



Media release

9 April 2017

Contractors will be working for months to repair flood damage

Thousands of workers in civil construction and general contracting were working outside in the worst of the extreme weather last week but their hard work has only just begun.

Civil Contractors New Zealand chief executive Peter Silcock, whose organisation represents 600 members in civil construction and general contracting businesses, said contractors were out throughout this weekend and last week, helping ensure public safety by clearing slips, drains and roadways, repairing stopbanks and directing and diverting traffic.

“Like emergency and civil defence staff, our workers help out in extreme weather conditions at all times of the day or night. It can be very difficult and very dangerous work and is often not recognised. I’d like to acknowledge their dedication.”

Mr Silcock said the hard work of contractors had only just begun, however, and contractors would be very busy in the weeks and months ahead.

The worst affected area was the Eastern Bay of Plenty but there was also major damage in Auckland, Waikato, Whanganui, Wellington, Kaikoura and other areas.

Local and central government would play a very important role in ensuring that contractors could mobilise quickly and adequately, Mr Silcock said.

Contractors needed a steady flow of work throughout the year to be able to keep people and resources in an area. Continuity of every day work was important to maintaining the on-the-ground capability and capacity required in emergencies, he said.

“The work ahead is not just about opening roads and clearing slips but also involves repairing drainage and water systems, sewerage and communications. Many of our members will have an essential role in assisting the affected communities to get back to normal.

“With the increasing frequency of adverse weather events, local authorities need to better plan and schedule their business as usual work so it enables contractors to operate effectively and maintain those local emergency crews.”

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For further comment contact Peter Silcock on:

DDI: 04 496 3273 M: 027 448 7036 peter@civilcontractors.co.nz