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IN OTHER NEWS

Thought of the week

Going on a CPD course doesn't make you competent any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.

Letter to the Editor Regarding the ITO

I am an apprentice still in training with plumbing.

I am still completing block courses that are few and far between, the written assignments, is what mainly bothers me though.

1/ The new version 4 group of assignments are total crap. Poorly written, not enough relevance / sufficient material and sometimes incomprehensible.

2/ They only give us enough time to get through about half the work in each of the 3 or more they issue each course.

3/ Because of that we have to try and RUSH through. Some of the tutors are having to almost spell out the answers to get them

Stakeholder Survey Results

Late last week the Board released a summary of the results of the recent stakeholder survey which some people participated in. This can be found online in the Board's "Info Brief". We would have to say the Chairman is persistent at trying to put a positive spin on things!!!



The amazing thing about a survey is that the questions can be asked in such a way to get the answer you want. For example it appears a scale has been used which has one "no" and two "yes" positions and one "don't know" i.e. not satisfied, satisfied, very satisfied and don't know. Stacked on the yes side, whereby the Board have now combined the two to give better results.

A good example is question 12 regarding registration and licensing where the Board have reported 59% of tradespeople (should be respondents) are satisfied with the registration and licensing process, indicating a good result. In reality though the chart shows 1% don't know, 17% are very satisfied, 42% were satisfied and 40% were not satisfied.

Now we have been taught when formulating questions that you base them on the analogy of postage. If you send an important letter you expect it to get to its destination on time. If it does you are very happy - if it gets there late you are happy its there, but unhappy with the service, and if it doesn't get there you are unhappy. So should the Board be happy that 40% of the letters didn't get through?

We are not going to get into the debate about what we think about the results but when you read it ask the question "is the percentage of not satisfied people (the mail that didn't get through) acceptable? Remember deception is hiding information where it's least likely to be found.

The nature of some of the summarised comments made include:

- Cheaper fees/value for money.
- Less complicated/online process easier to use.
- Don't like CPD points system/getting points to relicense.
- Get a new Board/improve performance/service
- Lower costs – fees too high.
- More contact/listen to local tradespeople
- More openness/transparency/honesty/reasons for decisions • Better timeframes for consultation/time for submissions
- Need to consult/not make decisions before/less dictatorial Some very

finished. But to no avail.

4/ The left over questions are required to complete away from course. The papers then go to some idiot who takes about 3 months to mark them, if there are any wrong answers they are sent back and forth. All the time wasted.

5/ You get the first attempt mark (after being done at home) is free, however if there is anymore "redo's" we are charged for!!

Ed: Yes there are big problems with our apprenticeship training and it is like a lot of other things in the governance of our industry where no one is held responsible.

The Federation is looking at alternatives but is also participating in work groups to help improve training and qualifications.

Letter to the Editor A Partners View

My husband has been in the industry for 15 years now and I have never seen him so unhappy.

If we ran our businesses the way the Board runs their affairs we would be out on the streets in weeks.

People seem to forget about the wives at home who help run the businesses and keep their husbands calm and from doing harm.

I want to thank the Federation because they are saying what everyone is thinking.

The committee has put their head on the chopping block for the rest of us and deserve our support so count me and the kids in for any future action.

important issues mentioned there. This is the benchmark by which future surveys will be conducted and the survey sample seems very small – only about 3-4% of licensed people and 5.7% registered people. It would be very interesting to know what number of people did not want to participate in the survey.

Well done to reception staff and the other front line staff at the Board who scored well in the survey.

Online Public Register

We reported the Federation had voiced its concerns to the Board about the process for the changes to the Online Public Register.

Three days before the implementation date the Board announced it had decided to roll out the changes at a later date and in two stages.

Stage one – Access to tradespeople on 9 July 2012, so on this date some of the names of the contact fields on your PGDB profile will change. The field names will be updated to clearly indicate the purpose for which the information is collected. From this date you can login to your PGDB profile and update your contact details. Important: none of your information will be available on the online public register until 1 August 2012. This is simply an opportunity for you to login to your PGDB profile and update your information.

Stage 2 – Public access on 1 August 2012. On 1 August 2012, the change to the online public register will go live to the public.

More information on this can be found online in the Boards "Info Brief" or telephone the Board.

Make the most of this extended time to ensure the information on the public register is accurate and the information you want the public to know.

Well done to the Board for working "constructively" with the industry on this issue.

Fees review

The Federation sent a letter to the Registrar requesting the fees review be brought forward to allow more time for due process if the industry wasn't satisfied. We felt the timing did not allow sufficient time with the Government being closed for a couple of months over Christmas, and the end of March being the start of the new licensing period. This was the response received from the Registrar:

Dear Mr Gordon

I can advise that the Board will be consulting between August and October this year and will be publishing its decision in the Gazette in December.

You can be assured that the review will be undertaken in a way that is fair and equitable, and complies with all the requirements of the relevant legislation.

I look forward to your constructive involvement during the consultation process and suggest that you wait for the outcome of the review before considering matters such as complaints to the Regulations Review Committee.

A great bit of advice from the Registrar which is received with thanks and deserves some advice in reply – "ensure that sufficient

Ed: Thanks very much for your support. Yes we agree with you and we feel a lot of the wives and partners are unsung heroes.

We know the committee couldn't function the way it does without the support of partners.

The regulators seem to forget the impact on families.

