



Department of
Building and Housing
Te Tari Kaupapa Whare

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27 May 2011

Honourable Justice Mark Cooper
Chairman
Royal Commission of Inquiry into Building Failure Caused by the Canterbury Earthquakes
PO Box 14053
Christchurch Airport
Christchurch 8544

Dear Justice Cooper

Royal Commission of Inquiry into Building Failure Caused by the Canterbury Earthquakes

Thank you for your letter of 12 May 2011 relating to the Royal Commission of Inquiry into Building Failure Caused by the Canterbury Earthquakes.

I attach a briefing the Department has prepared for you and your fellow commissioners.

This document covers the material requested, except for that related to building controls in Christchurch. As you suggest, we do not have access to the details of how Christchurch City Council managed its building regulatory matters prior to 1991. The briefing material does however, summarise our understanding of the general system of building controls prior to 1991 but not how the system was applied locally by Christchurch City Council. I recommend you approach the Council directly to access that information.

In regards to the question relating to the timeframe of our investigations, our project plan has the submission of the final report to the Minister on 29 August 2011. More detailed information on the investigations is in the Briefing Note.

The Briefing Note has five main sections:

- Section 2 covers the building regulatory system. This is where you will answer to your questions relating to building controls, except for the material specific to building controls in Christchurch.
- Section 3 gives an overview of the development of seismic design and standards.
- Section 4 provides an overview of the Building Act provisions for upgrading of the structural performance of buildings.
- Section 5 covers the post earthquake assessment of buildings.
- Section 6 outlines the Department's technical investigations.



David Kelly, my Deputy Chief Executive for Building Quality, is the Department's main point of contact with the Commission. His contact details are david.kelly@dbh.govt.nz and his DDI is (04) 817 4528.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Katrina Bach', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Katrina Bach
Chief Executive