

that the correct process for the Council to adopt was one of risk management where the Council ensured that the seismic risk from aftershocks was assessed, a standard that the damaged buildings would need to meet before they were safe to occupy was established and a process was developed for ensuring this standard was met by building owners.

44. I did not think that the BETT had adequate engineering and building inspector resources itself to determine what work was required to the red and yellow placarded non-residential buildings before they were considered safe to occupy. I considered this assessment work to be the responsibility of the building owners and their engineer advisors. I saw the Council's role as ensuring that a suitably qualified engineer was engaged by building owners and then reviewing the engineer's report.
45. On Monday 11 October after I returned to Wellington I telephoned John Buchan. I had been at a meeting of engineers interested in the earthquake recovery at the University on the evening October 6 or 7 and John had fronted for the BETT at that meeting. I noted at the meeting he was a CPEng and thought he might have some responsibility for the BETT. I passed on my concerns to him. I told him I had not had a response from Peter Mitchell, other than being sacked. I asked him if there were any engineers in the management structure above the BETT and he said he didn't think there was. He had no responsibility personally for the BETT and although he agreed to follow up my concerns said he was not in the habit of second guessing the decision of his superiors. I heard nothing more.
46. I hope that this statement will assist the Commission develop recommendations that will enable Local Authorities to strike the difficult balance between the social and economic dislocation costs, and life safety risks in the recovery period following future earthquakes.



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October 2011