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IN OTHER NEWS

Our Petition

The Federation Committee has been busy getting a submission ready for the Social Services Committee which has requested more information about the petition put forward by the Federation asking for a Commission of inquiry into the Governance of the industry.

The document is rapidly approaching 50 pages and outlines 112 questions which show the extent of the issues the industry is dealing with.

This report will be submitted today 8 June 2012. We hope the Social Services Committee feels the issues need addressing.

Thanks to all those who signed the petition and helped with the submission.

How similar is this?

A woman who admitted hitting her eight-year-old son has

Steaming Away

The Prime Minister has braved showers to see off three New Zealand boats taking part in the Jubilee flotilla, on London's River Thames. In the meantime parts of the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry are steadily getting up steam in their move away from the incompetence of the governance over our industry.

How far away is a total blockade of the Board's activities? This week we have look at the Board's update of the Register and the views of a few people who took time to write to us.

Changes to the Boards online public register

In the May version of the Board's Info Brief the Board outlined their plan to update the online public register. We outlined what they said in last week's edition of "Fellow Practitioner."

Remember the Board asked tradespeople to log in to the register and check that their address details are correct before information is made public on June 25 and that some of the fields would be changed and that they will now also contain information about any licence conditions, suspension, cancellation or disciplinary action taken in respect of a tradesperson in the last three years.

At the time of writing we logged on to make the relevant changes but there are NO changes to the field names and there doesn't seem to be a mandatory field 'preferred contact information'.

Under the Privacy Act the Board is required to take all reasonable steps to ensure that, having regard to the purpose for which the information is proposed to be used, the information is accurate, up to date, complete, relevant, and not misleading. The Board has asked in a newsletter, (that not everyone receives or reads), for people to update their details. We feel that as not everyone reads the "Info Brief" it is not unreasonable to expect the Board to contact each registered person to ensure the information is accurate.

The PGD Act 2006 provides the Registrar with discretionary powers to withhold information. If there is a reason why a tradesperson would object to their contact details being made public, an online option will be available to apply to the Registrar for it to be withheld. We haven't been able to find this online option either.

We recommend that if you do not wish some of your information to be made public then you make the application to the Registrar, if the online form ever becomes available. (And if it doesn't then a letter to the Privacy Commissioner might be in order). It's worthy to note that as the provision is there for information to be withheld then we believe the onus is on the Registrar to prove the benefit to the public outweighs the affect on the individual who has requested the information to be withheld.

had her conviction for assault quashed by the Court of Appeal.

The woman and her partner admitted they had smacked the child and were convicted in the District Court and sentenced to community work.

The partner was subsequently cleared on appeal to the High Court.

The woman had sought expert help to deal with the child's behavioural difficulties and had tried various non-physical measures.

The court said the penalties were out of all proportion to the gravity of the offending.

The woman has already served her sentence and lost her job. Family First director Bob McCroskie said the case sent a warning to all parents about what they admit to authorities regarding smacking.

"This mother has had her career damaged, lost income and faced legal fees, and it's caused irreparable damage to the family. "She was honest, asked for help, went to professionals who never came running with assistance but were quick to prosecute."

We read this article and thought how similar it is to the Paul Gee case where Paul was upfront and honest with the Board and found himself the subject of a "witch

With regard to disciplinary issues being in the Public Register we mentioned last week there should be a right of reply. Principle 7(3) of the Privacy Act may cover this:

Where an agency that holds personal information is not willing to correct that information in accordance with a request by the individual concerned, the agency shall, if so requested by the individual concerned, take such steps (if any) as are reasonable in the circumstances to attach to the information, in such a manner that it will always be read with the information, any statement provided by that individual of the correction sought.

If you have been disciplined but have a comment about it that you would want to ensure everyone that sees your information can read, then we urge you to request the publish your comments under the disciplinary charges or information.

Another issue we feel is very relevant is the charging for copies of information held on the register. Under section 82 of the PGD Act 2006 the Board may charge the public for copies of the information on the register.

The only people who benefit from this information being made available is the Public - so why shouldn't they pay for it. The industry doesn't get many opportunities to recover the costs incurred but this is one instance we are legislated to recover costs so hopefully the Board will be looking at ways to prevent the public from printing and copying the information on the register without paying.

The Public pay to find information about the registered owners of motor vehicles so why not pay to find information about us. The Board have a lot to do in the next 16 days.

This is how two people felt about the situation and put their thoughts on the Plumber's Forum, www.plumbers.co.nz

« Reply #10 on: May 31, 2012, 11:10:02 PM »

Well the only information that I wish to be made available to the public is my name and cell number and licensing details and perhaps the suburb that I'm located in. Being self employed and operating out of my home and in consideration to my family member's privacy I would object to my email and home phone contact to be in the public arena.

I note that you can't look up your doctor's details or almost any other professional's details so how this got past the privacy act is beyond me. I don't recall ever being contacted by the board about this tho I might have missed it..... Crikey what next!

« Reply #11 on: May 31, 2012, 11:26:08 PM »

Oh well I'll just change my details around a bit. If they are going to get silly on it so will I. I live at home and value my privacy.

Next they will want to know where we keep the spare key at home in case a PGDB investigator needs to dig through our personal belongings/toss our house while we are out working so they can build stronger cases against us to keep up the 100% conviction rate they are so proud of.

hunt”.

He went to the authorities for help regarding another practitioner and was fobbed off.

The enforcement was out of proportion with the gravity of alleged offending.

