

BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND CONTROL

Developed by:



**BUILT
ENVIRONMENT
CAREER
STREAMS**

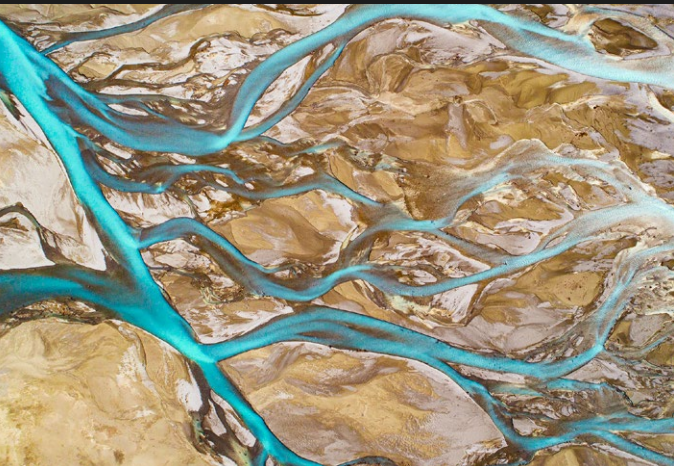
Ngā ara rerekē o te ao
hanga taiao

He ara whiria
A braided river



CHOOSING THE RIGHT CAREER STREAM FOR YOU

Inspired by Aotearoa New Zealand's many braided rivers, this helpful guide has been created for anyone entering or changing careers in the construction industry. Like a river, your chosen career stream may twist and turn throughout your career, but all streams can lead to rewarding and impactful roles – enabling you to make a tangible impact on New Zealand's built environments.



BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND CONTROL

This short guide gives you an overview of the opportunities and expectations within building compliance and control – including typical career pathways, key skills required, what the role looks like day-to-day, and how to get started.

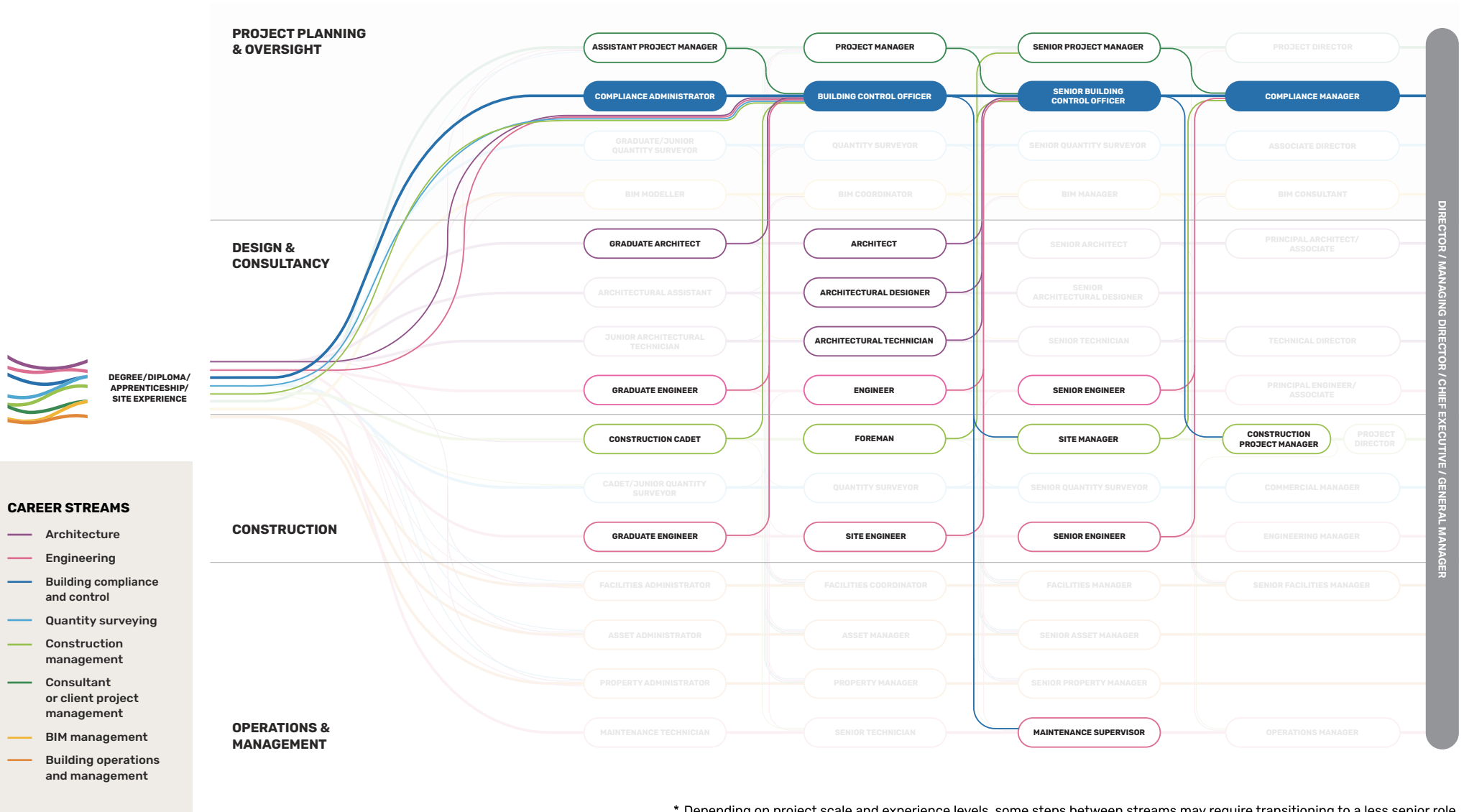
Roles in building compliance and control are essential in all stages of the building life cycle, including:

