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State of the Nation

Welcome to the latest edition of the Catalyst newsletter and the state of the nation. All eyes are on Christchurch as we await the release of the city blueprint and the potential green light to start the rebuild of the city.

The construction team visited Christchurch on 19th July and caught up with clients and candidates who have recently moved to the city. I was able to visit the Red Zone thanks to March Construction and was given a tour of the final stages of the demolition. Having visited Christchurch many times prior to the earthquakes, I knew my way around the city centre quite well, yet I found myself quite disorientated this time. Driving through the checkpoint (still manned by the army) we entered Cathedral Square and parked facing the remains of the shattered cathedral. With so many of the surrounding buildings gone or in the process of demolition it was hard to remember the square in its former glory and were it not for the still standing Chalice sculpture it would be difficult to confirm your location.

As we drove around the now reduced Red Zone it became clear that although there are a number of large buildings still standing, once demolition has been completed, few will eventually remain leaving a fairly blank canvas. It is really only a visit to the heart of the red zone that gives you a good understanding of how big the rebuild task will be.

Building Construction. The construction team returned to Auckland with good news with many construction contractors gearing up for some significant recruitment in the near future. Initially the requirement will be for Project Managers and Quantity Surveyors and so any candidates interested should get in touch.

Civil Contracting. After a brief flurry of activity the civil sector has calmed again as the winter season sets in and the flow of work slows. However all of my clients confirmed that there will be a significant need in the near future for a variety of roles.

Consulting Engineers. Andy, Mireille and Sam visited Christchurch on 26th July and met with most of the

key players. Our clients continue to distribute the work nationally and in some cases internationally, however, the desire remains to build local capability. Significant demand remains for Geotechnical and Structural Engineers with seismic experience. In addition, we gained a deeper understanding of the W&WW sector. Currently there is a need for Senior staff (8+ years) to deliver some of the more complex three waters engineering solutions. The demand will then continue to grow with the Intermediate level Engineers. Therefore – if you are a Senior level operator – now is your time!!

Finally - The CCDU releases the city blueprint on Monday 30th and will hopefully provide a way forward for developers within the CBD. According to clients involved in the preparation of this document it will be the definitive plan for the new city centre, allowing developers the opportunity to plan for the work ahead. As soon as the details are released Catalyst will be posting the information through various media sources including Linked In, Twitter and our WordPress blog. Join up or follow us and get the latest information on New Zealand sent directly to you.

Linked-In

www.linkedin.com/groups?home=&gid=2158919&trk=anet Ug_hm
www.linkedin.com/groups?gid=3908560&trk=hb_side_g

Twitter

<https://twitter.com/catalystrecnz>

WordPress

<http://catalystrecruit.wordpress.com/>

As always keep in touch with us and let us know of any plans to visit or move to New Zealand and we'll do everything we can to help.



Rebuilding Christchurch

Everyone is waiting for Christchurch's rebuild-fuelled boom to set the local economy alight. There are plenty of signs that things are warming up, but it's still too early to say the good times have arrived.

Christchurch is spending money and hiring people like it's a boom town.

Canterbury growth, based on factors including jobs, spending and consents, in the past three months was up 8.6 per cent on the same period last year, according to the National Bank composite index on regional economic activity – this is growth not seen since the 1990s.

Venture out at night and it is clear that anything open in the hospitality sector is doing well.

June's Paymark figures show Canterbury spending rose 6.8 per cent on the same month a year ago to \$404 million.

Trade Me figures show our job market continues to grow, leaving the rest of the country behind, particularly in architecture (up 148 per cent compared with this time last year) and office and administration roles (up 118 per cent).

Building consent applications are going through the roof across the board.

Christchurch City Council said its applications more than doubled between April and May and it was now issuing about 30 a day. Waimakariri and Selwyn councils report similar numbers.

But despite all this, economists say it's too soon to bring out the party balloons. Instead, it may be more a case that we had hit rock-bottom and there is nowhere to go but up.

