

Lessons learned from one of New Zealand's most challenging civil engineering projects: rebuilding the earthquake damaged pipes, roads, bridges and retaining walls in the city of Christchurch 2011 - 2016.

## Hays NAWIC Excellence Awards 2016 submission: Category: Professional Tradeswoman of the Year – Jane Taylor

**Story:** Women in Construction

**Theme:** People and Culture

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An award submission nominating Jane Taylor for the Hays NAWIC Excellence Awards 2016:  
Category: Professional Tradeswoman of the Year.

This document has been provided as an example of a tool that might be useful for other organisations undertaking complex disaster recovery or infrastructure rebuild programmes.

For more information about this document, visit [www.scirtlearninglegacy.org.nz](http://www.scirtlearninglegacy.org.nz)



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Hays NAWIC Excellence  
Awards 2016

**CATEGORY:**  
Professional  
Tradeswoman of the  
Year

Nominee: Jane Taylor

## Biography / CV Summary Page

Jane's personal statement on her CV reads like this: *"I am an enthusiastic and reliable worker with an excellent knowledge of the Traffic Management Industry. I enjoy a challenge and am an honest person with high personal integrity and a great sense of humor. I have a willingness to learn and embrace new opportunities. I am able to meet deadlines and can work within a team or on my own and I really enjoy assisting and interacting with people."*

Jane has over 30years experience in the trades arenas of Horticulture and Civil Construction. Over those years her yearning to work in the outdoors, in practical ways and in roles that contribute to her community have seen her continually learn new skills (see a summary of the last 15 years below) and quietly challenge stereotypes. She also is great with people which has seen her move into Supervisory roles in both her trade areas. Now, she is taking that continual enthusiasm for learning and sharing it with others, being responsible for the training of over 100 STMS (Site Traffic Management Supervisors) who are working in the Christchurch Rebuild.

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

March 2016 – present	<b>Workplace Trainer – Traffic Management</b> Seconded to the SCIRT (Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team) from City Care
Dec 2013 – March 2016	<b>Traffic Management Supervisor</b> City Care Limited
March 2013 – Dec 2013	<b>Traffic Management and Plan Drawer</b> Fulton Hogan
May 2008 – March 2013	<b>Traffic Management Crew</b> City Care Limited
1999 – May 2008	<b>Working Foreperson – Garden and Parks</b> City Care Limited
1990 – 1999	<b>Trade Certified Gardener</b> Works Operations – Christchurch City Council
1986 – 1990	<b>Horticulture and Gardening Apprenticeship</b> Paparua County Council

TRAINING	
2015	Work based First Aid Training
2014	Infrastructure Work Level 2
2014	Level 2/3 STMS Refresher
2011	Level 2/3 STMS Refresher
2009	Operate as a STMS for Level 2 and 3 Roads
2008	Level 2/3 STMS – Non Practicing
2007	Level 1 STMS Refresher
2006	Growsafe Introductory Certificate
2006	Fire and Rescue Services – Vegetation (Level 2)
2006	Agribusiness Introductory Agrichemicals Course
2004	Communication Skills for Difficult Situations (University of Canterbury Centre for Continuing Education)
2004	Level 1 STMS Supervisor
2004	Refresher – Level 1 STMS
2003 – 2004	CCC Rural Fire Authority Certificate of Appreciation for fire
2003	Microsoft Word 2000 Essentials Authorised Desktop
2003	Quadrant 4 Leadership Training
2001	Level 1 STMS
2001	Chainsaw Refresher Course
2001	Certificate of Registration as a NZ Horticulture Industry Training Organisation (Inc.) Workplace Assessor
2001	Humanizeme Precognitive Science Personal Development Program Phase 1
2001	Level 1 STMS
2001	Growsafe Introductory Course

Greater Christchurch has experienced over 13,000 earthquakes since September 2010. The most devastating in February 2011, killing 185 people, irreparably damaging around two thirds of the city's commercial buildings and liquefying about a third of its land area. Entire suburbs have since been disestablished with a massive rebuilding programme underway both above and below ground.

One organisation involved in that rebuild programme is the Stronger Christchurch Infrastructure Rebuild Team (SCIRT). Underscored by an Alliance contract between 5 large Civil Construction companies (City Care, Downer, Fletcher, Fulton Hogan and McConnell Dowell) and 3 client organisations (Christchurch City Council, CERA, New Zealand Transport Authority), SCIRT is tasked with rebuilding the earthquake damaged infrastructure assets – the publicly owned pipes, roads, bridges and retaining walls. This involves over 2.5 billion dollars of work over 700 projects in 5 ½ years by 2,000 team members seconded from over 100 organisations of different sizes and natures.

With around 120 civil construction projects happening at any one time and a city that needs to keep safely moving, exemplary traffic management (for novices that looks like a lot of road cones!) is very important. Underpinning that is capable men and women who understand the fundamentals of how to ensure that the traffic management layout is compliant, relevant to the site and most importantly keeps both the workers and the public safe.

Jane Taylor is the capable Workplace Trainer - Traffic Management who has been seconded to the SCIRT programme and works with around 100 Site Traffic Management Supervisors (STMS) training and coaching them on the job in how to reach the pinnacle of their trade. She has been seconded from City Care, her employer organisation, but works across company boundaries with STMS's from the other four Civil Construction companies and their sub-contractor companies who supply them with Traffic Management resources.

