



Media Release

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Building Consent Team achieves New Zealand first in reaccreditation

Selwyn District Council has been reaccredited as a Building Consent Authority, and is the first Council in New Zealand to be reaccredited three times without needing to make any changes to existing consent processing practices or systems.

The Council's building consent team was audited in October for reaccreditation as a Building Consent Authority, which enables the Council to issue building consents. As part of the assessment process, IANZ (International Accreditation New Zealand) routinely require corrective actions, when non-compliance with Government regulations are identified, or issue strong recommendations about how consent processing systems or methods could be improved to better comply with regulatory requirements.

IANZ assessors found no issues which required corrective actions and made no strong recommendations for Selwyn to improve its processing systems. The IANZ report also identified Selwyn's records of processing and inspection decisions and reasons for decisions, and training processes as being of a particularly high standard and cited these as examples of good practice and performance.

In 2013, Selwyn introduced a new online building consent application system.

"The system has been refined over the past two years and allows people to lodge consent applications at any time from their office or from home and to check on consent progress online at any time," says Selwyn District Council's Building Manager Ian Butler. "It also allows code compliance certificates to be issued onsite once a final building inspection is completed which enables new home owners to move in immediately."

The system allows a number of building consent staff to work on an application at one time. It also has inbuilt information and training systems for staff – so for example staff members can find standardised technical advice on different building code requirements or use training modules in the system to improve their knowledge of different topics.

In April 2015, the Council and Alpha Group, who together developed the system, won the Society of Local Government Managers Supreme Excellence Award for the online building consent system.

Selwyn District Council is one of the busiest building consent authorities in New Zealand. In the year to June 2015, Selwyn issued the third highest number of new dwelling consents after Auckland and Christchurch. Selwyn processed 2,790 building consent applications in total, and the average time to issue a consent was 12 working days. Statistics New Zealand figures indicate that Selwyn has been New Zealand's fastest growing district for eight years running.

Mr Butler says the results of the reaccreditation process mean that people building or renovating homes in Selwyn can feel confident that the Council has appropriate systems and processes in place to deliver building controls which meet or exceed government expectations. "Our building consent team have put a lot of effort into continuously improving

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