The harsh reality, despite the promising figures, is that we are still far behind where we would be if the earthquakes had never happened. People may be more willing to open their wallets than a year ago, but it's not translating into a flood of hospitality and accommodation jobs.

Fletcher EQR is repairing about 100 homes a day but still has 80 per cent of the work to do. Small time builders say they are struggling to get by while they wait for residential rebuild work to get going.

The CBD cordon will remain in place until at least early next year, however the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority says this could change if more buildings were added to the demolition list.

The business community is pinning its hopes on the Central City Development Unit's (CCDU) blueprint for the central city, due out at the end of the month. It will undoubtedly provide more certainty for investors and lead to greater job opportunities, but it won't happen overnight.

Then the big question mark is whether the worst of our seismic activity is actually over. Geologists are also predicting a 10 per cent chance of another magnitude 6 or above earthquake in the region in the next year.

Acting Labour earthquake recovery spokesman Clayton Cosgrove said there was no denying there were positive signs, but it depended on the industry. "If you're a pub, you're going really well, the drainlayer is going gangbusters, the builder was but isn't now. Fletcher's are doing well because they have the monopoly.

"We are going to have a world-class city eventually. We are almost two years down the track, you've got to ask yourself... when is the gun going to go off?"

Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce chief executive Peter Townsend said the region was on the cusp.

The CCDU announcement at the end of this month would provide more certainty for commercial investors, then things would get into high gear in three to six months, he said.

Christchurch Mayor Bob Parker said it was never going to be "a gun going off", but the framework was falling into place. "We always thought that last winter was going to be the hardest of our lives. But in fact, it wasn't. This has been the hardest winter.

"We are so much closer to the process ramping up in a way that is apparent. I'm more positive than ever now."

Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee said it was important not to lose sight of the enormity of the job. He was regularly updated with "the numbers" from the various government-accountable organisations and said the general overview showed Canterbury was doing well.

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Rebuilding Christchurch - article continued from page 2

Individual problems often detracted from the big picture, he said. The work by Fletcher EQR would become more consistent as its capacity increased.

"I've always maintained it would be a gradual ramp-up. We are on the initial steps on that ramp," he said. "We are only seeing the earliest signs that we are going to have a very buoyant economy in the near future".

Shamubeel Eaquad, principal economist for New Zealand Institute of Economic Research, said the worst was over, but the rebound to date was still "very low level".

The rebuild would drive economic growth, but it would need offices, stores and other buildings to be back before normal economic activity could resume. There was also the question of where the workers would live.

"It's not just the rebuild. It's the return to life as usual. It will take some time before we are back to the earthquake level," he said. "The politicians will be trying to do something specific like rebuilding the CBD. In reality, most businesses will go elsewhere and do alternative things. They can't wait 10 years for the CBD to be rebuilt."

Robin Clements, a senior economist for UBS, said the one thing we could be sure of was that things were not getting worse.

The council building consent numbers were a positive sign, but it would take those numbers to reach "historical levels" to say the "ramp-up" was truly under way.

Source: The Press, 18th July, Joelle Dally

Nick Haley Case study of moving to NZ

Nick first approached Catalyst in April of 2011. He and his wife had been looking at a move to New Zealand for some time, and had been waiting for the right career opportunity to present itself. Phil and Nick were in regular contact over those next few months, Nick's patience paid off and when an opportunity presented itself with Fulton Hogan, Nick was ready and prepared for the move. Nick joined Fulton Hogan's Christchurch team as M&E Project Manager, his first day being February 6th 2012

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

My wife and I had always fancied living in NZ but felt that there was not a long term opportunity up until now. We also have family in the Auckland area and Great Barrier Island which we have not seen in years.

Has New Zealand lived up to your expectations?

We did not really know what to expect so came with an open mind. There a lot of things to like. The sun, the great outdoor lifestyle. The people seem quite relaxed about things in general. Also there doesn't appear to be a class system here which makes a refreshing change.

