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#### IN OTHER NEWS



#### Dear Editor:

Can anyone confirm if Pakuranga MP Maurice Williamson was suspended from the caucus and then the party in 2003 after sabotaging Bill English's first annual conference as leader after the 2002 loss?

Also to repeat something I read on the Parliament website:

*"Why on earth have National Party members shot themselves in the foot trying to wrench a loaded gun off Maurice Williamson?"*

Are they doing the same again rescuing him from his own mistakes?

How much trouble does a Minister have to cause, how much destruction, how much adverse affect on people's lives and how

#### The Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Amendment Bill

Evidence has been submitted and now we are back to the waiting game. We would like to thank everyone for their support and encouragement.

We would also like to thank the Hon Nick Smith who in 2006 made a profound statement in which we have altered one word:

*But what is even more serious is why this Government chooses to break two of the most basic principles on which our democracy is founded. If we go all the way back to the Magna Carta, we see that there are two important principles. The first of those is that no one is above the law. But these [deleted Labour] National Government members say that they are above the law. If they break the law they say they will just pass a bill to fix it up. The second important principle of the Magna Carta is the issue of public money not belonging to the king—one cannot help oneself to money unlawfully. This Government has torn up those two fundamental principles of our society, and it has made this country look like a joke.*

It seems this Amendment Bill, supported by Master Plumbers and the Board, does nothing but take a \$660,000 liability by the Board (which was negotiable) and turns it in to a \$2 million law suit.

#### One Laugh After Another



Drainlayers Amendment Bill.

Firstly Master Plumbers choose to put in a one page submission. That submission was an entire page on membership, nothing to do with the Bill itself - just membership. This is part of what Master Plumbers new CEO had to say:

*"In his address to the committee, Mr Wal Gordon representing the PGD Federation reported a membership of 1000. He was not questioned about this, nor the Federation's fee structure, nor whether or not any of its members sat on the Board.*

*I note the above because it is our understanding that the PGD Federation's 'membership' is in fact an email address list: no membership fee is payable and no membership agreement is entered into. The names of my staff none of whom is a plumber, gasfitter or drainlayer are included in this list.*

We were shocked into laughter when we read the further submissions from Master Plumbers and the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board to the Government Administration Committee who is dealing with the Plumbers, Gasfitters and

much arrogance do we have to put up with before the Government will do anything.

Perhaps they forget they get voted in by the people and can get voted out by the people just as quick.

Keep up the good work Federation and don't worry about Master Plumbers comments as they will be responsible for their own demise.

**Dear Editor,**

When does this Board finish its reign of destruction?

**Ed:** The NZ Gazette shows the following:

**17 September 2013**

- Peter Jackson
- Bill Irvine

**12 July 2014**

- Susan Simons
- Craig O'Connell
- Ian Rowe

**17 September 2014**

- Allan Bickers
- Nicholas Fleckney
- John Simmis

**17 September 2015**

- Graham Hardie
- Murray Burns

These are the dates that we know of unless the members are terminated prior to those dates. (Sorry "contracts" terminated that is).

**Dear Editor**

Royal assent: The signature of the Sovereign or the Governor-General is necessary before a bill that has been passed by the House becomes an Act of Parliament.

Let's get a letter to the Governor General about this act of bad faith.

**Ed.** Very good idea. One of our Committee members

*I point this out because I do not believe Mr Gordon can rightly claim to represent anyone but at best a handful people who have in some way agreed to support him."*

You gotta laugh as it yet again shows that the people in the positions change but not the attitudes.

We would have thought Master Plumbers would have been better served looking at their own membership numbers instead of focusing on ours. We are not the one's claiming to represent people who work with or for our members, just the members themselves.

Here we are back to being described as a handful of people who follow Wal Gordon. Nothing new in this comment. It just shows the intent of the organisation who claim to be the voice of the industry but don't say anything unless it's cleared through their master.

In the Board's Further Submission the Boards CE stated:

*"There is no evidence that the views of the Federation are held generally by the industry. ..."*

In one of the supporting documents the Board had this to say:

*"The Board has a good relationship with other organisations, the key ones of which are MBIE, Master Plumbers and the Skills Organisation. The only poor relationship is with the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Federation but in the current climate, the Board has little ability to influence that situation"*

That last paragraph cracks us up as it was the Board that broke off communication with the Federation when we wouldn't become one of their "lap dogs" and a master and their lap dogs should have a good relationship as the lap dog is reliant on its master for companionship and its every need.

The amazing thing is all the faults we have identified have been proven to be right by independent people and organisations.

### **So much in common**

We believe the Board and Master Plumbers have a good working relationship based on like minded people (and sometimes the SAME people), - like thinking people banding together in a common cause – and that cause is in our opinion - "money".

You see both organisations are set up so that the money is handed to the Chief Executives through membership fees, or licensing fees and levies and if they want more they just bung up the rates.

They both spend money on putting enough spin out there to ensure they keep their jobs and if anyone gets in their way they try to push them aside. The Board use the "public health and safety spin" and Master Plumbers uses "the voice of industry."

Well we believe that practitioners care more about the health and safety of the public that the Board does, and we refute that Master Plumbers are the voice of industry, they are simply "one" of the voices of industry.

drafted a letter last week and we are nearly ready to send it.

