



# Occupational licensing in the building sector

**so homes and buildings are designed  
and built right the first time**

**Occupational licensing is coming for  
the building industry in New Zealand,  
starting 1 November 2007.**

If you are a skilled professional in the building industry, becoming a licensed building practitioner is something you need to consider. This brochure explains what it is about and how it will work.



Department of  
Building and Housing  
*Te Tari Kaupapa Whare*

# Occupational licensing in the building industry

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## What is occupational licensing?

People in the building industry who are responsible for the work done are going to have their expertise formally recognised, in many cases for the first time.

As a result, the public will be able to have confidence that licensed building practitioners working on their homes and properties are competent and have the skills, knowledge and experience needed to do the work properly.

This will help improve the quality of New Zealand's buildings and homes, to the benefit of everyone.

## Who can be licensed?

Voluntary licensing begins in November 2007 for designers, builders, site supervisors, construction managers and carpenters. In late 2008, this will be extended to external plasterers, roofers, bricklayers and blocklayers, and specialists in concrete structure, steel structure and building services.

Licence holders will gain professional recognition, which employers, clients and customers will value and respect.

An online register will make it easy for the public to find and confirm that a building practitioner is licensed.

## Is being licensed compulsory?

**No.** It is a personal decision and voluntary. There will always be people working in the building industry who are not licensed.

However, from November 2010, it is intended that some specific work will need to be supervised or done by a licensed person. This is expected to cover:

- design
- site management
- some restricted aspects of building structure and envelope.

Unoccupied buildings, like sheds and barns, will be exempt. Also, homeowners will still be able to do DIY work as at present, including building a standard, straightforward house from scratch.

## How does this happen?

Application packs will be available in October this year for the Design, Site<sup>[1]</sup> and Carpentry licence classes. People with practical industry experience will assess applicants, based on:

- applicants' work history
- feedback from technical referees and clients
- applicants' understanding of the responsibilities of having a licence.

Technical qualifications will not be required to be licensed – what's required is evidence of the appropriate skills, knowledge and experience.

However, qualifications will be good evidence of competence and should be included if available. Likewise, apprentices should still complete their apprenticeships - being licensed is not a substitute for a technical qualification.

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[1] Site covers builders, site supervisors and construction managers.

## Will licensed building practitioners be accountable for their work?

**Yes.** A Building Practitioners Board will investigate complaints. As a last resort, the Board can rescind a licence. Consenting authorities will keep a record of who did what on each building project.

However, the Scheme is not intended to increase the legal liability that individuals in the building industry already face. There has always been legal liability in the building industry – the right to sue for damages – and this won't change.

## What will being licensed cost?

The fees are not finalised yet, but being licensed for Site or Carpentry is expected to cost between \$350 and \$400 (GST incl.), assuming a face-to-face assessment is not required. Design is expected to cost between \$840 and \$1100, a face-to-face assessment being essential. After that, there will be an annual fee of about \$200 (GST incl.).

**For more information visit [www.dbh.govt.nz/occupational-licensing](http://www.dbh.govt.nz/occupational-licensing) or call 0800 60 60 50. You can sign up for an electronic newsletter.**

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