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**From:** Christine Watson [ ]  
**Sent:** Friday, 20 January 2012 2:50 p.m.  
**To:** Mark Zarifeh  
**Subject:** Re: Joe's Garage

**Written Statement from Christine Watson (owner) re Joes Garage/Earthquake  
22 February 2011.**

**Dear Mr Zarifeh,**

**To answer your questions -**

1. At the time of the February 22 earthquake I was the owner/operator of Joes Garage, Hereford Street, which is franchised the the Lone Star. My husband, son and I had held that position for the last 9 months approximately.
2. When the earthquake struck I was behind the counter, walking towards the kitchen.
3. I then turned around and ran toward the front wall of the building beside the door and pressed myself hard up against it on the inside, as I felt as though the roof was collapsing because of the force of the earthquake and the amount of dust that instantly filled the room.
4. As I was running I saw Greg Tobin run past me. Just as I reached the front wall, the second storey external bricks fell to the ground right outside the doorway, and I saw Gregs legs as he disappeared underneath the mass.  
My waitress Rhea Phannet was also covered up to her neck in bricks and debris just outside the door.

5. From the first earthquake 4 September 2010, we observed some external cracking mainly on the front and back walls of the building. As time and aftershocks progressed, these did get worse. Some repairs were carried out on the top storey outer front wall.

To our knowledge the building was regularly checked by engineers and Miles Construction who were the upstairs tenants, and we were reassured by the landlords (Joes Garage Francise) that it was safe to occupy.

I certainly felt we were being well looked after as far as the state of building and its safety were concerned.

This is a true and accurate account of my experience and knowledge in this tragic situation. I hope is of assistance in the enquiry.

Christine Watson

On Mon, Jan 16, 2012 at 3:35 PM, Mark Zarifeh  
<[Mark.Zarifeh@royalcommission.govt.nz](mailto:Mark.Zarifeh@royalcommission.govt.nz)> wrote:

Dear Mr and Mrs Watson,

Further to my telephone conversation with Mr Watson today, I would appreciate it if Mrs Watson could provide the Royal Commission with a written statement outlining the following:

- Her position re the franchise you were operating as at February 2011 and how long you had been doing that
- where she was in the building when the February earthquake struck
- what she did
- observations of Greg Tobin at that time, in particular where he went and where on the building the material which struck him came from.

I omitted to ask Mr Watson, but if you have any information in relation to damage observed before or after the September earthquake and any concerns in relation to this or the structural integrity of the building this would be of assistance.

Thank you for your assistance.

Regards,

Mark Zarifeh,  
Counsel Assisting,  
Canterbury Earthquakes Royal Commission.