- Initial consenting and approvals in planning and design
- Building inspection and quality management during construction
- Ongoing health and safety management throughout all project phases
- Commissioning approvals and Code Compliance Certificate issuance at project completion
- Administration of fire safety compliance, evacuation procedures and building warrant of fitness systems throughout the operation of the building
- Investigation and technical assessment of failures such as weathertightness, seismic deficiencies and construction defects

Building Control Officers play a key role in ensuring construction projects meet building codes, safety standards, and legal requirements. **Building Surveyors** provide related compliance services such as pre-purchase inspections, forensic investigations of weathertightness, and seismic or defects analysis. Other compliance roles include fire safety, building warrant of fitness systems, health and safety management and compliance, and environmental building performance and sustainability compliance.

These roles combine technical expertise, on-site inspections, and high-stakes decision-making, offering a rewarding path for those who value precision, responsibility, and real-world impact. Work in compliance and control suits those who are detail-oriented and methodical, with strong communication and stakeholder management skills, the ability to solve complex problems, negotiate diplomatically, and remain resilient under pressure in situations with legal and safety implications.

BUILDING COMPLIANCE AND CONTROL CAREER STREAM



KEY PARTS OF THE ROLE

- **Communication under pressure** – Building compliance requires constant negotiation between competing interests. You'll need to be diplomatic and manage complex stakeholder relationships, while clearly explaining regulatory requirements that parties may not want to hear.
- **Making difficult decisions** – You'll need the confidence to make sound professional judgements when stakeholders have conflicting interests. Complex compliance situations rarely have solutions that please everyone.
- **High professional responsibility** – The role carries significant responsibility for public safety and your decisions will have lasting consequences for building safety and legal compliance.
- **Self-directed professional development** – Building codes and regulations change frequently, and compliance professionals often work alone without immediate peer support or mentoring. You'll need to be self-directed in your learning and stay connected with professional networks to maintain your knowledge and share problem-solving approaches.
- **Extensive documentation requirements** – You'll need to balance efficiency with the detailed documentation needed for legal and professional accountability. All compliance decisions require thorough record-keeping and reporting

ALTERNATIVE CAREER PATHS

After you've gained experience in building compliance and control, other roles that become possible include:

- **Client or consultant project management** – Representing owners in construction projects
- **Property development and investment advisory roles** – Providing input on development feasibility as well as technical due diligence on applications for consent
- **Building pre-purchase inspection** – Conducting property assessments and applying regulatory and technical knowledge to help purchasers make informed decisions
- **Construction management** – Applying compliance specialisation and quality management experience throughout delivery
- **Education and training** – Tertiary education, corporate training, or professional development roles

"I've got to understand the legal framework that I have to establish, and work out which pathway I want to take to achieve all of those things. It often doesn't keep everyone happy, and I know that, but I need to decide which solution I'm comfortable with."