He had already served his sentence and had lost his savings, his reputation, and time from his family and his family income.

Paul went to the so called professional organisation that turned on him and prosecuted him to the full extent of the law.

It would put you off telling them anything.

A Poets Perception.

THE FIELD IS
MONEY, POWER
AND BUSINESS,
WHICH WAS ONCE
A MEADOW FOR
ALL.... NOW RULED
BY A FEW

A mine field made of our industry and lives,

What is a minefield.....

An area where, if you are unfortunate to venture or must venture, you risk injury or worse.....

Placed there to protect from trespassers and an effective deterrent to those who are aware of its presence, put in place by indiscriminate assassins..... in a place that was once safe to tread.

Man working in this industry makes you feel a bit like a sex offender. I'm one incorrectly pipe clipped job away from getting an electronic monitored ankle bracelet put on me so the community and my plumbing probation officer can track my movements in case I re-offend and do plumbing/gasfitting work with clips spaced at 1.2m not 1.0m lol...

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I was in fits of laughter last week when I read the Boards "Info Brief" and saw Mr Bickers view as follows;

"Having considered the latest submissions on CPD, it is evident there remains a wide range of views amongst tradespeople as to the value of CPD with some expressing the view that its worthwhile while others continue to express the view that it is not the intent of the legislation".

Mr Bickers quote from Harry Duynhoven on his introducing of the Energy Safety Bill was interesting but should be read in the context that there was considerable debate and alterations after that statement.

Mr Bickers should turn his attention to and consider the following facts and how the statement of Mr Duynhoven evolved into the final 2006 Act. That is why we have Section 32 and possibly the reason why his Board is held in such disdain through their ongoing lack of understanding of the 2006 Act.

One intent of the Act is simple, a five year license. Parliament does not want tradesmen in a situation where we are continually having to relicense on an annual basis with the associated compliance costs and frustrations of the silly little courses - the Board's understanding of the Act is pitiful.

Look at these comments after the legislation was passed.

PHIL HEATLEY (National—Whangarei) Hansard 21 November 2006 said this: The legislation allows for different classes of licences and associated licensing standards. Originally in the bill the licences would last for up to 2 years but, of course, that provision has now been extended to 5 years, because it was madness to go through the licensing process every couple of years. The cost involved and the time involved would have been pretty tough for tradespeople, who are in short supply and who, on the whole, are doing a very, very good job, so we extended that to 5 years. It provides for licensing of employers for up to 5 years to ensure that their employees are licensed and supervised

KATHERINE RICH(National): Hansard 16 November 2006 There are also some good changes to the licensing regime itself. In the original Energy Safety Review Bill it was suggested that plumbers would need to renew their licences every 2 years. Two years is a very short space of time, and the committee members felt it was important to extend that out to 5 years. We all understand the importance of competence; we all want to know when we hire a plumber, and he or she comes into our home, that that person is competent. But on the flip side of that, we do not want plumbers in the situation where they are continually having to relicense; there are compliance costs and frustration associated with a 2- year-licensing regime. I think that this change is a win, also.

If you are in the know you are looked after, you are protected, these mines come with a friend or foe option....

The rest of us....putting trust in the map provided by those that placed the mines, maps that change, to be sold to us every so often, a must have book of regs that can be ignored at will.....

The only people truly safe are those that put the bombs in the floor.....their fool proof plan is not to go in the field at allJUST MAKE A BUSINESS OF MAKING MINE FIELDS

Most of these law makers, so called expert gasfitters couldn't fit a ducks arse to a pond.....and we follow them???

Go figure.....

Another town visit

The Federation is happy to be off to New Plymouth on 28 June 2012 for a meeting to give our thoughts on the Governance of the industry.

Hopefully we can have a good turnout like Palmerston North.

More details on this next week.

Madness to licence every couple of years – don't want tradespeople continually relicensing - thank goodness the Industry has the FEDERATION, keep up the good work, we all appreciate what you are doing.

Ed: Thanks for your words of support. It seems the Board can quote history when it supports their objective but when it doesn't, it means very little. If Mr Bickers had the respect of the industry they would probably take note of what he is saying but alas that respect is long gone and now it's just bureaucratic dribble.

Dear Editor

I believe it's time for "in your face" action against the Board as they are treating us with utter contempt, so we should do the same to them. A lot of members of the public were out his week protesting about education. They have hit the streets and hit the streets hard. Why don't we get a few ideas from our members and see what they are up for?

Here are my thoughts;

- We could all remove ourselves from the Board's mailing list and let them revert back to hard copies.
- Not respond to their consultation. • Not respond to them by telephone.
- Not respond to their calls to get CPD Points.
- Generally just have nothing to do with them. We do it with IRD and ACC. Just treat them as pricks and forget about them.

Any action needs all of us not just a few. As it stands students and teachers have more balls than a lot of tradespeople. We need to stand up, be counted and get behind the Federation. I've been like a lot and sat back - well not any more as even my son wrote to the Prime Minister about education issues and that made me feel ashamed of myself for not taking action. I'm with the Federation.

Ed: Wow! Those are some strong words and said with conviction. Yes perhaps it is time to take more decisive action. The Federation was hoping common sense would prevail but it seems the Board and Government seem content to continue on the path of denial which eventually will force us to take action which we normally wouldn't.

We all seem to be from the laid back "she'll be right" generation, but this time she won't be right. For a decade we have been hoping for improvement and we haven't got it. Now the industry is going backwards. The Federation is not discounting alternative action if current action fails.