work opportunities coming from the re-build.

"After 10 years of re-build, do you really think they are going to pack up and leave? Not a dog's show," said Key.

The \$5.5bn Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Fund announced in the budget this week proved the Government's commitment to the re-build, he said.

Information Source:

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/business/rebuilding-christchurch/5038288/Key-Boom-ahead-for-Christchurch>

James Parker

Case study of moving to NZ

Current Employer: RCP, Christchurch

James first contacted Catalyst after arriving in New Zealand as part of his travels. He had a Working Holiday Visa and was looking for 3 – 6 months work that would finance his stay in the country. After our initial conversation on the phone we spoke with clients in Christchurch who were keen to interview James once he arrived in the city. He interviewed on the 11th and was immediately offered a temporary assignment which he started the following day.

Q. What inspired you to consider moving with your family to New Zealand?

A. *I made the move solo. The current situation in Christchurch is truly unique, and the opportunity to be part of the demolition and rebuild of a whole city was something I wanted to be involved in. This, coupled with New Zealand's natural beauty and adventure culture, made the move a very easy choice.*

Q. Has New Zealand lived up to your expectations?

A. *I would say it has exceeded my expectations, work is hard but the experience is invaluable. The social life has been great, there is an atmosphere of "comradery" and anyone working on recovery projects is very well received.*

Q. How has your life changed since moving to New Zealand?

A. *Only to some extent – New Zealand is still enough like the UK that you life will not change that extremely but New Zealand offers a greater lifestyle.*

Q. What one thing would you have done differently?

A. *Nothing. I took a bit of time out to have a look around the country, I would definitely recommend that.*

Q. What one thing do you wish you had known about before moving?

A. *I'd have to get up so early to watch the football!*

Q. What advice would you pass to someone commencing the process?

A. *Make sure you have thought about the process then put all your energy into settling in.*

Q. Looking back with hindsight, do think you have made the right move?

A. *Yes, I would recommend it to anyone thinking about making the move.*

Useful Facts:

1 st Contact -	31 st March 2011
1 st Interview -	11 th April 2011
Job Offer -	11 th April 2011

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RICS

the mark of
property
professionalism
worldwide

Oceania

About RICS Oceania

RICS (Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors) Oceania represents: Australia, New Zealand, American Samoa (USA), Norfolk Island (Aust), Fiji, East Timor, French Polynesia (Fr), Guam (USA), Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, New Caledonia (Fr), Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau, Northern Mariana Islands (USA), Palau (USA), Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands (UK), Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna Islands (Fr), Samoa

The Head Office of RICS Oceania is based in Sydney and there are offices in several other Australian states and in Auckland, New Zealand. RICS has these main roles within the Oceania property sector:

- To maintain the highest standards of education and training;
- To protect consumers through strict regulation of ethics and standards;
- To advise organisations, such as governments and regional boards.

Migrating to NZ

There are many issues to consider when thinking about migrating to Australia or New Zealand. These include:

- Will you gain employment, what is the market like?
- How much can you expect to be paid?
- Will your professional qualification be recognised?
- Will the area of practice that you have been involved in elsewhere be similar or very different here?
- What licenses will you need to work?
- What employment or residency visa do you need and are you entitled to?

All of these questions and more depend on a whole range of factors including:

- What area of work you have experience in;
- What discipline of RICS or RICS Chartered Designation you have attained;
- What state, territory or country you will be moving to;
- What type of work you wish to undertake.

The RICS attempt to answer the main questions that members raise but some questions can only be answered by those directly involved in the market.

Immigration VISA options:

http://www.rics.org/site/download_feed.aspx?fileID=8818&fileExtension=PDF

Information Source: <http://www.rics.org>

What topics would you like to see more information on? Drop us an email (mverdon@catalystjobs.co.nz) and we'll be sure to include it in upcoming newsletters!

Also please understand that it is not often possible to answer generic questions like 'Will I get a job' or 'Can you advise me which firms are recruiting' - thats a question for Catalyst Recruitment!

Will you be 'recognised' in New Zealand?

RICS is working hard to raise the profile of our members in Australia and New Zealand, through running events, government, media and lobbying on specific issues.

The term 'Surveyor' is not used in a Property context in New Zealand. Property professionals are either valuers, agents, managers, developers, asset managers, fund managers etc. There is less of a notion of a general practitioner than in the UK. Quantity Surveyors and Land Surveyors use the surveying label as do Building Control Surveyors (who are known in Australia as Building Surveyors.)

