

Working together on the Canterbury rebuild

A joint effort to get enough skilled people to help with the rebuild of Canterbury is well underway. The Skills for Canterbury project involves many organisations working together to get suitable candidates into industry training and apprenticeships in the construction and infrastructure sectors. While our understanding of how many people will be needed for the reconstruction effort continues to evolve, it is likely that we will be talking thousands in construction alone, including electricians.



Photo: Andrew Massie, CPIT, Christchurch

ETITO is part of the Built Environment Training Alliance (BETA), a group of Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) working to support skill development for the building, construction and infrastructure sectors and working closely on the Skills for Canterbury project.

BETA works to address skills issues with its members having coverage for the following industries:

- Building and construction
- Building contractor services such as cleaning and general building services
- Painting and decorating
- Electrical
- Flooring
- Infrastructure and roading
- Joinery and glass
- Plumbing, gasfitting, drainlaying and roofing.

BETA's work is about:

- Understanding the nature and timing of skill demand
- Influencing [accelerating] the demand for skills
- Ensuring that training solutions are available
- Responding to the immediate needs for skills
- Building a pipeline of talent to meet future needs.

BETA is recruiting a Wellington-based project leader. In the meantime, ETITO and the Industry Training Federation are providing the project management.

On the ground in Canterbury

ETITO has appointed Kevin Thompson as operational team leader in Christchurch, responsible for leading the field staff of BETA ITOs who are working together to get in place the kind of training arrangements we need for the work ahead. ETITO Training Manager Marty Matheson is continuing to work with electrical firms to identify opportunities and achieve the best match for successful apprenticeships.

While much of the short-term remedial work after the February earthquake is complete, it's more difficult to predict the nature and timing of the major reconstruction work. Working together now to address skill shortages and adjust training programmes means we will be better placed to make sure we have enough people when the work is ready to begin.

We understand that firms need as much certainty as possible around the availability and timing of work to enable them to grow their workforce and

take on apprentices – this is an important part of the work we are doing and why a cooperative, information-sharing approach is critical.

We need to get people into jobs and training now

One of BETA's initiatives is the **Straight to Work** programme, working with Work and Income New Zealand to place 200 people in employment in the Canterbury region within a short timeframe. Work and Income provides pre-screened candidates with whom our training staff meet to gauge their skills and experience. BETA then looks to match them with employers and arranges for them to complete health and safety and first aid training as part of a three-day course or as part of their employer induction programme. As with other training arrangements, the ITOs provide ongoing support throughout the apprenticeship.

To find out more about opportunities contact Marty Matheson, ETITO Training Manager on 03 365 9252 or e: martym@etito.co.nz

For further information about BETA visit www.beta.org.nz or email: info@beta.org.nz

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