

Retaining the services of a registered building surveyor: What you need to know

NZIBS GUIDANCE NOTE No.1 –

If you are considering retaining the services of a New Zealand Institute of Building Surveyors (NZIBS) registered building surveyor, this guide explains how our members operate, what they can do for you and the level of professionalism you can expect to receive. Other guides to our members' services are available at <https://www.buildingsurveyors.co.nz/resources/nzibs-guidance-documents/>.

Remediation of building defects

Property owners who need to have building flaws or faults (defects) identified and may require subsequent advice on how to remedy these, should consult a NZIBS registered building surveyor.

Set out below is a general outline of the process a registered building surveyor is likely to follow to ensure a professional solution is provided for you:

Accepting the Job:

- Obtain a good understanding of the work to be undertaken, the history of the problem and any work that has already been done.
- Review to check they do not have any conflicts of interest in terms of the work you want done.
- Confirm in writing all details of the job, including any special terms and conditions, and the cost implications of the proposed work.

Initial Inspection:

- Undertake a desktop review of the Territorial Authority file for the property if required.
- Carry out the necessary inspection/s of the property. including, establishing construction methods and materials used, as per their proposal you accepted.
- Advise what steps should be taken next, which may include further invasive investigations of the building.

Remediation Design:

- Agree on a design plan. This includes quantifying what work (if any) is required to bring the building up to NZ Building Code standards or other work needed to meet the requirements of the relevant Building Act.
- Obtain written work plans and quotes from any other professionals proposed or needed for the job. Discuss the need for indemnity insurance.
- Consider whether neighbours and compliance authorities need to be notified.
- Be able to obtain a build cost review at any stage, subject to the agreed proposal work scope.

For further information on the NZ Institute of Building Surveyors please go to:

www.buildingsurveyors.co.nz or phone 0800 11 34 00.

Consent Process

- Prepare building consent and/or resource consent application documents as needed, and lodge on your behalf if required. Advise you what the application costs are for making any building/resource consent applications, and guide you through these processes.
- Communicate with local building consent authority (Council) through the building consent/resource consent application process, and respond to any requests for further information, keeping you updated on application(s) progress.

Contract Procurement/Tendering/Setting up a Building Contract

- Advise on finding suitable builders for tendering the work and an appropriate building contract.
- Advise on estimated remedial build costs, when cost advice is included in the engagement. Also, if providing cost advice, advise you on financial retentions and withholding of any payments required under a contract. Alternatively, advise you when to use an independent quantity surveyor. Identify in writing who is responsible for supervision, cost control and cost predictions throughout the project.
- Advise on the need for building/contractor insurances to be in place.
- Tender to selected builders and analyse (compare) the tenders to help you decide which builder to use.
- Ensure the builder's health and safety policy document is provided and discussed with you, and that the builder is taking care of the statutory requirements prior to work commencing on site.
- Develop a plan to document any variations to the work and update everybody involved.

Contract Administration

- Continue to assess the project's design to remedy the agreed extent of the building's damage or requirements.
- Explain that for a period after construction completion when you have possession of the site of work back, a contractor usually has the right to return to the site to fix any faults (the Building Act required length of time for this to occur is 12 months).
- Advise on what the options are if your builder does not complete work on time.
- If your registered building surveyor undertakes administration of the building contract, they will sign off the work to signify the job is complete and check the Council has completed all required inspections and apply on your behalf for a Code Compliance Certificate to be issued. This will confirm the work has been completed in accordance with the Building Consent.
- In association with the builder, ensure that necessary paperwork relevant to the work, including product maintenance, materials literature, as-built drawings and construction records is given to you at completion.