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State of the nation – Heading in the right direction

Welcome to the Catalyst state of the nation for the month of August. Spring has arrived in New Zealand with the South Island getting a last icy blast and the North Island suffering its fair share of showers. Hopefully this will all pass and the sun will start to shine again soon! Wellingtonians will be looking forward to the passing of the spate of earthquakes they've been suffering recently. Once again a peaceful afternoon was disrupted last week with another shake that had buildings evacuated. ---- Again there were no injuries and only limited cosmetic damage to the city, a testament to the protection work done through the 80's and 90's when it was expected for Wellington to get the "big one" not Christchurch! That said I'm sure the crane operator 30 stories up wasn't thinking about protection work when his cab was swaying like a ride at a fairground!

Little has changed in the past month in New Zealand, very much the norm during the winter. That said it is enlightening listening to the different opinions from clients in the industry. Across the board there is talk of an increased number of tenders being worked on in both Christchurch and the rest of the country. There is also an appreciation that the pool of labour in New Zealand is now well and truly dry. It's now recognised that unless a local candidate can be lured from a competitor clients are going to have to look further to find the people they need. This still isn't happening on mass as the work isn't there yet but as tenders are awarded there will be a significant move towards speaking with candidates from overseas.

The major hub of activity remains Christchurch but there is an increasing sense of frustration from the public and contractors at the constant delays and slow pace at which things are moving. Of course rebuilding Christchurch isn't going to happen overnight but the expectation that more should be happening is being voiced openly on a daily basis. One article I posted on the blog this week expressed the concern that we could see other companies falling over as Mainzeal did at the start of the year. Many companies are balancing on a knife edge because they've invested in people and plant only to be now waiting for the work to happen!

Whether in response to the criticism or just by luck CERA delivered a new timetable for some of the anchor projects this week which show some progress in the near future; hopefully this is a sign of more to come. The rest of the country shows a steady increase in activity with a number of major projects completing the design stage and progressing to the construction stage. As these projects gain momentum and their size increases so the need for new personnel will increase as well.

As ever it's vitally important that you keep in touch with us and let us know of your plans. If you're making a visit let us know and we'll liaise with clients to arrange interviews; the same if you're planning a move. New Zealand isn't flat out yet by any means but it's heading in the right direction and so if you're serious about the move you should be speaking with us now so that you're ready when the roles come. Keep an eye on the blog to see what's happening, check the job board regularly to see roles as they come up and follow us on Linked In to be involved in discussions with those who are here and those who are planning a move.



On the one hand

Christchurch lures UK migrants as rebuild opportunities grow.

The growing Christchurch rebuild is proving attractive to migrants, with new records being set for the number of people moving to the city from overseas.

Latest figures show that 636 people moved to Greater Christchurch from overseas in June – the biggest number for the month of June since Statistics New Zealand began publishing data in 1990. In the six months to June 30 this year, 4409 people have migrated to Greater Christchurch – equating to almost 25 people every day.

In addition, the number of people leaving is down – 150 people left Christchurch City for Australia in June – the lowest amount for any month since November 2009.

Acting CERA chief executive Warwick Isaacs says the job opportunities in construction and trades, as well as the supporting industries, make Christchurch an attractive proposition.

"I think people are also seeing the chance to be a part of something quite special in Christchurch. It's not often you get to rebuild a city into something new and world-class," Mr Isaacs says.

"We are seeing evidence of the rebuild picking up pace in the suburbs, and with the cost sharing agreement between the Crown and Christchurch City Council now in place, the design and planning for the central city's anchor projects is also ramping up."

Source – Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority

One the other hand

– The UK wants more Kiwis

London's Mayor has called for the United Kingdom to open its doors to an unlimited number of New Zealanders, saying current restrictions on them are "disgraceful"...

Statistics NZ figures show 4578 New Zealanders moved to the United Kingdom permanently or for the long-term last year - down from 12,416 in 2000.

Writing in the national Telegraph newspaper, Mr Johnson said Britain had betrayed its relationships with Commonwealth countries such as New Zealand and Australia.

He said the government should open its doors to an unlimited number of immigrants from such countries through "bilateral free labour mobility zones"...

