

## NEWSHUB\_BUILDING\_CONSENT\_INVESTIGATION.mp4

[00:00:00] Welcome back here with AM at six to seven hundreds of new homes across wa, Kaur, and Bay of Plenty and Central. The North Island could have been signed off inappropriately. It's been revealed that engineering design submitted to various councils were given the all clear by a member of engineering New Zealand, who is not a qualified professional, instead, using more qualified individuals identities without their permission. Engineering New Zealand ceo Richard Templer joins us this morning. Good morning, Richard.

[00:00:33] What, Anna, Laura,

[00:00:35] How did this happen?

[00:00:39] Uh, so this is a case of, uh, intentional misrepresentation. A uh, member of engineering New Zealand has essentially, uh, misappropriated, uh, the signatures and details of chartered professional engineers. Chartered professional engineers are very experienced engineers who've had their, uh, competency assessed and tested by senior engineers in their field. They've typically done at least five years post-graduate, uh, work under supervision. And so this person has, uh, misrepresented on their documents that the designs have been checked and approved and signed off by chartered professional engineers.

[00:01:23] What types of documents have, have they been signing off on, and what are the consequences of this?

[00:01:32] Uh, so I sh I should also add that our, um, we understand building owners and building occupiers will be very concerned about this, and this is why engineering New Zealand, the councils, the police and envy are working to resolve this as quickly as possible. The documents that have been signed off are producer statements and building consent documents. So producer statements are used by councils where someone has, uh, undertaken a piece of design, uh, on a, uh, a building or a renovation, and it requires engineering checking and approval. And it needs to be a high of a high standard. That's why it has to be signed off by a chartered professional engineer.

[00:02:15] So would this person have gone on site and inspected something and then incorrectly signed off, or is this something someone would do in an office?

[00:02:25] Uh, this is potentially could have happened in both those instances. So a person could have, uh, si uh, in this case it may be design documents that have been signed off, and it also may be site inspection documents. Um, as you, as you'd understand, there's a huge number of documents associated with building and potentially a very large number of buildings that may be impacted. So it's taking a significant amount of time for councils to work through and identify which documents have been correctly signed off and which haven't. So they're having to work with, uh, builders and designers across this whole area.

[00:03:05] So, Richard, are you saying that there could be some buildings out there at the moment that are unsafe, but the occupants or the owners believe that they are safe? Is that one of the, the consequences of this? Potentially?

[00:03:19] It's probably too early to say that. Uh, the initial examination is showing that some of the designs are not up to standard, but councils have to work with the, the, uh, builders and designers to have a look at what has actually been, uh, built, what has actually been constructed, and then they'll

have to work through each one of those, uh, situations, basically on a case by case basis. Obviously, if they find anything as, uh, unsafe, they'll want to work with the, the building owner, builders and designers to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

[00:03:55] I know that, as you said earlier, many um, agencies are investigating this at the moment. Do we know, firstly, it was just one person doing this and how many identities this person has been signing off with?

[00:04:11] Uh, so at the moment we understand that there is just one individual involved. Uh, we don't yet know the exact number of, um, uh, chartered professional engineers, uh, information they've been using. Uh, but to date it looks like it's a very small number

[00:04:31] And how many places could be affected? We heard, you know, there are three areas of New Zealand. Could it be more widespread than that? And hundreds of places, thousands of places? What are we talking, Richard?

[00:04:43] So the, the indications we've had to date is potentially, uh, uh, hundreds of properties. We've obviously sent this information out to all councils, and so far only councils in the areas you've described have found records, uh, that relate to this individual. But every council in New Zealand has been cheating.

[00:05:04] And just finally, what do you do if you are in this position, if you own a place that that is affected, what, what are your options at the moment?

[00:05:13] So if you have any concerns, a, about your building, any concerns about the way it may have been signed off or anything like that, please get in contact with your local council. Uh, or if you, uh, have concerns and, uh, you don't wish to contact the council, you can contact engineering New Zealand. Richard,

[00:05:32] How were the councils signing off? Do they not check when a, when an engineer or supposed engineer says, I'm an engineer, here's my signature. Do the council before they give consent, not say, who is this person? Are they legit?

[00:05:46] So the, the challenge in this case is because it's intentional misrepresentation. When the council would've seen the signature and the details of the engineer, they were completely legit. So you can look on our database. We have a database on online of, uh, engineers, which includes whether they're chartered professional engineers. So if the council had gone and checked, they would've seen that this person was a chartered professional engineer. That's why it's, uh, you know, it's a serious problem.

[00:06:17] Me. Thank you so much for your time this morning. That's engineering New Zealand ceo Richard Templer. Thank you. And if you are one of those effectors, um, get in touch with your insurance company as well, because you need to make sure that you've got insurance cover. Mm-hmm. Right. It's seven o'clock. This is am.