

# Go ahead

Your heads up to Building and Planning

March 2015

## Solid start to 2015 for building consents



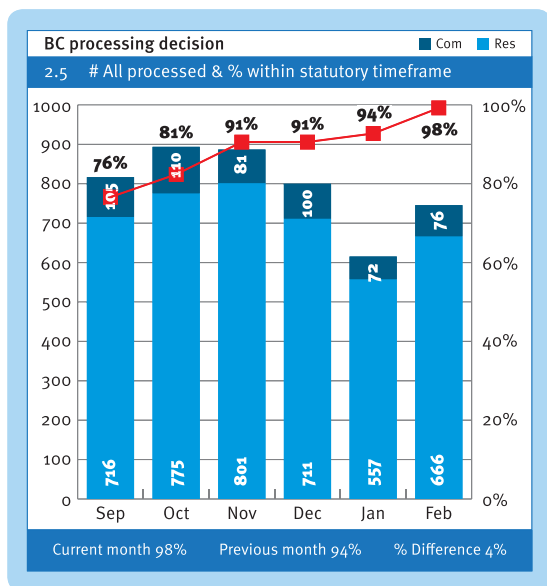
The Council's consents team has started the new year on a high, reports Building Control and City Rebuild Director Peter Sparrow.

"We have started this year on the right note after ending a period of significant change last year by gaining accreditation from International Accreditation New Zealand.

With data available for the first two months of the year, the Building Control Group team are performing well, as shown in the processing data below".

### Consents processing:

- 98 per cent of the 742 consents processed in February were done within the statutory timeframe (94 per cent in January). Of the 666 residential consents processed, 99 per cent were done in 20 days. In January it was 95 per cent (557 consents processed).
- 88 per cent of the 76 commercial consents processed met the target last month, while in January it was 89 per cent (72 consents).



### In this issue:

- The year ahead – what we can expect
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- Compliance schedules pass MBIE check
- Changes to the Resource Management Act



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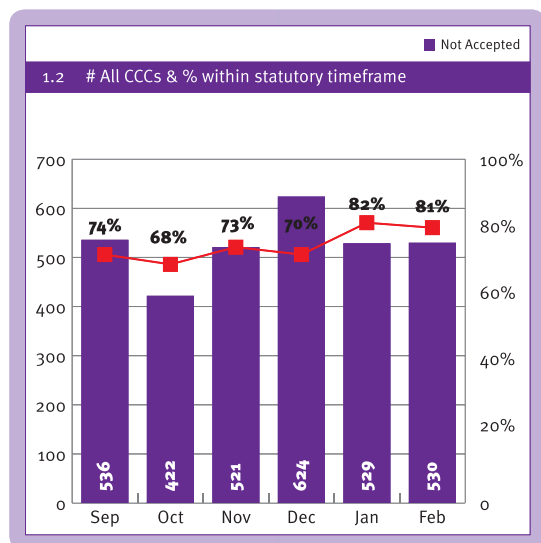
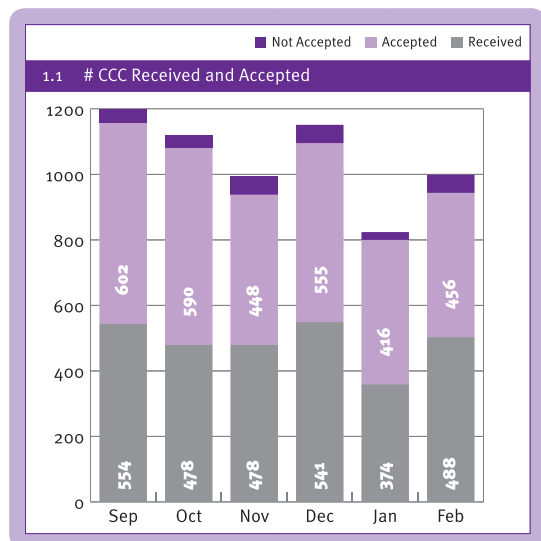


What is particularly pleasing is that the vast majority of consents are being processed in fewer than 15 days.