Any citizen of a European member state can live and work in the UK.

New Zealanders can obtain a two-year working holiday visa.

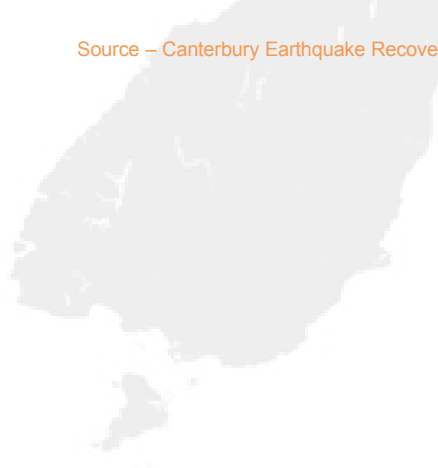
If they wish to stay longer, they must qualify for an ancestry visa, or be classed as a skilled worker.

University of Auckland economics professor Tim Hazledine said that if Britain's doors were opened, it was possible highly-skilled workers would leave New Zealand.

But there was no real evidence of New Zealand suffering significantly from such a "brain drain".

"New Zealanders do well overseas. They earn good money, on the whole. And they often come back with some savings, and maybe start a business with experience and knowledge that they wouldn't have perhaps got in New Zealand."

Source: New Zealand Herald by Nicholas Jones





Christchurch lures migrants as rebuild opportunities grow

Release Date: 22 July 2013

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	Leading the Project	Business case start	Master Planning start	Design phase start	Early Construction Works start	Main Construction Works start	Completion
To Papa Ōiākarō / Avon River Precinct including North Frame and The Margaret Mahy Amazing Place	Crown	2nd Quarter 2013	1st Quarter 2013	1st Quarter 2013	1st Quarter 2013	4th Quarter 2013	2nd Quarter 2015 (The Margaret Mahy Amazing Place will open 4th Quarter 2014).
East Frame - Public Realm	Crown	2nd Quarter 2013	1st Quarter 2013	1st Quarter 2013		3rd Quarter 2014	3rd Quarter 2015
Convention Centre Precinct	Crown	1st Quarter 2013	1st Quarter 2014	1st Quarter 2014	4th Quarter 2013	1st Quarter 2015	1st Quarter 2017
Health Precinct	Private Sector facilitated by Crown		2nd Quarter 2013	4th Quarter 2013	2nd Quarter 2014	4th Quarter 2014	4th Quarter 2015 (initial development complete)
Bus Interchange	Crown	2nd Quarter 2013		4th Quarter 2013	2nd Quarter 2014	3rd Quarter 2014	2nd Quarter 2015
Justice and Emergency Services Precinct	Ministry of Justice					2nd Quarter 2014	2nd Quarter 2017
Metro Sports Facility	Crown					2nd Quarter 2015	1st Quarter 2017
Retail Precinct	Private Sector facilitated by Crown					4th Quarter 2013	4th Quarter 2014 (initial development complete - The terrace)
Earthquake Memorial	Ministry for Culture and Heritage						1st Quarter 2016
Stadium	Crown					4th Quarter 2015	4th Quarter 2017
The Square	Crown/CCC					1st Quarter 2015	1st Quarter 2016
Innovation Precinct	Private Sector facilitated by the Crown (MBIE/CCD)					It is anticipated that Stage 1 construction will be complete in 4th Quarter 2014.	
South Frame	Crown					3rd Quarter 2014	2nd Quarter 2015
Residential Demonstrator Project - Breathe	CCC/Private Sector						Stage one anticipated completion 2nd Quarter 2015
Central Library	CCC					3rd Quarter 2014	4th Quarter 2016
Performing Arts Precinct - excluding Town Hall	CCC					3rd Quarter 2014	4th Quarter 2016
Cricket Oval							
Te Puna Ahurea Cultural Centre	Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu						

Note that dates shown in blue text are new information released on 29 August 2013.
All timetables are subject to change, based on private or public sector delivery mechanisms.



New Zealand Government

“Along with the rebuild and replacement of Christchurch's horizontal infrastructure such as roads and underground pipes, where close to \$40m is being spent every month, there are plenty of opportunities being created.”

