

ROLE DESCRIPTION

CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE CLAIMS ENGINEERING PANEL: TECHNICAL MEMBER/ADVISOR

PRIMARY PURPOSE

The Government has developed two key initiatives to resolve the outstanding insurance claims related to the Canterbury earthquake sequence; the Greater Canterbury Claims Resolution Service, and the Canterbury Earthquakes Insurance Tribunal.

The Canterbury Earthquakes Insurance Tribunal Bill (the Tribunal) will establish a Tribunal to provide speedy, flexible and cost-effective services to help resolve insurance claims related to the series of Canterbury earthquakes in 2010 and 2011.

On 9 October 2018, Government announced the establishment of the Greater Christchurch Claims Resolution Service (the GCCRS) to provide independent advisory and resolution services to residential home owners who have outstanding or potential insurance claims in the Greater Christchurch area related to the Christchurch earthquake sequence.

Engineering disputes sit at the heart of many of the complex and currently unresolved insurance claims in the greater Christchurch area. To support the work of the GCCRS and the Tribunal, Engineering New Zealand established the Christchurch Earthquake Claims Engineering Panel as an independent expert panel that the GCCRS and the Tribunal can draw on for technical and expert advice and facilitation services.

The Panel is made up of engineers appointed by Engineering New Zealand for their experience and credibility across stakeholder groups, as either a Technical Member or Facilitator. We are looking to expand our Panel by recruiting more Technical Members, with experience in structural engineering.

The **Technical Member** may be asked to provide technical or expert advice or input for the resolution of an insurance claim. Requests may be made by the GCCRS, the Tribunal, the insured, or under joint instruction between the insured and insurer.

CONTEXT

The Panel is administered by Engineering New Zealand and is independent of the GCCRS, the Tribunal, insurers and homeowners. Engineering New Zealand is New Zealand's professional body for engineers. Our role is to create greater connection within the industry and across society, and recognition for the key role that engineers play. It's also to build greater credibility so New Zealanders have confidence and trust in the work that engineers do.

GCCRS or Tribunal requests for technical or expert advice or input on a claim are received by Engineering New Zealand and assigned to a Technical Member of the Panel.

Technical Members of the Panel will be requested to provide services on an as needs basis and are not guaranteed work. However, our Panel members have been in high demand for the GCCRS and the Tribunal will increase this demand further.

Technical Members will be reimbursed reasonable consulting rates for their time, reasonable expenses associated with the delivery of Panel services, and for induction and training.

ROLES OF THE TECHNICAL MEMBER

Initial Process Appraisals

On request from the GCCRS or the Tribunal, carry out Initial Process Appraisals, under joint instruction from the insurer and insured, to help determine what, if any, next steps should be taken to resolve the matter.

This will usually involve a conversation with the homeowner on their observations of earthquake damage (including repairs that are alleged to be inadequate or not previously addressed), a visual assessment of the insured's home, and a brief report as to whether there are any issues that may require a further process to be initiated by the GCCRS or the Tribunal.

Peer review

On request from the GCCRS or the Tribunal, peer review "on the papers" one or more engineering assessments of earthquake damage and reinstatement recommendations for a home and advise whether the report(s) is of an acceptable standard for the parties to rely on for the resolution of a claim. This will include advice whether sufficient investigations have been carried out, the evidence supports the findings, the correct standards have been applied, and the conclusions in the report are robust.

Engineering assessment of earthquake damage and reinstatement recommendations

On the joint instruction of an insured and insurer, carry out an assessment of the insured's home and advise on earthquake damage and recommend an appropriate reinstatement methodology.

On request from an insured, carry out an assessment of the insured's home and advise on earthquake damage and recommend an appropriate reinstatement methodology.

Provide explanations about engineering assessments

On request from the GCCRS or the Tribunal, meet with an insured and/or insurer to discuss an engineering report that either party has received and assist the insured/insurer to understand the report's findings and recommendations.

Expert advisor

On request from the Internal Dispute Resolution Service of the GCCRS or the Tribunal, provide independent expert engineering advice during the facilitation, mediation, arbitration or hearing of an insurance claim, acting in accordance with the High Court Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses.

EXPECTATIONS OF TECHNICAL MEMBERS

Technical Members of the Panel will be expected to:

- Respond in a timely and professional manner to any requests from Engineering New Zealand
- Declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest to Engineering New Zealand before accepting a request from Engineering New Zealand
- Work effectively and collaboratively with Engineering New Zealand, the GCCRS, the Tribunal, insured and insurers to support the efficient resolution of engineering issues related to an insurance claim
- Always act in accordance with the Engineering New Zealand Code of Ethical Conduct
- Act impartially and objectively, remembering that the Technical Member of the Panel is not an advocate for either party
- Be respectful to homeowners and take time to understand and (where possible) answer their concerns about engineering issues associated with earthquake damage to their home
- Keep up to date with developments in the engineering assessments of earthquake damage and remediation strategies
- Attend Engineering New Zealand induction and training for technical members.

QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND ATTRIBUTES

- A Chartered Professional Engineer or senior engineer with extensive and recent experience in post-earthquake building assessments and reinstatement (structural or geotechnical)
- Has established relationships of trust and confidence with a wide range of stakeholders, including homeowners or insurers
- A strong understanding of the building regulatory environment
- Experience providing technical advice in dispute processes, including mediations and courts, would be an advantage
- A track record of relevant previous work that meets a standard acceptable to Engineering New Zealand
- An excellent communicator who can listen, reflect and respond to concerns and communicate ideas clearly and comprehensively to both a technical and lay audience.