**Dear Editor:**

I read this in the Kaipara Concern

*“What relevance does insolvency have? If an organisation acts outside the law and as a result it becomes insolvent then that is a fact that has to be accepted. It happens to individuals and businesses throughout the world all the time”*

Letter to the Editor (un-substantiated report)



Hi Editor and all you good PGDF practitioners,-

Talking about people sitting on planes, this jogged the old memory-

Does anyone out there besides me remember when a certain international passenger plane flight landed in NZ some years back, when it was a Ministry of Agriculture requirement for all passengers (ie. people sitting on 737's), to remain seated while the aircraft was sprayed inside the cabin as a measure against bugs etc. getting into NZ, and a certain politician dickhead jumped up out of his seat followed by his cronies and other suits - on the premise that he couldn't hang about because he had an important meeting (Yeah Right) to attend and couldn't be put through what every other law abiding citizen/ air passenger had to submit to BY LAW.

Now what was his name again-ah let me think- Yeah I think I know his name and

It makes you wonder which organisations have the greater skills, the ones with money and historical reputations or the ones that operate on the smell of an oily rag, values, honesty and morals.

So do we take their comments seriously, well we probably would if they were made by people we respected or trusted but they're not, so we just get on fighting the fight.

### Just for the sake of CE's

In the Board's Further Submission the Boards CE stated:

*“The Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Federation (the Federation) consistently publicly promotes the view that the Board is dysfunctional, corrupt, incompetent, and that its members have conflicts of interest. This view is not reality and in my opinion disguises what is simply opposition from the leadership of that organisation to being regulated generally, and specifically opposition to the requirement that licensed plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers must undertake continuing professional development”.*

It seems to us that some people are a bit slower than others when it comes to gaining full understanding – so just for those people – what the Federation is about is **fairness and equality in plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying regulations and legislation.**

If the Board were such a high functioning organisation, then the Federation would not exist. This has been a decade in the making, a decade of putting up with a poor regulator that acted outside of legislation and with poor governance, little in the way of policy guidelines, and definitely outside their mandates.

This has all been backed up by independent organisations such as the Officer of the Auditor General, The Ombudsman, and the Regulations Review Committee, so it's NOT just the Federation that think things are amiss.

For the record we are NOT opposed to being regulated – in fact it is essential in a protected industry – but we ARE opposed to being regulated badly. As to continuing professional development – well that is an ongoing discussion for another day.

### Influence

We presume the above comments were made by the CEO of Master Plumbers in response to comments made about their influence over the Board.

We would like to draw everyone's attention to a reported article regarding statements made by Ray Galt, President, MPGD at the Waipura Hotel in July 2011:

*“He informed the members that without the PGD Board we will come under the Licensed Building Practitioners. This will be more rigorous on us as we will not be under one umbrella like now. MPGD has an influence today, but would not have that if we were under the DBH”.*

Does influence exist? Give it some thought. Keep in mind that the Minister has appointed two past Presidents and one other member of Master

so do you and everybody else that watches the news and reads the newspaper, the name of that re: dickhead and possible LAWBREAKER was MAURICE WILLIAMSON.

Seems he got away with that, maybe he thinks if he sticks around long enough, and he's been around an awful long, long time (yawn), maybe people will forget about his lawbreaking and he'll get the knighthood he's been after all these years. After he's screwed over the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers of Aotearoa that is.

Hey you Drainlayers- Does Mud stick?- TOO F#\$KING RIGHT!! for LAWBREAKERS. Whoops, there goes the lawbreaker's knighthood! And all we want is a fair go and to earn an honest living.

**Ed:** We have been unable to substantiate this letter to confirm it is true but we have no reason to doubt the writer.

#### Charities Commission

The Boards wasteful expenditure of our money continues this month with its appeal to the High Court regarding being struck off the Registered Charities Register.

The appeal is still active and is set down for the 24 of April 2013, 10am, Court Room 4, High Court, Wellington. The hearing is open to the General Public.

Remember Mr Bickers said the Board exists for the protection of the public but how does spending tens of thousands of dollars to remain a charity do that. Perhaps this is just another case where they don't like being proved wrong AGAIN.

Plumbers onto the current Board.

#### Are the public protected from a Gas Incident?

The public are still protected, but they were better protected when we had Gas inspectors. Inspectors were the bees knees. Before we went to the self regulating aspect of gas there were gas inspectors and everyone was protected by a double check process i.e. the tradespeople and then the inspector.

Now that gas certificates are changing, the protection of the public has taken a hit again. So where is this leading us? It seems to us that there is more regulation, greater cost to the industry, more responsibility for the tradesperson, greater risk for discipline and greater expense for discipline and prosecutions.

How many inspectors could we employ for the \$2 million spent on discipline annually? Ironically, this is one area where we agree with the PGDB – the gas certificate scheme worked fairly well, it was transparent and available to everyone – the alternative is going to take us who knows where.

We urge gasfitters to be cautious and to ensure that they are aware of the changes and keep the necessary records.

#### The \$45.00 Trainee Fee.

Remember in the consultation round that the Federation objected to this fee and Master Plumbers stated it was good for the trainees to learn about the cost of being in a regulated industry or words to that effect, well we wonder how they feel now that even licensed tradespeople have to pay a trainee fee.

Yes, for those who bothered to license - if they are already registered say as a plumber but are in training as a gasfitter or drainlayer, then they pay the \$45 fee. What does the \$45.00 get spent on?

#### Prosecution Levy

When you search New Zealand Legislation you get hits for Fees and Disciplinary levy in three areas:

- Osteopathic Council (Fees and Disciplinary Levy) Notice 2013
- Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers (Fees and Disciplinary Levy) Notice 2013
- Social Workers Registration Board (Fees and Disciplinary Levy) Notice 2012

When searching for Prosecutions Levy there are NO results ANYWHERE in New Zealand Legislation that we could find.

Makes Maurice Williamson's comment about coming into line with other industries look a bit uninformed. Perhaps this is historical for New Zealand where we are the first industry to have a prosecution levy slapped on it. There seems to be a lot of history making going on at our expense.