



February 2022

To whom it may concern,

This letter is to offer some perspective as to the state the roofing industry finds itself in and what that means for you as a customer at this point in time.

The construction sector as a whole is experiencing unprecedented pressures, due to global supply chain issues, COVID-19, labour shortages and unprecedented demand, added to other previously existing issues present in the sector also.

The Omicron variant has now added to the already significant COVID-19 work management requirements. Larger member companies are trying to operate in separate bubbles, while that is not an option for smaller companies. We are expecting staff absences to impact on productivity as infections rise. In addition to this, some staff have, as is their right, decided not to be vaccinated. Roofing companies do not have a 'subs bench' where they can call up replacements. This also makes staffing allocation more difficult where only vaccinated people are allowed on some sites.

RANZ members have been very proactive training people but a recent survey has shown that the vast majority of member companies are short of experienced roofers. This is a common problem amongst all trades. The huge demand for construction and therefore, high work volume, has exacerbated this problem.

Our roofing supply chain has definitely had and will continue to have problems for quite some time with no foreseeable solution or end date, no longer making it possible to guarantee delivery times across many roofing products. Our members can only pass on what they are told from their suppliers. Their suppliers are also at the mercy of their own suppliers and the logistics network both locally and globally. There has been a rationalisation of some product lines to limit choice but increase stock levels. This approach helps but does not solve the problems immediately.

The suppliers to industry created a very high expectation through great service levels in the past. It used to be possible to place an order and within 24-48 hours have most roof materials manufactured or dispatched and delivered to a site! This in turn enabled roofers to place orders in a just-in-time fashion. The sheer volume of work out there has put significant pressure on factories. Production lines run at a certain speed, limited by machines speeds, as well as staff at these plants who are under a lot of pressure as well.

To bring a roof together to be able to start construction unhindered requires a myriad of different elements to be brought together. It has become increasingly common for other parts of a build to not be ready for the roof to be installed (due to some of the pressures highlighted above), which prevents the roofer from starting. In reality they have to keep assigned staff busy by assigning them to sites that are ready and can't simply stand them down until your site is ready. It is a queue process and when you lose your place, our members will do what they can to get it back as soon as is practicable. As is the nature of roofing, weather is another contributing factor to unforeseen delays.

A lost day due to weather is just that - lost. Your roofer will have to make up the time lost plus find more time to keep all of the work moving.

There are inflationary prices coming through from suppliers and additional costs which are unable to be absorbed by roofing companies. While it is possible to get a fixed price quote, we suggest that you note that quotes usually have a limited time that it is valid until and some quotes have conditions attached where the price may change to reflect increases as and when these arise.

We certainly recommend members communicate well with their customers. It is rarely a pleasant conversation that there will be delay on your project. But much of what is occurring is out of our members control and they too are frustrated that they can't always give the service that they want to give.

It is what it is people, and we have to tolerate it from all sides. Again thanks for your patience.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Graham Moor". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Graham Moor  
RANZ CEO

P.S. I had my own roofing business and have been in the industry for over 40 years. I understand what is going on. Our members have endured through the pandemic and we all realise there is some distance to go before we see a return to whatever normal is going to be. They are doing the best they can in circumstances which have added numerous dynamics and situations that we have not seen or had on such a scale.

From an industry perspective and on behalf of our members – thank you very much for your patience.