- Daniel Weatherill, C3 Building Compliance

SALARY BANDS*

	Building compliance administrator	Building control officer	Senior building officer	Compliance manager
Minimum time in role	No direct progression	4-6 years (destination role)	5-8 years (destination role)	(destination role)
Salary range	\$50,000 - \$70,000	\$70,000 - \$110,000	\$85,000 - \$130,000	\$100,000 - \$150,000

**Salaries and time in roles is indicative only and can vary significantly based on experience, performance, firm size and structure, regional location, specialisation, and market conditions.*

ROLE OVERVIEW

KEY DAILY ACTIVITIES

- Processing building consent applications and reviewing plans against building codes
- Conducting on-site building inspections and assessments
- Resolving complex compliance issues and illegal building work situations
- Communicating with councils, builders, and property owners about consent requirements
- Writing reports and documentation for consent decisions and inspection outcomes

WHERE YOU COULD WORK

Territorial authority (council) – Working directly for local government, processing consents and inspections

Private consultancy – Specialist compliance consulting to construction teams, developers, and government agencies

WHO YOU'LL WORK WITH

Architects, engineers, design consultants, builders, contractors, project managers, property owners, developers, council planning and building departments, regulatory bodies, and government agencies

TYPICAL WORK ARRANGEMENTS

- Mix of office-based assessment work and site-based inspections
- Physical fitness required for site-based roles and building inspections
- Standard business hours with occasional evening or weekend work for urgent matters
- Limited remote working due to site inspection requirements
- Professional, client-facing role requiring clear communication

WHAT TO EXPECT

REWARDS AND SATISFACTION

- Influence over project direction from inception
- Professional fulfilment – from ensuring building safety to protecting community wellbeing
- Variety of experience working with different building types, construction methods, and technical challenges
- Developing deep knowledge of construction methods, building codes, and regulatory frameworks

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- Generally more predictable hours than contractor roles
- Project deadline pressures can require concentrated periods and longer hours
- Meeting-intensive schedule requires good time management
- Increasing flexibility with hybrid working arrangements





GETTING STARTED

The qualifications needed for a technical role in building compliance and control are specified in the NZ Building Regulations. You'll also need practical knowledge of the construction industry and current building practices, construction methods, and materials.

IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

- **Gain relevant qualifications** – National Diploma in Building Surveying, or diploma or degree in Engineering, Architecture, Building Science, Construction Management, or other approved qualification
- **Seek site experience** – Gain experience in a related construction role (such as building surveying, construction or architecture) to develop your knowledge of design and construction processes
- **Connect with councils** – Understand local council processes and compliance requirements
- **Develop communication skills** – Essential for managing stakeholder relationships

HOW TO GET INTO A BUILDING COMPLIANCE ROLE

- Start in council administrative roles and work toward technical positions
- Consider private sector entry if council positions are limited
- Look for apprenticeship or intern opportunities with experienced practitioners

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- Construction methodologies and building systems
- Building codes and regulatory interpretation and application
- Inspection techniques and compliance assessment methods
- Legal frameworks and statutory requirements
- Communication and conflict resolution
- Risk management and liability
- Documentation and report writing for consent decisions and inspection outcomes
- Quality assurance and inspection techniques

CAREER STORY



Daniel Wetherill – Business Director,
C3 Building Compliance

“I asked one of the building inspectors if I could go with them for the day and learn what his role was...I had the best work day I have ever had... loved the element of getting out and seeing buildings.”

Daniel Wetherill’s career has focused on building control and compliance, with roles in both council and consultancy. Born into a construction family in the UK and influenced by his father’s advice that “no one was doing it”, Daniel left school at 15 to pursue quantity surveying. Although he completed his construction management diploma, the 2008 GFC shattered his QS aspirations and taught him that he wasn’t a “numbers person”.

