

Earthquake strengthening start up to guide building owners

Newly formed Seitech has just completed seismic strengthening projects at Britomart Precinct and Auckland Airport's domestic terminal.

The company's launch comes at a time when building owners are coming under pressure to ensure their properties will perform well in the event of an earthquake.

New legislation will give building owners 20 years to either strengthen their earthquake-prone buildings to a minimum 34 percent of the new building standard, or demolish them.

The government estimates there are 15-25,000 at-risk buildings in New Zealand, and territorial authorities must have completed building assessments within the first five years of the legislation taking effect.

A publicly accessible register of earthquake-prone buildings will be established by the MBIE.

"This level of transparency is likely to help accelerate earthquake strengthening for many buildings," says Seitech founder and director Tim Jones.

"Building owners will come under pressure from both tenants and insurers to make the seismic upgrades in less than the allowable 20-year timeframe."

Seitech has established a joint venture with structural steel fabricator D&H Steel, which itself recently formed an alliance with StarSeismic, a manufacturer of buckling restrained brace systems for both new and existing structures.

The new partnership enhances Seitech's capability and capacity, and allows it to offer clients a complete implementation service: fabrication, construction and seismic engineering

"Seitech specialises in the implementation of seismic strengthening solutions," says Mr Jones. "We work alongside structural engineers to assess the 'buildability' and methodology of their designs, then we manage and implement the solution for the building owner."



