



Fellow Practitioner Issue 155

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IN OTHER NEWS



Dear Editor

We already knew we had a bunch of clowns in the Board and now Parliament is starting to look like animal farm.

Old flip flop has been referred to as a jackass at times, we know they are all pigs with their snouts in the trough and now the Prime Minister is referring to Bill English as the "Devil Beast".

When will all the name calling stop?

Dear Editor

Over \$1 billion more than is needed for ACC is being collected from New Zealanders in levies. An extra \$900 million is being taken from people's pockets through petrol taxes and the Board keeps on taking from us.



A Workshop But Not As We Know It

This the workshop we would have preferred to have been in but instead the Federation Administration Committee were around a table last Saturday having a "strategic planning" workshop about immediate issues and progression of the

Federation. Here's a summary for you.

The Federation has a current balance of \$13,127.07, all of which has come from donations. Expenditure is being kept to a minimum, mainly photo copying, postage and electronic mailroom costs. A HUGE thanks is extended to those making regular donations ranging from \$5.00 to \$100.00 a month. The books are now being submitted for tax purposes as we are not a Registered Charity like the Board.

Membership is currently at 1030. This handful of "malcontents" as Flip Flop Williamson referred to us seems to be growing but we still need all members to get the word out to others. We've been challenged on our membership – but the proof of our numbers lies in our voice and our actions. Members have been good about responding to requests and for supporting submissions etc – perhaps more so than other organizations in the sector. The proof is evident when you got through the submitters for various things that the Board has called for – the Federation members are often around 70+ % of respondents.

154 issues of the Fellow Practitioner have been sent out and feedback is excellent. Thanks to all those who contribute, and just a reminder to everyone to send in your thoughts and ideas. Spelling and grammar don't matter - that's why we have a proof reader and editor to tidy things up.

It was reported at our workshop that nothing had been received from the High Court regarding the Board's Charity appeal. It was discussed and felt that this could take some time. The decision could have wide ranging effects on other charities.

No change to Continuing Professional Development, it's still a "buy points" scheme and the Regulations Review Committee has not reported on our requests for a review of our complaints.

Gas Certification was briefly discussed with regards to the impact on consumers and it was agreed the new process is a step backwards

I see the issues we face being faced by the entire country. Perhaps there are more secret meetings going on behind closed doors that we suspected.

Dear Editor

From the news last week

The Government's being slammed for its explanation for blocking any future legal challenges over payments made to family carers. Payments have been granted to families who care for adult disabled children.

Health Minister Tony Ryall says the block clause put into family carer's legislation is to protect the policy and prevent ongoing lawsuits from parties seeking similar forms of compensation.

Green MP Catherine Delahunty says that's bizarre. "To set up a discrimination the way they have, around not being able to complain, is as some people have said, possibly unconstitutional. It's definitely against the Bill of Rights."

Very similar to the unconstitutional acts they are imposing on us.

The Flip Flop Amendment Bill

No change on this front. This Bill, which Flip Flop Williamson claimed has such a huge impact on the safety of the Public, seems to have come to a screeching halt as has the actions by other Committees such as the

which gives "non licensed people" extra power to convince customers they are legitimate tradespeople. Of course none of this will be news to our members – indeed tradespeople have been quite vocal about this being a backwards step for everyone except the Government agency who had the wet dream about it in the first place.

The aim and values of the Federation were read and confirmed. It was agreed no changes were needed and the Federation had kept to the aims and values over the last two and a half years and should continue to do so.

The Chairperson's role was discussed and it was agreed the existing Chair should remain. Wal Gordon had offered to step down if anyone wanted to take on the role of Chairperson of the Federation. We will look at change as and when required. (Note from the man with the Ute, the cellphone and the dog – A big thank you to Wal from members – he has spent many hours championing our cause and he's done a fantastic job!)

A good discussion was held around membership recruiting and the application of an annual membership fee. With regard to fees it was felt that practitioners' circumstances varied and as such we should rely on people paying a small donation as they can afford it. We would like to encourage everyone to pay \$5.00 per month as a donation. Just set up an automatic payment through your bank. One big question is "what do I get for my money?"- the response is "what will you get if we don't hold the Board and Government accountable?" We again reassure members that no committee member takes any payment for meeting attendance, travel to various meetings or reimbursement of any kind; we even pay for our own sausage rolls!