After immigrating to New Zealand with his family in 2011, Daniel discovered building control by chance. His father secured a role at Thames-Coromandel District Council and Daniel used that connection to explore his own opportunities. “I asked one of the building inspectors if I could go with them for the day and learn about his role. I had the best work day I have ever had – I loved the element of getting out and seeing buildings.”

Starting out in a casual role with the council, Daniel progressed to full-time employee in building control. After a move to Auckland, he worked for a building control firm, moving up to a team leader role. When legislation changed and formal qualifications were required, he completed his Diploma in Building Surveying through night school.

In 2021, Daniel established his own company, which has grown over five years from a solo consultant to seven employees. He has also worked as an educator, training others and developing leadership skills. Daniel enjoys the variety and complexity of building control work. His day involves processing building consents, reviewing plans against building codes, and solving complex compliance puzzles. He particularly enjoys the problem-solving aspect and collaborating with colleagues to resolve challenging situations.

Beyond the technical work, Daniel feels he has evolved into “a people person” who finds fulfilment in developing his team. For Daniel, building those relationships while nurturing the growth of others provides immense satisfaction in his chosen career.

EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

EMPLOYER TYPE

Territorial authorities (councils)

- Greater employment security and structured conditions
- Comprehensive compliance experience across building types
- Professional development support and peer networks
- Structured processes and clear regulatory frameworks
- Potential for broad geographic experience across different council areas

Private sector compliance consulting

- Specialisation in specific building types or compliance areas
- Greater flexibility in service delivery and working arrangements
- Entrepreneurial opportunities and potentially higher earnings
- Business risk management requirements
- Direct client relationship management

PROJECT VARIATIONS

Larger projects

- Higher complexity, multiple experts involved, standardised approaches

Smaller projects

- More individual responsibility, direct client contact, broader skill requirements

REGIONAL VARIATIONS

Regional centres

- Broader role scope combining consent processing and inspections
- More varied work but less specialist support
- Stronger community connections but potentially isolated professional development

Main centres

- Specialist roles with focused responsibilities
- Better professional development opportunities and peer support
- Higher volumes but more structured processes and increased role specialisation

NEXT STEPS AND RESOURCES

BUILDING YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

Industry connections

- Attend building industry conferences and compliance training events
- Join local construction industry associations and building professional groups
- Participate in council and government consultation processes
- Build relationships with architects, engineers, and contractors in your region

Upskilling and continuing education

- Building code updates and regulatory interpretation training
- Inspection techniques and compliance assessment methodologies
- Legal framework updates and statutory requirement changes
- Communication and conflict resolution skills development
- Risk management and professional liability awareness

Industry resources

- Building Officials Institute of New Zealand (BOINZ) boinz.org.nz
- New Zealand Institute of Building Surveyors (NZIBS) buildingsurveyors.co.nz
- Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) building.govt.nz
- Local council building departments – for regional compliance requirements
- Building compliance training providers – for ongoing professional development

MAKING YOUR DECISION

Building compliance offers job security, professional recognition, and the satisfaction of protecting public safety through building regulation. Consider your tolerance for legal responsibility, preference for detailed technical work, and interest in regulatory frameworks. This field rewards careful attention to detail, strong communication skills, and continuous learning about building technology and regulations.

This guide draws from research including in-depth interviews with construction professionals across New Zealand, industry surveys, and analysis of career progression patterns. For the complete research report and additional career pathway information, visit buildinginstitute.nz/resource/file/27



IS THIS THE RIGHT CAREER STREAM FOR YOU?

A career in **building compliance and control** is more than just a job. It's a pathway to professional growth, community contribution, and long-term job satisfaction. Whichever career stream you choose, you'll be playing an important role in protecting communities, contributing to high-quality construction, and making a tangible and lasting difference to New Zealand's built environment.



GET THE GUIDE

Use the QR code to download the full Built Environment Career Streams guide and explore the many rewarding pathways in the construction sector.

Or head to the website using this link: buildinginstitute.nz/resource/file/27