



**New Zealand
Concrete Masonry
Association Inc.**

Media Release

10 October 2011

NZ Concrete Masonry Association Celebrates Over 50 Years of Activity

The New Zealand Concrete Masonry Association (NZCMA) has held its 50th AGM.

Formed in 1956, the NZCMA is one of New Zealand's oldest construction-related trade associations. Seeking to inspire wider and more innovative use of concrete masonry in the built environment, the NZCMA provides technical support to ensure that industry decision makers realise the full potential of concrete masonry.

Concrete masonry is a staple material of the New Zealand construction industry; a silent workhorse that encompasses reinforced concrete block and concrete block veneer, along with concrete block paving and flagstone paving for pedestrian walkways.

NZCMA president Dene Cook said the anniversary coincided with the association's update of the Concrete Masonry Manual, a significant resource for designers and specifiers, to reflect recent changes in industry standards and best practice.

"Through the dedication of its members the NZCMA will continue to promote the benefits of all concrete masonry systems as offering technically robust and seismically resilient solutions for a sustainable built environment that will safeguard New Zealanders over the next 50-years," Mr Cook said.

During the devastating Canterbury earthquakes correctly reinforced and constructed concrete masonry, designed in accordance with modern NZ Building Code requirements, performed admirably.

Concrete block paving, introduced to New Zealand through the activities of the NZCMA, also performed extremely well across Canterbury. Even where concrete block paving was disturbed as a result of the significant earthquake forces, its capital cost is recoverable as it is able to be reused following remedial work.

In addition to its structural prowess and durable low-maintenance, an important feature of reinforced concrete block masonry is that when utilised within passive solar design it can greatly reduce the heating/cooling costs of homes through its ability to trap, store and release the sun's heat.

As New Zealand looks to address the increasingly difficult issue of stormwater management arriving from urbanisation, permeable concrete block paving will become an important solution. By allowing stormwater to pass between each concrete block, permeable paving helps reduce the amount of stormwater entering drainage systems, and in turn rivers and streams, to prevent flooding, while its specially designed sub-base also filters out pollutants. The NZCMA has been pleased to see permeable paving featuring prominently in the Christchurch City Council's draft City Centre Plan.

Recently the NZCMA has been involved with the Cement and Concrete Association of New Zealand (CCANZ) and the Department of Building and Housing in the development of an Acceptable Solution (E2/AS3) for weathertight concrete and concrete masonry in the New Zealand Building Code. This will enable builders, designers and their clients to choose from a wider range of building materials, and in turn enable the weathertight advantages of concrete and concrete masonry systems to enhance New Zealand's building stock.

For further information please contact:

David Barnard
NZCMA Executive Officer
(04) 232 6684
admin@ccanz.org.nz