



NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY
WAKA KOTAHI

Level 4, BNZ Building
354 Victoria Street
PO Box 973, Waikato Mail Centre
Hamilton 3240
New Zealand
T 64 7 958 7220
F 64 7 957 1437
www.nzta.govt.nz

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Excellent progress on new Kopu Bridge

I am pleased to advise that nearly 40 people are now directly employed on the Kopu Bridge project as the new structure begins to take shape over the Waihou River.

Construction on the \$47 million project was launched by Prime Minister John Key in July last year when the contract was awarded to HEB Construction. Most full-time staff from HEB are now based permanently on the site, working hard to have the bridge completed by mid-2012.

The project has also provided jobs for local workers who are providing a range of services. As construction continues over the next two years, it is anticipated that at least 10 more people will be employed full-time on site and another 100 downstream, supplying materials and providing supporting services.

Almost all materials for the project will be New Zealand-sourced. Locally-sourced products include crushed aggregate from Matatoki's Leach Quarry which has been used as embankment filling. To date, around 185,000 tonnes of fill has been used on the site. Approximately 50,000 tonnes will also be required for stage two and three of the embankment filling.

Complex monitoring equipment installed before Christmas is constantly measuring settlement and ground water pressure on the site to ensure the swampy ground can handle the new loading. Because the ground near the river is so soft, it will need time to settle and strengthen as the project progresses through different stages.

Before Christmas, work began on building a platform from the western bank out into the river. This western platform is expected to be completed by June this year and will support the piling rig and all heavy plant and machinery needed for construction of the piers, bridge beams and deck. Once complete, another platform will be built out from the eastern bank. For your interest, a recent photograph is included.

Thank you again for your continuing interest in the Kopu Bridge project. If you would like to receive regular email updates about progress on the bridge, please email leanne.ross@nzta.govt.nz and we will add you to our list. In the meantime, you can find about more about the project by going to www.nzta.govt.nz/kopubridge.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kaye Clark'.

Kaye Clark
State Highway Manager