When dealing with government agencies or the immigration department (who often seek advice on employment label/classification) it is important to bear this in mind. While there are some hurdles to overcome in migrating to New Zealand there are many benefits and opportunities. Of the c.2000 Chartered Members here more than a half will have qualified elsewhere in the world and migrated here.

Any other queries:

info@rics.org.au

Christchurch visit May 16th-17th 2011

First of all we should explain why the trip to Christchurch came about. The two Directors of Catalyst (Andy and Phil) are originally from the UK and are based in Auckland. We are absolutely passionate about adding talent to NZ's talent pool. That means bringing people like you over to NZ. We did it ourselves in 96 and 03 and know what it takes although we were both single at the time, we both ended up marrying Kiwi girls and have Kiwi children. Through our advertising in the UK, we attracted the attention of Number 8 Recruitment owned by Peter Hart and Zinzan Brooke. Peter, Phil and I are inconsequential hard workers, but Zinzan is an All Black legend and a household name in New Zealand. If you didn't know that, you should perhaps reconsider moving all this way to live in a rugby mad culture.



Phil, Peter, Andy and Zinzan

When Number 8 read a one of our press releases about the Christchurch Rebuild, they contacted us and expressed a really heartfelt desire to assist in any way they could to help with Christchurch – in effect they felt impotent in London not being able to help.

A hastily arranged trip occurred which needed to be squeezed in before Zinzan's wife gave birth to their 6th child (last Thursday 26th). We allocated two days which included 7 organised client meetings and one huge evening function where many clients attended.

These are our findings...



Monday 16th May

Since our return

The NZ Herald published a very interesting story...

On current estimates the building and construction industry is going to face nearly a doubling of its present workload from today's value of nearly \$8 billion a year.

This translates into a huge and rapid demand for specialist trades to support such an increase in an industry that at present employs about 77,000 people.

It will be a demand that also embraces a requirement for university-qualified management students with planning and supervisory skills that can be used in or adapted to the requirements of on- and off-site project management.

Industry projections that are still being refined tell us that the demand will encompass thousands of electricians, carpenters and builders, builders' labourers, painters, tilers and floorers, plumbers and drainlayers, plasterers, bricklayers, glaziers and concreters.

In traditional professional areas quantity surveyors, engineers and designers will be in demand. The numbers vary in each category but the country is likely to need in excess of 4000 new qualified painters, 3000 new electricians, 4000 plumbers and drainlayers, 3000 tilers and floorers and many roofers, glaziers and plasterers.

We were not sure what we would find when we flew into Christchurch. The city was clearly visible down to the South East as we circled to land and I had a weird sense of intruding on something much bigger than myself – knowing that 165 people had died in the centre of those buildings. It also made me think of the picture of Christchurch taken from the port hills, moments after the quake.



Source <http://tinyurl.com/Christchurch-moments-after>

Once we landed we drove from the airport to our first meeting a journey that takes you through suburbs which are virtually unaffected. The biggest difference to a regular visitor is the rough road surface that was previously as flat as you could imagine. You also see the odd fractured garden wall and the odd repaired roof where chimneys had toppled in the first quake. You sort of feel – where is the real damage – this can't be it.

Our first visit was with a major house builder who has been given the opportunity to build 1000 new homes. Initially – new suburbs were envisaged, but many people with badly damaged houses do not want to move – so now the plan is to provide temporary housing in the front garden while the original house is repaired or knocked down and rebuilt. This meeting also gave us the first hint of negativity towards the speed of government response and genuine disharmony towards the EQC and their appointed contractor who reportedly plan to bring 5000 workers in and house them in containers in Amberley!!! You get the feeling

that Cantabrians are very protective about their patch – especially where the Aucklanders are concerned and 'unsubstantiated' rumours are rife.

We walked away from our first meeting knowing that to build 1000 new houses, these guys will need plenty of administrative staff (QS and Project Managers) as well as trades and semi-skilled staff. Exactly how many are required and when depends on when the Government body CERA (Christchurch Earthquake Rebuild Agency) starts releasing work. They have a government contract to build 1000 houses, but they have 25 tradesmen on stand by waiting for the button to be pushed. Their best guess is that they expect to double their team in 2 months and double again in 6 months.

We also hear that the Irish and UK workers will be welcomed with open arms while the Aucklanders who are not particularly trusted in this part of the country may not receive the same reception.