When she applied for the secondment opportunity she was a stand-out candidate. "Selecting Jane as our Traffic Management Trainer was an easy decision: not only did she have a wealth of experience in the trade she has the absolute right personality fit of a person who would work alongside others and coach them towards the right way of doing things rather than tell them what to do" said Mason Tolerton, Training and Peak Performance Manager, Jane's Manager at SCIRT. Jane works alongside 5 other trainers, all men. But of course this is not new territory to Jane. Her work history has a common theme of her being a woman pioneer in fields that are historically male dominated.

Jane left Hornby High School with her sixth form certificate at the age of 16 and sought out her first job. She applied for a four year apprenticeship in the Paparua County Council park and recreation department in amenity horticulture and turf management. She had to patiently wait a month while the council left the job open as they were waiting for a male to apply. At the close of the month she was still the only applicant so they had to give her the job. So begun Janes career in the trades.

After her apprenticeship, she became a trade certified gardener and she worked in parks and reserves around the Canterbury region for over 23 years. For the last 7 years of this period of time she was in a leadership role as the Heritage Foreperson for the Garden Heritage team which maintained all the high-profile parks and reserves and homestead gardens around Christchurch.

Having therefore reached this pinnacle in her trade, rather than staying and stagnating, Jane craved a new challenge so took up an opportunity in the City Care Traffic Management division in 2007. There were not that many people, let alone women, in traffic management team with only 4 in the crew and 3 in the office. There were only a handful of women in traffic management across the whole industry when Jane started in 2007. Jane was the first woman to be employed in Traffic Management in City Care.

Because Jane enjoyed the industry and the kind of work, she put her hand up to work the Friday night shift assisting the cleaning crew by driving the big compactor trucks. Jane continued to do that job every Friday night into the wee hours of the morning for nine years. When driving the compactor trucks at City Care some of the guys were "a little bit funny about it". She often had an older guy as a partner. He drove the truck and she emptied the bins. He was supposed to be her protector but the standing

joke was that she would be better able protect herself by the time he would have been able to make his way out of the truck. "Some of the guys got a bit protective of you. It was actually quite nice" recalled Jane.

When you meet Jane she strikes you as quiet, humble, switched on and a 'just get it done' kind of a person: all the traits of a valuable tradesperson. It is these attributes that have not only meant that she has been successful in her endeavors but have proven to be the winning formulae for her breaking down barriers to her getting a foothold in the male dominated industries that interest her, and to pave the way for other women. When asked about the highlights of her career to date, Jane responded "I think being one of the first women in traffic and breaking down the barriers that the guys have about me being a female."

The first big job in traffic Jane went on she did not get much help from the guys she was working with for the first 6 weeks and then slowly but surely they started giving her a hand because they realised she was very competent. That is how Jane builds credibility and connections: quietly being very capable at her job. The more she did this she also built up relationships. She measured her success when it came to the point that the men would ask her to go and assist them on their job because they knew that she would do an excellent one.

Her excellence was recognised in 2015 when one of her Traffic Management sites was awarded a plaque for best STMS site for the month. It was for Pages Road which is in the Eastern suburbs and one of the most challenging traffic management areas due to the extent of the earthquake repairs happening there.

Jane is keen to assist in ensuring that the opportunities that she had been provided would be made available to other women. She put her hand up to be part of a collaborative group that was established at SCIRT in 2013 whose aim it was to "Raise the visibility and enable women in Construction across the SCIRT programme". She was one of the founding members and is still an active participant to this day. One of the groups aims was to increase the number of women working in operational roles (traditionally male dominated) by the time the project finished in December 2016. The group have really been making a positive impact and Jane has played a strong part in that.

For example, since the earthquakes, Jane reports that the City Care Traffic Management team size has grown significantly to around 105 in the field (including temps and subcontractors). What is impressive is how many women that City Care now employ in that discipline. "I think we've got more females than males now actually", says Jane with a smile.

Probably the biggest impact Jane has had on women joining the industry is just being herself and getting on with her job. She is a visible reminder of what is possible. "I've had other women saying to me I came into the industry because I used to see you standing on such and such a road and I'd never seen a women doing it before. So I thought I'd give it a go because you're always out there lugging stuff around so we thought it was something we could do. I've had that comment from a few people" said Jane. In her training role now she visits other traffic management companies and they have told her they are employing more women.

A strong reason behind Jane's nomination is her connection with learning. Her training record on her CV is astounding demonstrating her thirst for learning new things and new skills. She also stretches herself by putting her hand up for new opportunities, growing her knowledge in application on the job. Not resting on her laurels in her current role as a SCIRT Workplace Trainer, on the 18<sup>th</sup> July Jane is enrolled to undertake a National Certificate in Adult Education, Level 4.

The ultimate mark of a top tradesperson is the footprint of their skills left behind when they leave. Jane has already proven she has that in her day to day Traffic Management work. But what is not as visible is the impact and imprint she is making on the over 100 men and women she is working alongside to improve their trade skills. Jane's legacy from the Christchurch Earthquakes will be an industry that has more women in it, but also an industry that is more skilled – quite a powerful, wide ranging and sustainable impact. Hence, her nomination for Tradeswoman of the Year.



Jane Taylor – seconded to the SCIRT programme by City Care Workplace Trainer, Traffic Management



Jane Taylor (back row, third from the left), member of SWIC (SCIRT Women in Construction) group