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# Update on the EQR repair process in Canterbury

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The residential repair project being managed for EQC in Canterbury by Fletcher Construction is now moving from its establishment phase into full engagement with homeowners in many of the relevant areas.

The project – operating under the title EQR, for Earthquake Recovery – is currently scoping or repairing more than 1,500 homes with earthquake damage. This number will continue to escalate rapidly as geographical coverage and overall momentum increase.

The Chief Executive, Infrastructure of Fletcher Building, Mark Binns, said the EQR project was on track to complete the rollout of the first series of Hubs in the areas covered by its mandate from EQC by April this year.

“We will have the initial target of 12 Hubs in place by that time, one in each electoral ward of the three council areas, along with a special purpose Hub dealing with quick response and weathertight situations. In addition, we will be well under way with putting in place four more Hubs in the larger wards that were not in our original planning, but which are needed to manage claims throughout the relevant areas and to provide good access for homeowners as we work with them.”

Hubs are now established and operating in Halswell, Rolleston, Kaiapoi, Fendalton, Rangiora, Woolston and Addington. Two others in Banks Peninsula and Malvern/Ellesmere/Springs are currently establishing double offices – Lyttelton/Akaroa and Lincoln/Darfield. The Burwood/Pegasus and Shirley/Papanui wards are the next in line.

Fletcher Construction is managing the residential repair process in the Christchurch, Selwyn and Waimakariri council areas for claims assessed at between \$10,000 and \$100,000 plus gst. The physical repair work is being carried out by contractors recruited on the basis of first preference for locals, subject to an accreditation process.

Almost 200 local contracting companies have been accredited to date, with a steady stream being added each week. Each of these is encouraged to work with their extended teams of sub-contractors and suppliers, and the total number of tradespeople currently engaged is estimated at up to 1,000. A high proportion of those are focused on the ‘finishing’ trades such as painting and plastering.

Further information on EQR and the repair process is available at [www.eqr.co.nz](http://www.eqr.co.nz).

Mr Binns said the establishment phase of the project had progressed well to date. “We have been necessarily focused on the establishment of our Hubs, the recruitment of project management staff and contractors, and the establishment of IT and other systems. Now that this phase is well advanced we are moving to a position where we can deliver repairs to homeowners and residents across the affected areas.

“That will take further time to achieve, but we are moving as quickly as possible. Homeowners will hear directly from us when their claim has been referred to us by EQC and allocated to a Hub. Until that time any enquiries about claims should be made through EQC on 0800 DAMAGE (0800 326 243).

”We are tremendously encouraged by the positive reception received from the people of Canterbury, and especially by their patience in what are clearly trying circumstances. As the next few weeks and months unfold we will be dealing with many more on an individual basis, and also communicating with the community at large on our progress.

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“The other pleasing feature of the project to date is the level of co-operation both offered and actually received from other organisations involved in the earthquake recovery process. For us these include the Christchurch, Selwyn and Waimakariri councils; the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Commission; Ministry of Social Development and Work and Income; the Department of Building and Housing and the Building Research Association of New Zealand; the Insurance Council and individual insurers; and various charitable organisations including the Salvation Army and the Red Cross.

“All the organisations involved are working to deal with challenges posed by the recovery process. Those particularly relevant to EQR include temporary accommodation for residents who are displaced while repairs are carried out, provision of welfare assistance in a range of special circumstances, processing of the of building consents required for some repair work, and identification of the most appropriate technical solutions for various repair situations.”

Mr Binns noted that, aside from getting established to carry out the work specified in its contract with EQC, the project had adapted to meet overlapping or related needs. “A key example is our work with EECA (the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority) to deliver winter heating solutions in homes where that is required as a result of the earthquake. The details of that programme are still coming together and we expect to make a full announcement on this programme in the near future.

“Another example of evolving needs is the recent decision to make the EQR project management services available to claimants in the Hurunui district as a result of enquiries from affected residents. Details will be made available shortly.”

For further information:

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