Operational Matters

We note the use of the term "it is an operational matter" by more and more Ministers.

How long before Mr Williamson starts quoting the same to separate himself from the activities of the Board?

Letter to the Editor Regarding Action

I think passive action can be taken by refusing to communicate with the Board electronically.

Ask for everything in hard copy, do everything in hard copy and hey it will help out NZ post at the same time.

Letter to the Editor Regarding Licensing

Thought you might be interested to know a good plumber mate of mine got a call 2 weeks ago from the PGDB wanting to know why he hadn't paid his licensing.

He had had a gutsful of the Board and decided to stop licensing as his son now had his licence. This seems a desperate call to drag in money.

What do you think?

It is a Plumber's business, in my opinion, whether they licence or not and to my mind there was no need for the Board to be ringing

information is provided, that regulations are adhered, and that it is all **fair and equitable** as nothing else will be accepted".

Training in the Prisons

The Federation sent in an Official Information Act request to the Department of Corrections asking a number of questions regarding the training of prisoners in Plumbing and Gasfitting. Here is their response:

Dear Mr Gordon

Thank you for your email of 21 May 2012, seeking information under the Official Information Act regarding the training of offenders in plumbing.

The Department of Corrections' overarching goal is to improve public safety and reduce re-offending. Research shows that offenders who find sustainable work after release from prison are less likely to re-offend, and more likely to become productive members of society. As most offenders will be released at some stage, the Department has an obligation to ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills to reduce the likelihood of re-offending following release.

Employment has been identified as one of the key factors in reducing the level and seriousness of re-offending. Boosting the skills and employment prospects of prisoners (and raising education levels of New Zealanders generally) has also been identified by the Government as a main area of focus.

The Department of Corrections is actively developing strategic partnerships with private sector agencies and industry organisations with the aim of working together to provide more work and training opportunities for prisoners. We would be very interested to meet with representatives of your organisation to examine ways in which we could work together. If you are interested in pursuing this option I would be happy to arrange for the National Prisoner Training Manager to meet with you in the future.

My response to your questions follows.

1. What is the content of the training they are being provided with? Plumbing training programmes provide prisoners with the opportunity to develop key skills and qualifications in plumbing through the partnerships between Corrections, Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology (CPIT) and Waikato Institute of Technology (WinTec) to provide Trade and Technical Training courses in Plumbing at Christchurch Men's Prison (CMP) and Spring Hill Corrections Facility (SHCF) respectively. Course content covers:

- Worksite safety and first aid • Working with hand and power tools
- Trade calculations and measurements
- Sketching plumbing installations • Providing customer service
- Welding and brazing
- Excavation
- Working with metal and PVC piping

A short extension course is offered at both locations offering further training for successful graduates in further drain laying and roofing skill sets.

my mate.

LTNZ does not contact us if we forget to relicence our car licence. Imagine what impact it could have if even a small percentage of us decided not to register next year.

Ed: That's a very good point. What resources are being put into this project?

It could be argued that it is good customer service in case the tradesperson had forgotten but on the other had they could be looking for more prosecutions for operating without a licence.

Thanks for your letters – keep them coming!!

Remember: Ideas can change the world and don't cost anything.

What does the Board do?

The Board has existed in some form since 1912 to control entry to the plumbing, gasfitting, and drainlaying trades.

We hear a lot from them how successful they are but really what do they do?

If they don't look after the interests of the industry then who does?

2. What is the duration of the training? Course duration is 17 weeks for both CPIT and WinTec introductory programmes. The short extension course mentioned above is five weeks duration at WinTec, and eight weeks at CPIT.

3. Who is providing the training? See response to question 1 above.

4. What qualifications do inmates receive upon successful completion of the training? The CPIT programme at CMP provides the CPIT Certificate in Entry to Trades (Plumbing/Gasfitting), consisting of 62 credits predominantly at Level 3. The WinTec programme at SHCF provides the WinTec Certificate in Entry to Trades (Plumbing/Gasfitting), consisting of 62 credits predominantly at Level 3.

5. What is the split of training practical vs theory? Both courses provide a similar mix of training and practical aspects. Typically trainees will undertake theory sessions for about 25 percent of the day with the remainder devoted to practical instruction building on that theory. Trainees are also required to do homework.

6. What is the placement strategy for obtaining work in the plumbing industry for inmates upon release? The partnerships with CPIT and WinTec allow offenders to progress their training on release with further training with these institutes. Both organisations endeavour to identify and promote likely candidates to key employment contacts.

Offenders who complete the WinTec training at SHCF have the opportunity to continue employment and experience in the plumbing trade within Corrections as part of the Housing New Zealand New Builds and Refurbishment yard based at the facility.

Corrections Release to Work case managers actively seek employment for minimum security prisoners with employable skill sets. A relationship with Work and Income New Zealand is involved with proactively seeking jobs for these graduates in the Auckland, Waikato area, as well as seeking employment in the Canterbury region to support rebuilding efforts there.

Multiple agencies are available to support employment searches as part of the process of reintegration for released prisoners including Corrections Community and Probation Services, Prisoners Aid and Rehabilitation Society, and the Salvation Army among others.

7. Why has plumbing been a targeted trade for this type of training? The Department of Labour lists plumbing specific trades as well as more generic labour, technician and trades in multiple areas of the growth and skills shortage rankings. There will also be an ongoing requirement for skilled trade's people to support the Canterbury rebuild.

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