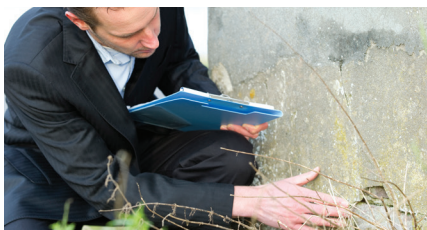


# Protecting the inspectors

The number of builders offering residential inspection services has grown dramatically. Before heading down this path, it's critical to understand your obligations or you could end up in serious litigation.

BY TONY CONDER, BOINZ TECHNICAL AND EDUCATIONAL MANAGER, WELLINGTON



**RESIDENTIAL INSPECTION** work is seen by builders as an extension of what they do and a way to grow business in a lucrative growth area with a low cost of entry.

However, most offer this service without any formal training or understanding of the strict legal requirements that surround it.

## Getting it wrong can be costly

NZS 4306:2005 *Residential property inspection* defines the standard of inspection and reporting required. In February 2013, a High Court case established that any person holding themselves out to be a residential property surveyor will have their performance judged against this standard.

The court decided there was a level of skill and care required if a person says they are

competent to carry out this work – especially so where the inspector contends that they have carried out the inspection to NZS 4306:2005.

In *Hepburn & Ors v Cunningham*, *Cunningham* stated that the cladding was 'good'. The cost of remediation clearly demonstrated that the cladding was not good and was leaking. It was determined that the tenor of the report had misled the purchasers, and a substantial award was made against the surveyor towards the cost of remediation.

## Programme protects surveyor and client

The poor quality and variability of reports offered to the public and the increasing danger to uninformed builders was recognised by Building Officials of New Zealand (BOINZ). It has developed a training and accreditation programme addressing the problems and inconsistencies.

The BOINZ Accredited Building Surveyor programme regularises the residential property inspection sector, providing protection

and good outcomes for both the surveyor and homeowner.

## Path to get accredited

The BOINZ Accredited Building Surveyor programme requires applicants to attend and pass the course. Once they have, candidates have to submit their reports for audit.

At this stage, the lessons learned during the course are applied to the outputs the surveyor provides to the public. The number of reports required to be submitted in order to gain accreditation can vary. When the technical panel is satisfied the applicant's reports are compliant with the standard, the candidate can become an accredited member of BOINZ.

BOINZ accredited surveyors must carry insurance and provide a Police check. A report quality audit is carried out at membership renewal.

Once they've passed the examination and the audit, the surveyor may provide reports that comply with NZS 4306:2005, are of a consistently high quality, meet the client's needs and protect the member from litigation. ◀

**For more** ▶ See [www.boinz.org.nz](http://www.boinz.org.nz).