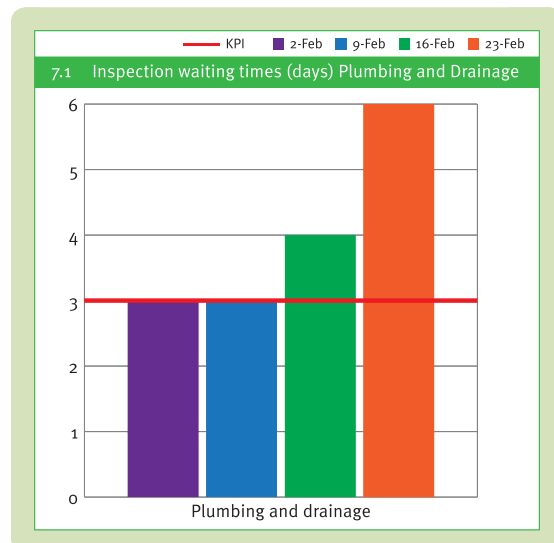
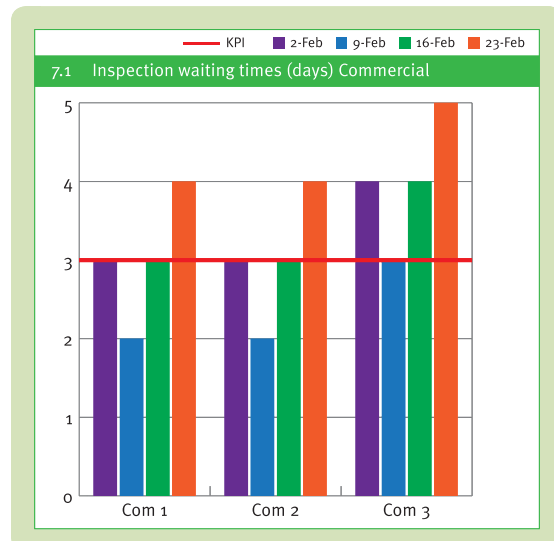
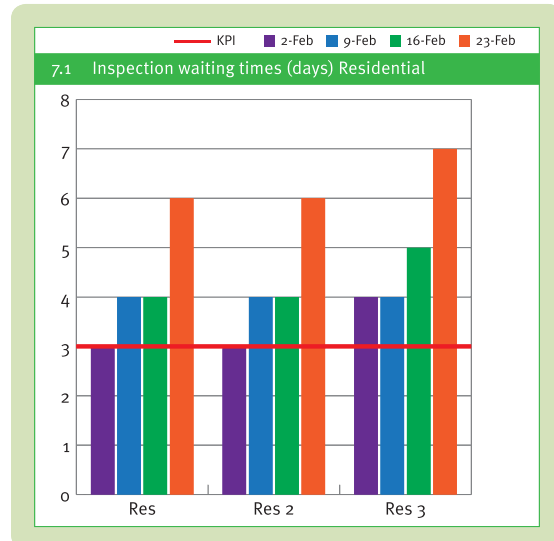
Our improved processing has been noted by the industry, with Canterbury Master Builders President Alastair Miles commenting:

“We received feedback from our members that they have seen an improvement in the time taken by the Council to issue residential building consents. This is a positive result for the industry and gives our members and their clients some real certainty on consent times and will enable them to better plan resources and commencement dates on site.”

#### Code Compliance Certificates (CCC) decisions (S93 refusals and CCC Issued)



#### Inspections



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## The year ahead – what we can expect

Rebuild momentum is expected to remain steady this year, with our analysis predicting we will grant 7,143 consents this year. This is compared with 10,229 consents in 2014 (forecast 8,140) with a combined building value of \$3.07 billion. By comparison in 2012 we granted 6891 consents valued at \$1.1 billion and 2013 there were 7919 consents with a value of \$1.7 billion.

