



NZ needs 3,000 Irish tradesmen

by **Conall Ó Fátharta**

ABOUT 3,000 tradespeople could find work in New Zealand helping to rebuild earthquake-ravaged Christchurch.

New Zealand immigration advisers Migration Associates have launched a "search and select" programme to help with the estimated NZ\$30 billion (€18bn) rebuild of the city.

The latest estimates from New Zealand's construction industry put the number of tradesworkers needed over the next five years at 150,000 — twice the number available in the country.

Borey Chum of Migration Associates said there is an immediate need for 25,000 tradespeople and it is hoped that one third of these can be sourced here or in Britain.

"Quality tradespeople across all sectors and construction professionals will be needed to complete the re-build of Christchurch. It is estimated that the immediate need for the re-build is 25,000 skilled building tradespeople," he said.

"We conservatively estimate that a third of that figure could be supplied from Ireland and the UK, whose tradespeople are deemed highly desirable because of their English as first language status and relatively high skill levels."

According to the immigration advisers, Irish tradespeople will require

a firm job offer in order to secure permanent residency in the country. Those with strong partnerships or links with employment agencies based there are preferable."

He added: "Those seriously considering a move to New Zealand, either on a temporary or permanent basis, should visit migration-associates.com for more information."

New Zealand's visa rules are less stringent than those for Australia, with age limits capped at 55 years rather than 45.

New Zealand does not require a mandatory English language test, a costly practical skills assessment or evidence of recent work experience, elements which have proved challenging for Irish people seeking to emigrate to Australia.

With an estimated 1,500 people leaving the country every week, a large crowd is expected at the **Working Abroad** Expo in the RDS on October 1 and 2.

It will feature the largest number of overseas companies and recruiters to date looking to employ directly from Ireland.

According to emigration expert Stephen **McLarnon**, the employment options abroad have completely changed even from one year ago with New Zealand, Australia's **Northern Territory**, Western Australia and Canada all offering thousands of jobs across a range of sectors.