The other useful piece of information is that the locals are leaning towards a new CBD that should be rebuilt with a general 3 storey plan – retail at ground level, with two layers of residential above – keeping people living in the CBD and reopening businesses.

Our second meeting is with a commercial contractor who are the first to admit that they are actually a bit quiet, but everything will change within 3 months, and again within 6 months and again within 12 months. The demolition figures are talked about for the first time today. With 900 commercial buildings to be demolished within the cordoned off CBD and a further 300 outside of the cordon, they expect to be busy, but at the moment – if it wasn't for 7 supermarkets being built they would be struggling.

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Since our return ...Continued

The rider is clearly explained by one of our LinkedIn group members.

'Guys, just to fill you in on the picture here in Christchurch, NZ. While you may all be under the impression that because there has been a lot of damage to the city, there is an immediate need for skilled construction management staff, which any logical person would presume. However the story on the ground is somewhat different.

After the major damage in Feb and further damage in April, the first thing I was making safe, and to this end the CBD is still in the "red zone" i.e. closed until further notice. This is to allow unsafe buildings to be demolished, and the rest to be made stable. CERA, a government department has been set up to oversee the re-building of the city, and we all know what that mean - meetings, consultations, meetings, reports meetings and more meetings.

The Christchurch City Council is holding open forums with the community from this next weekend to be able to establish the way forward for the city, the report that will emanate from these consultations will finally be presented to the government in Dec 2011. So, don't think anything will be happening too quickly.

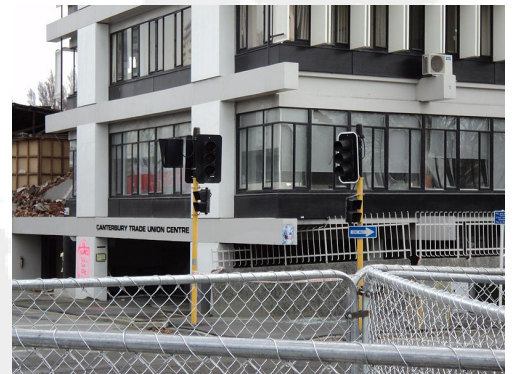
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We came away from the meeting with a real sense of a tidal wave of skill and labour shortage about to hit the market. These guys were going to need Quantity Surveyors, Project Managers and plenty of skilled people for their precast concrete plant next door. In addition they highlighted a huge shortage in the trades and semi-skilled area including Carpenters (finishing and framing), Concrete workers (shuttering and placement), steel erectors and roofers (iron sheets). A huge shopping list – we were starting to look sideways at each other as we comprehend the scale.

We then took a quick trip around the city. Nobody is allowed in the CBD, but you can approach the metal fenced cordon and look in from the outside. Firstly we had to get there and passed these side streets...



Then we had the first sight of the cordon and some of the buildings. 900 of the 3,300 buildings will be deconstructed.



The first building may look like it has sunk at the front left – it actually has! The second building has dropped by half a metre at the nearest corner crushing the railing. The third photo shows the cordon fencing and one of the first cleared sites.



Since our return

...Continued

Having said that there are major works going on at present to "fix" houses, and if you are in that market there may be opportunities for you here. There is also a limited amount of small commercial works starting.

However you must understand that the pecking order for employment here is as follows, firstly Christchurch residents, then Canterbury residents, then NZ citizens and if they are really up the creek without a paddle they "may" look outside NZ. You must also appreciate that NZ has had a bad time in the depression, so the work in CHCH has attracted the construction sector workers of all persuasions from the whole of NZ, who are thus far coping with the load.

I'm not wanting to sound negative, or put you off coming to beautiful NZ, just wanting to give you a true picture, and get you to realise that they don't "need" you. If you don't get a reply or response as quickly as you may expect in the UK, it is basically because there are a hell of a lot of people just like you looking for work in NZ. So that long ramble is my take on the situation here in Quake City.

Good luck'

Our next meeting was with Christchurch City Council who explained the huge issues associated with the rebuild project. There are two major issues for people. How badly is my house damaged? And how badly is my land damaged? Everyone is awaiting the publishing of the geotechnical report that will allow CERA to put some red lines on the map to indicate which pieces of land can be used for rebuild purposes and which will be cleared for park land. A huge component of this report is based on the extent of liquefaction that occurred during the shakes. Some of the Eastern suburbs may be non-residential moving forward. Some areas may need coffer dams as they are now remarkably close to the new water line on the rivers – through land sinking, not water rising.

