

Media Release

Steady economic data prior to June quakes

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Earthquake Recovery Minister Gerry Brownlee has welcomed the release of economic indicators showing some promising areas of economic activity in Canterbury, but he notes that most of the data is pre-June, so doesn't show the affect of the major quakes which hit on 13 June 2011.

[Canterbury Economic Indicators – June 2011](#) [PDF 500KB]

"The indicators released today by the Ministry of Economic Development are consistent with recent Treasury, Infometrics and NZIER reports which show business confidence levels in the Canterbury region are holding up," Mr Brownlee said.

Most of the latest batch of indicators covers the period from February to early June.

"The latest data shows an improvement in economic activity, which is consistent with the feeling on the ground prior to June 13 – Canterbury really was getting its confidence back ahead of the magnitude 5.6 and 6.3 events," Mr Brownlee said.

"I have asked officials to monitor the effects of the 13 June quakes closely."

The latest data shows trade continued to grow following last September's initial event, manufacturing was strong, and job ads increased.

"Cantabrians are picking themselves up yet again," Mr Brownlee said.

"We've delivered some certainty to the housing market in recent weeks with the initial announcement of rebuilding zones, especially for the 100,000 or so owners of properties in the green zone who can get on with repairing and rebuilding.

"This work alone is going to require massive input from skilled tradespeople."

The new indicators mimic the initial release of data on June 1 in many respects, with manufacturing and exporting driving economic growth, and the retail and tourism sectors struggling.

Key trends show:

- Consumer spending ahead of the June 13 events was consistent with post February 22 data, at around 5 per cent below nationwide levels.
- In May manufacturing reached its highest level since November 2010 thanks to improved production and new orders.
- Despite infrastructure damage caused by the earthquakes, exports and imports from Canterbury's ports have continued to increase.
- Although net migration for Christchurch was 462 in May 2011 this had slowed from 717 in March 2011. This is well below the levels quoted by some commentators.
- Retail sales were down by almost 8 per cent in Canterbury and 11 per cent in Christchurch.

This announcement was originally published on cera.govt.nz and beehive.govt.nz

- The number of businesses leaving the region is also greater than this time last year but the rate of departure has declined.

"June's event was a setback for Cantbarians, and I'm sure future data will show that in some sectors, but I still get a sense of great resilience and positivity from those on the ground.

"Large numbers of people in the government and private sectors are working very hard alongside our hardest hit citizens to rebuild and recover, and I remain extremely confident of the region's future," Mr Brownlee said.

The Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) is responsible for rebuilding greater Christchurch and its surrounds, and supporting the welfare of its residents.