Source – Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority



“I now have practically halved my working week leaving so much free time to spend with my wife and friends, now every weekend my wife and I go exploring up and down the countryside getting overwhelmed with the sheer beauty of New Zealand and kindness of her people.”

Stephen Holder

Case study of moving to NZ

Current Employer: City Care – Christchurch

Stephen and his wife had been contemplating a move to New Zealand for many years and first made contact with Catalyst in September 2011. Unfortunately the timing was not ideal to commence pursuing opportunities due to the state of the market at that time. Instead with the ultimate end goal of enjoying a better life-style in New Zealand in mind, Stephen patiently waited for the market to pick up, which it did in September of last year. Catalyst arranged an interview with City Care, from which he obtained a job offer shortly after. After a couple of unforeseen speed bumps during the immigration process; Stephen and Julie's dedication and commitment to making the dream reality alongside the support of City Care and Catalyst, saw the happy couple arriving in Christchurch at the end of May this year. As you will see below; they haven't looked back!

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

I had been thinking about moving to New Zealand for about 10 years, mainly due to the stunning unspoilt landscape, low population and construction opportunities, but with the events that befell Christchurch there is a clear need for people with good construction experience and I felt compelled to be a part of the rebuild process.

Has New Zealand lived up to your expectations?

It has in fact exceeded all of my expectations which were already very high. We have only explored a few areas of the south island and neither words, nor pictures alone can convey just how beautiful this country is, how friendly the people are and how fantastic the lifestyle is. It is something that has to be experienced.

How has your life changed since moving to New Zealand?

In a word; *time*, I know that this seems to be an esoteric answer but when you consider my personal situation in UK was as a project manager, commuting approximately 2.5 hours a day and working on average 65 hours on a normal working week you can quickly see that my time was consumed entirely by my career, and I know I was not an unusual person working these hours in my field. Now fast-forward to my new life; my daily commute is now 40 minutes a day and I only work a maximum of 40 hours a week, I now have practically halved my working week leaving so much free time to spend with my wife and friends, now every weekend my wife and I go exploring up and down the countryside getting overwhelmed with the sheer beauty of New Zealand and kindness of her people.

We've started to do lots of activities such as mountain biking, tramping, Tai Chi and I have even resumed my long forgotten passion for surfing, something I hadn't had time or energy to do for longer than I can remember; even my wife has taken it up, this is helped by the fact that we live in a lovely house only four minutes' walk from our gorgeous beach in New Brighton, which rarely has more than the odd dog walker to watch us in our wetsuits.

What one thing would you have done differently?

I would have researched and organised our temporary accommodation much more thoroughly by engaging my future employer more to assist as much as possible. As kind, welcoming and friendly as 99.99% of kiwis are, there are still rogues out there willing to take advantage of new arrivals. I think most of the major employers in Christchurch use a company called ContractAccom who assist expats in finding very good quality accommodation at reasonable prices.

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

The price of second hand cars, they are very expensive compared with European prices. If we had known this before leaving we probably would have shipped my wife's car out rather than selling it.

What advice would you pass to someone commencing the process?

The paperwork is lengthy and complicated but if you work through it systematically completing one form before another there is a clear structure to it, and if, as we received, your response from the visa process is a 'no' don't give up, we didn't and now we are here loving our new lives.

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

Are you kidding me? Emphatically YES!!

Useful Facts:

1st contact to interview	340 days
1st Interview to offer	24 days
Offer to arrival	266 days
Time since arrival	94 days

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New Zealand relatively prosperous

Each year the Legatum Institute compiles an index of country prosperity based upon eight major criteria shown below.

Taking everything together New Zealand in 2012 ranked fifth out of 142 countries, bettered only by Norway, Denmark, Sweden and Australia. The US ranked 12th and UK 13th. NZ rankings by the various criteria were as follows.

Entrepreneurship & Opportunity	13
Economy	27
Personal Freedom	2
Social Capital	4
Governance	2
Health	20
Safety & Security	13
Education	1

Source – Brain Gain NZ
<http://www.prosperity.com/Default.aspx>