

# Media Release

## Public sector relocating to Christchurch CBD in 2016

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About 20 government departments and agencies will be relocating into the Christchurch CBD in 2016 to support the city's recovery.

"Today's announcement by Prime Minister John Key is very welcome news," says Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee.

"The Government is committed to the revitalisation of Christchurch and delivering the Christchurch Central Recovery Plan. The CBD has been all but closed since the earthquakes and government agencies had to relocate across the city in temporary office space."

"We plan to bring a total of 1700 government employees from 20 departments and agencies back into the CBD during 2016," says State Services Minister Jonathan Coleman. "This move will be a catalyst for more economic activity in the CBD, whether it is retail or associated businesses."

The Government agencies are expected to move into four new buildings around the Retail Precinct. The departmental offices will occupy about 24,000 square metres of space in the preferred buildings. The buildings will be built to at least 100 per cent of the building code.

"Negotiations over the leases are on-going with the developers of the preferred buildings, so we cannot go into more detail at this stage," says Mr Brownlee.

The Government's Property Management Centre of Expertise has been working with the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority to meet the priorities and challenges of the re-build, and initiated the accommodation project.

"These decisions will provide greater certainty for our public service in Christchurch and the community it serves," says Dr Coleman.

"This is a long-term solution for government office accommodation in Christchurch. It also reflects the central approach that the government is taking towards government accommodation, in contrast to how agencies previously negotiated leases in isolation."

The departments and agencies relocating include the Ministry of Social Development, New Zealand Transport Agency, ACC, Department of Conservation, Statistics NZ, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry of Health, Housing New Zealand Corporation and Department of Internal Affairs, along with a number of smaller agencies.

The Government has been advised the move will mean a total additional cost of about \$90 million over 20 years, or an average of \$5.6 million a year from 2016-17.