How has your life changed since moving to New Zealand?

I have started gardening. I never used to have the time to garden. Also we have bought a campervan. I never thought that would happen either!

What one thing would you have done differently?

Nothing. Our move to NZ was planned very well. If we could turn back the clock though I would recommend a stopover to break up the journey- if the budget allows.

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

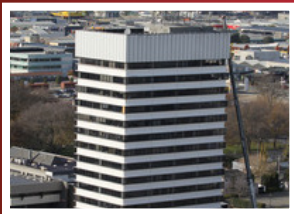
New Zealand is an expensive place to live and the Christchurch rental situation is very tough. We underestimated this but with persistence its achievable to find somewhere.

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Quake damaged office block

By Kurt Bayer
8:19 PM Monday Jul 16, 2012



The earthquake damaged Radio Network House on Worcester Street, Christchurch.
Photo / Geoff Sloan

A multi-storey office block will be blown up in quake-hit Christchurch's first controlled demolition next month.

The 14-storey Radio Network House building in Worcester St, which housed Newstalk ZB, will be razed with an explosive implosion.

The controlled demolition, which has been approved by the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA), will be the first of its kind in the city since authorities began the massive task of bringing down the hundreds of quake-damaged buildings.

Most of the tall buildings have been brought down floor-by-floor, in a painstakingly slow process mainly because demolition contractors are working in confined city spaces that rule out implosions.

Scheduled for Sunday, August 5, the potentially spectacular event is expected to attract a huge crowd of onlookers.

Radio Network House was badly damaged in the magnitude-6.3 February 22, 2011 quake and engineers ruled it unsafe.

Nick Hayley – Case Study of moving to NZ - article continued from page 3

What advice would you pass to someone commencing the process?

Sort your own visa out and don't stress about it (like I did). Make sure you fully understand what your costs will be to get here. If you do not know anyone in NZ book a furnished holiday bach for as long as possible as your belongings can take three months to arrive. This will give you time to seek out a suitable rental. Top Tip- you can get a mortgage even though you are on a work visa!

Looking back with hindsight, do think you have made the right move for your family?

Definitely. No regrets at all.

Useful facts	
1st interview to offer	83 days
Offer to arrival	97 days
Time since arrival	170

No baby boom and fewer sheep: Myths busted

If you thought New Zealand was in the middle of a baby boom, think again.

Perhaps you've heard that almost half of all New Zealanders will soon be non-European. You'd be wrong.

Or perhaps you still believe the one about New Zealand having 20 sheep for every human. Wrong again.

Statistics NZ demographers have analysed 17 common "myths" about the population and found 12 are false.

Only one is completely true - that more women are remaining childless. The other four can be summed up as "maybe", "not quite", "partly true" and "it depends".

Senior demographer Kim Dunstan said the agency drew up the list of "population myth-busters" after seeing all in the media at various times.

"We are on the lookout for ways to promote population as part of our role in terms of promoting the use and understanding of statistics," he said.

The term "mini-baby-boom" has been widely used since the number of births jumped from 54,000 in 2002 to 64,300 in 2008, the highest for 37 years.

But the agency says the average number of children each woman will have in her lifetime rose only marginally, from 1.9 in 2002 to 2.2 in 2008, and has since dropped to 2.04.

"In 1961, the birth rate was around 4.3 births per woman," it says.

"If the 1961 birth rates applied today we would have had

around 112,000 births in 2011. In fact we had only 61,400. With the current birth rate only just reaching replacement level (2.1), we cannot justify the claim that New Zealand is having a baby boom."

The myth-busters say the idea that almost half the population will soon be non-European stems from ethnic projections that count people with mixed ethnicity more than once, under multiple ethnicities.

Official projections show the number of Asians will jump from 10 per cent of the population at the 2006 census to 16 per cent by 2026, when they will equal the number of Maori.

