

Fletcher Building responds to WorkSafe investigation into Canterbury Home Repair Programme

Auckland, 27 May 2014 - Fletcher Building Limited (“Fletcher Building”) wishes to issue the following statement in response to the WorkSafe New Zealand (“WorkSafe”) investigation involving the Canterbury Home Repair Programme.

The Canterbury Home Repair Programme (“CHRP”) involves the repair of properties where the damage falls between \$15,000 and \$100,000. Fletcher Earthquake Recovery, a business unit of Fletcher Building, is project managing independent building contractors as agent for the Earthquake Commission.

WorkSafe has applied to the District Court in Christchurch for an extension of time to complete its investigation, which concerns the process by which houses containing asbestos have been repaired under the CHRP. Fletcher Building notes that no charges have been laid by WorkSafe.

Asbestos containing materials were used widely in homes and other buildings throughout New Zealand between 1940 and 1990. Tens of thousands of houses across New Zealand still contain asbestos.

Fletcher Building states that the asbestos hazard in houses repaired under the CHRP has been managed responsibly and effectively. Fletcher Building has engaged with WorkSafe since the commencement of the home repair programme regarding processes for handling all hazards including asbestos.

The risk of asbestos exposure during the repair process was identified early in the CHRP, and independent contractors were required to arrange testing for all houses assessed as potentially containing asbestos. Where asbestos was found to be present, contractors were directed to undertake repairs in accordance with the New Zealand asbestos regulations.

Further enhancements have been made to both the testing and repair practices as the repair programme has progressed, along with educational initiatives to upgrade the general state of knowledge of asbestos in the Canterbury home repair sector.

Fletcher Building remains fully committed to maintaining healthy and safe environments for residents, employees, contractors, and all others involved in its work.

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