It is estimated that 35% of the cities infrastructure will need to be rebuilt. Some sectors are now so bad that it is estimated it will cost 120% of renewal to repair – hence whole sectors will need to be rebuilt from scratch. There are also massive projects required in the utilities sector to replace the temporarily erected power cables.

The council also commented about other employers poaching local staff leaving the council's team short of at least 10 staff – an issue that could worsen.

Our next meeting was with the company who are project managing the programme for the deconstruction process. It can not be easy programming for a unique project such as this, while suffering the ongoing red tape from insurance companies and government agencies. Building owners are being urged to make tough calls on 50:50 buildings to take advantage of the no go zone. As soon as the CBD is reopened, it will cost a lot more money to knock a building down.

Once the buildings are removed the whole underground infrastructure will need to be replaced. It literally involves a complete rebuild from the under-ground up.

Our final meeting on the Monday was with a house builder that has won a government contract to build 1500 temporary houses for those whose houses are uninhabitable. They too are being stymied by red tape and are waiting for the go ahead. They had built 20 houses in 2 weeks in their yard which were ready to be shipped to site and dropped into gardens, but which site is now the compelling question.

At his meeting it was commented that the Cantabrian carpet layers recently announced that the city required an influx of over 1000 carpet layers alone. They had pulled in 62 staff to build the houses but had sent them back to repair work while they awaited government decisions. They were expecting the sector to become heavily understaffed as the projects start. They expected their workload to double every 6 months for 2 years. They will be chewing our arms off for staff from Quantity Surveyor and Project Managers right through the trades to Hammer Hands.

At 5:45pm we piled back in to the struggling Ford Falcon and drove straight to the evening function which started at 6pm. This was an opportunity for around 20 to 30 Sub Contractors to meet Zinzan, share a beer and tell us about the opportunities for construction professionals, skilled trades people and consulting engineers for this 5 to 10 year project. The evening went famously, but did set up a slower start to Tuesday.

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Tuesday 17th May

Tuesday was all about the Civil Engineering Contractors. We met two clients who were excited and petrified about the future (in terms of recruitment). Both of the clients we met are part of the Alliance formed by the 5 main Contractors who after the second earthquake have agreed a 20% each way split on the work, with 40% being committed to the smaller local contractors from the Canterbury region. Nobody knows what work each company will be allocated until September 1st, but ramping up is a priority. One Contractor reckoned they needed to move from a team of 100 to a team of 400. The other estimated a need for 300 to 400 people. The key focus will be deep drainage, utilities, resurfacing and civil ground works. Not only do they need 'arms and legs' there will clearly be a significant need for leadership as these operations take on a completely different nature.

One figure that astounded our team is that the annual budget for 'deep drainage' in Christchurch is around 3km of replacement pipes per year. A conservative estimate is that 300km will need to be replaced as a result of the earthquakes (but nobody will really know until it is fully explored).

We returned to Auckland a bit stunned at the extent of what needs to happen. Our trip was all about gauging the level of response we need to provide along with the timing. We now know that our calculation of 1500 professionals was probably a 100% underestimate – 3000 would be closer. We also know that over 20,000 Trades and Semi-skilled staff will be needed.

Timing is the question that still needs to be answered. The companies we met believed that short term they could cope by moving people around the country, but this would be a very short term strategy. If someone from Auckland moves down – they will ultimately want to move back in around 6 months.

Therefore the companies we spoke with are keen to identify and secure international talent from the overseas market, but at this stage they just do not know when. Some of the clients have some knowledge of how to go about it, but every company we spoke to was very keen to tap into our capability.

Since our return the NZ Herald published a very interesting story...

On current estimates the building and construction industry is going to face nearly a doubling of its present workload from today's value of nearly \$8 billion a year.

This translates into a huge and rapid demand for specialist trades to support such an increase in an industry that at present employs about 77,000 people.

It will be a demand that also embraces a requirement for university-qualified management students with planning and supervisory skills that can be used in or adapted to the requirements of on- and off-site project management.

Industry projections that are still being refined tell us that the demand will encompass thousands of electricians, carpenters and builders, builders' labourers, painters, tilers and floorers, plumbers and drainlayers, plasterers, bricklayers, glaziers and concreters.

In traditional professional areas quantity surveyors, engineers and designers will be in demand.

The numbers vary in each category but the country is likely to need in excess of 4000 new qualified painters, 3000 new electricians, 4000 plumbers and drainlayers, 3000 tilers and floorers and many roofers, glaziers and plasterers.