The number of Pacific people will grow from 7 per cent to 10 per cent.

Add those three together for 2026 and it totals 42 per cent - giving the almost half "non-European" figure.

But the same projections also show that 70 per cent of the population in 2026 will be European, down from 77 per cent in 2006 but still dominant.

The explanation is that 12 per cent will be of mixed ethnicities.

The latest birth figures suggest that ethnic mixing is increasing - 15,831 (26 per cent) of the 60,860 babies born in the year to March this year had more than one ethnicity.

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No baby boom and fewer sheet: Myths busted - article continued from page 4

Only 5249 (31 per cent) of the 17,207 babies with Maori ethnicity were solely Maori, 50 per cent of Pacific babies were solely Pacific, 68 per cent of European babies were solely European; and 72 per cent of Asian babies were solely Asian.

Other babies had every possible ethnic combination, including 105 who belong to all four main ethnic groups.

Statistics NZ says it was true that New Zealand had roughly 20 sheep for every person in New Zealand in 1982 - when the country had 70.3 million sheep and 3.2 million people.

But sheep numbers have plunged to 31.1 million, while humans have increased to 4.4 million.

That means we now have only seven sheep for each one of us.

But the analysts say it may be true that about one million New Zealanders live overseas - if overseas-born children and non-NZ-born NZ citizens are included.

They discovered the idea of a "seven-year itch" in marriages is more like a four-year itch based on the peak divorce rates.

And they say it is only "partly true" that many expatriate New Zealanders came home after the 9/11 New York terror bombing, and the question of whether Christchurch overtook Wellington's population before last year's earthquake depends on how you define the two cities.

Fact or fiction?

NZ has 3m people and 60m sheep: **Fiction**

Sheep numbers peaked at 70.3m in 1982, when we had 3.2m people. But we now have only 31.1m sheep and 4.4m people.

More women are remaining childless: **Fact**

The proportion of women aged 45 to 49 years who were childless has risen from 9 per cent in 1981 to 13 per cent in 2006.

NZ is in the middle of a baby boom: **Fiction**

The average number of children each woman can expect in her lifetime fell from 4.3 in 1961 to less than 2 around the year 2000. It rose slightly to 2.18 in 2008 but by March this year it is 2.04.

NZ women have their first child at age 30: **Fiction**

The median age for women giving birth last year was 30, but the median age for having a first child was around 28.

Almost half of all Kiwis will soon be non-European: **Fiction**

By 2026, 16 per cent will be Maori, 16 per cent Asian and 10 per cent Pacific - but 70 per cent will still be European or be mixed race.

The average woman lives six years longer than the average man: **Fiction**

While true in the 1980s, the gap has closed to 3.7 years. On current death rates, a baby boy born today can expect to live 79.1 years and a baby girl 82.8 years.

Half of all marriages end in divorce: **Fiction**

There are roughly 20,000 marriages and 10,000 divorces every year, but only 35 per cent of couples who married in 1986 divorced before their 25th anniversaries in 2011.

Couples tend to divorce after seven years: **Fiction**

The peak divorce rate is only four years after marriage and divorce becomes steadily less likely with every year after that.

There's a brain drain: **Fiction**

On average over the past 15 years we've lost 300 labourers a year, and net losses of most other unskilled groups, but we've gained 1570 professionals a year because of our skills-based immigration policy.

NZ's population is drifting north: **Fiction**

A net inflow to Auckland up to 1996 has reversed. Since 2001 there has been a net outflow of people from Auckland to the rest of the country, although Auckland still gains more from overseas.

At least 1m Kiwis live overseas: **Maybe**

There are 483,000 NZ-born people in Australia, about 58,000 NZ-born in Britain and 73,000 in the rest of the world, a total of 614,000. But you could easily get to around 1m if you count New Zealanders' children and NZ citizens who were not NZ-born.

Source: Simon Collins – www.herald.co.nz, 27 June 2012.

www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10815690