

Media Release

Pride in progress as fifth anniversary marked

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Minister for Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Gerry Brownlee says the people of Canterbury can be enormously proud of what they have achieved in the past five years.

"As we mark the fifth anniversary of the February 22 earthquake, it's a chance to reflect on how far we have all come," Mr Brownlee says.

"From a devastated city and communities so badly affected, people have gone from strength to strength and an exciting new city is taking shape.

"The Valentine's Day quake was an unwelcome reminder of what Canterbury has endured. But the response to that quake shows just how much we have achieved – we have stronger buildings, strong people and a community that looks after one another."

Mr Brownlee cites the most recent CERA Wellbeing Survey, which shows more than three quarters of Greater Christchurch residents reporting a positive quality of life, that people are bouncing back and have optimism about the future.

"Most insurance claims are resolved, most of the demolitions are done, most of the infrastructure repair is complete, and we are now in a building phase where new facilities are springing up and there are huge opportunities, such as the blank slate in the Residential Red Zones.

"Of course there are people who still face challenges, and as a Government we will continue to fund and support services to help them."

Mr Brownlee says completion of the first major Crown facilities in the central city, in addition to the many private developments, has created a sense of excitement in the city.

"And with work due to advance on the Metro Sports Facility and the Convention Centre Precinct this year, as well as completion of further construction phases for the Avon River Precinct and the Justice and Emergency Services Precinct, the physical recovery of the central city is now well on track."

Mr Brownlee says progress is evident in other organisations too, with the Earthquake Commission (EQC) settling 98.6 per cent of dwelling claims under \$100,000 and private insurers settling over 75 per cent of claims over \$100,000.

In excess of \$1.4 billion worth of building consents have been issued in the central city since 22 February 2011, and over \$12.1 billion in all of greater Christchurch.

The Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT) has completed 86 per cent of its total horizontal infrastructure repairs (roads, storm water, drinking water, and sewerage pipes). In Christchurch's CBD 97 per cent of the horizontal infrastructure repairs have been completed.

"We have learned a lot from the Canterbury earthquakes, and in July last year I announced the beginning of the EQC Act Review to ensure homeowners, EQC and private insurers can effectively plan and recover from future natural disasters.

"This work, alongside the Independent Review of the Civil Defence Emergency Management Response to the Christchurch Earthquake, ensures lessons from Canterbury are retained to help inform our readiness for potential future events."

Mr Brownlee says the focus will now change from recovery to regeneration in greater Christchurch.

"This will come with new legislation when the Greater Christchurch Regeneration Bill becomes law and the end of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority in April.

"Already there has been a handover of recovery functions by CERA to other agencies, and the new agencies, Regenerate Christchurch, and Crown-owned company Ōtākaro Limited, are now being established.

"The focus now will be on acceleration of the work still to be done, and seizing the opportunities for greater Christchurch, while moving towards local leadership of the regeneration by the Christchurch City Council and other local organisations," Mr Brownlee says.

[Read the original release on the Beehive website »](#)