There is still an element of volatility and we continue to work closely with the industry to get a feel of how volumes may change.

## Exemptions – does your work qualify?

The Building Act 2004 has always allowed for some building work to be carried out without obtaining a building consent. Exemptions fall into two categories: work that is automatically exempted by the Building Act and other work where the Council can decide to exempt the work on a case-by-case basis.

### Getting an exemption can mean:

- Less documentation and cost for the customer
- Shorter processing times
- Eligible projects start sooner

### The Council considers applications for exemption where the work is:

- carried out by suitably qualified and experienced persons with a proven record of competence in similar work, and
- a clear understanding of the Building Act and building code is demonstrated in the application, and
- robust assurances are given as to how compliance with the New Zealand building code will be achieved.

The Council has a team dedicated to exemptions and they will carefully consider each application.

Find out more online at [www.ccc.govt.nz/bcexemptions](http://www.ccc.govt.nz/bcexemptions) or call 941 8999.

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## Compliance schedules pass MBIE check

A small team from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) has spent a week on site to conduct a technical review of our compliance schedules and building warrants of fitness.

Compliance schedules list the specified systems within a building such as sprinkler systems, lifts and smoke detectors. These ensure a building is safe for members of the public to enter, occupy or use.

The visit earlier this month was part of a scheduled programme of work. At an informal exit meeting, MBIE representatives commented that Christchurch was much more advanced than some other places. Christchurch City is one of two councils out of 10 visited that do not require another site visit.

There were some positive comments alongside some areas that the Council needs to look at. These will be considered by the Council and an appropriate approach determined following receipt of the final MBIE report.

As a matter of routine reporting, MBIE posts results of reviews on its website as part of its reporting for the end of the financial year.

## Changes to the Resource Management Act

On 3 March 2015 a number of amendments to the Resource Management Act (RMA) came into effect.

The key changes affecting the resource consent process are:

- New and clearer information requirements for all resource consent applications
- A new mandatory requirement for applicants and submitters to pre-circulate hearing evidence
- Changes to processing timeframes for notified resource consent applications.

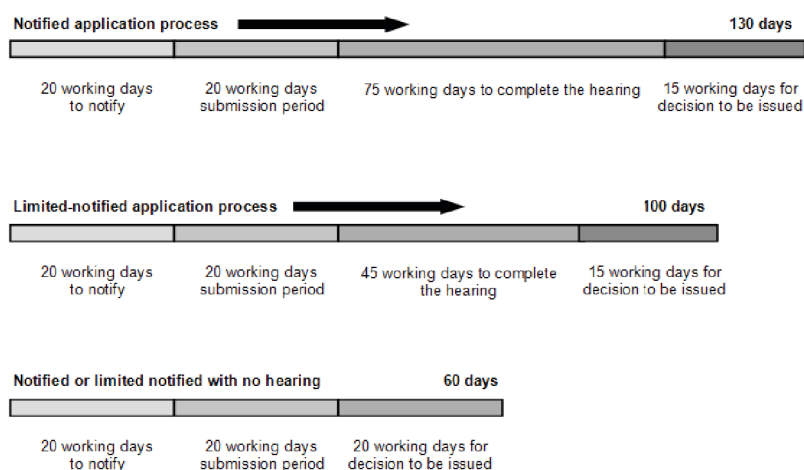
The extent of information to be submitted with applications depends on the complexity of the proposal. There is little change for straightforward applications (for example, a new residential unit or accessory building). However, the Council

will check more complex applications to make sure they cover the expanded information requirements. This reduces the likelihood of further information being requested later.

The amendments apply only to applications lodged on or after 3 March 2015. Applications lodged before that date must continue to be processed under the provisions of the RMA prior to the amendments.

More information is available on the Ministry for the Environment website <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/rma/rma-reforms-and-amendments/rma-reforms-programme-2013-and-beyond/resource-management-amendment>

You can also contact our Duty Planner on 941 8999 to find out what the changes mean for your application.



Source: Ministry for the Environment

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