Certificate of Membership

Wal Gordon

*Proud supporter ensuring Fairness and Equality in
Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying Regulations and Legislation*



- > Make the PGD Board and Government Accountable
- > Increase Industry Participation
- > Tackle Excessive Expenditure
- > Ensure Better Decisions
- > Strengthen the Industry
- > Ensure Past Issues Are Addressed
- > Ensure Relevance in Training
- > Make Your Opinion Count

Membership certificates were discussed and a draft was presented. The Membership Certificates were to aid with recruiting by letting people know about members and the plight of the industry. These will be available soon.

The Federation will soon be fundraising via the sale of tee shirts and other products, with an appropriate slogan on the back of the tee shirts

Regulations Review Committee.

We believe these actions by the Government and Parliamentary Committees is a breach of our right to natural justice. Bureaucratical tactics to wear people down in the hope people go away.

All it is doing is creating more work as now the Federation is exploring submitting complaints against those whom are not doing their jobs. For example the Regulations Review Committee who have had sufficient information to make decisions since November last year and have done nothing.

It is disgusting when the public are funding organisations and a parliamentary process that is failing.

Fight for your money



Last week we looked at a 1:6 ratio which showed us what turnover was required to fund activities of the Board - it worked out that for every \$100.00 we spent on Board activities it would take \$600.00 of turnover to break even.

Let's look at it for our annual licensing:

The Prosecution Fee of \$90.00 x 7100 practitioners licensing is \$639,000 paid to the

and the Federation Logo on the front. Committee members are submitting their thoughts on slogans and as always, your thoughts and ideas are welcomed. We will feature the best of the best in an upcoming newsletter.

The state of the website was discussed as it was identified there had been no change since it had been started. Two of the committee members are happy to take over the updating of the website. Doing a video with a link was also discussed.

The Amendment Bill and the current consultation were discussed, as was the next steps for the Federation. It was agreed that we shouldn't wait for outcomes any more, that we should just push on to the next project and not let the Board or Government use the system to slow down progress.

Follow up letters are to be sent to the RRC regarding CPD, Fees and any other complaints that are in. It was agreed the Government was too slow and perhaps they should be bypassed and we go direct to the District Court for legal process. Costs and procedures will be looked at as will the need for legal representation, hence the reason or donations and fundraising.

It was agreed that the IRD should be approached and a determination requested regarding the payment of Offences fees and Disciplinary levies being a tax deductible item by practitioners who are employees.

Various forms of protest action were discussed and it was agreed that we need to ensure the protest action at licensing time next year should be looked at to ensure it is legal and will not put practitioners at risk. While the Board has acted illegally we don't want to lower ourselves to the same level. The possibility of prosecuting the Board under the Act was touched on and will be explored when legal counsel can be secured.

The Office of the Auditor General follow up investigation was discussed and the 15 recommendations they had made in their last report were read. It was agreed that the issues should be looked at more closely and any relevant documentation sent to the Committee Secretary for inclusion in a register of issues ready for the OAG. If you have any issues please send them to wal.gordon@xtra.co.nz

The review of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006 is scheduled to happen this year. We will keep a close eye on this and what the Board is recommending.

Do we need a Board? This question was discussed and the answer lays in what other options we have. It was mentioned that the Treasury Guidelines state that if something can be privatised then it should be. This will be investigated further.

The future of CPD was discussed and it was agreed we should start to look at what the Federation can do for members if we can't beat CPD legally. The development of courses to be provided to members free was discussed. An outline is to be developed.

The question was asked what the future of the Federation was and

Board which will require \$3,834,000.00 in turnover across the industry.

The discipline levy of \$175.00 x 7100 practitioners is \$1,242,500.00 paid to the Board will require \$7,455,000.00 in turnover.

The licensing fee of \$101.00 x 10,500 licences is \$1,060,500.00 paid to the Board will require \$6,363,000.00 in turnover.

All up just for discipline, prosecutions and licensing we are having to turnover \$17,652,000.00 as an industry just to pay the \$2,942,000.00 the Board steals from us.

The profits from the turnover could be better spent than on a failing Board.

It just doesn't make economic sense. How is that supposed to increase productivity by 20% which is what the Government wants.

And don't forget the price of sitting an exam, \$410.00, \$2460 in turnover.

To employ an apprentice you would be looking at apprenticeship fees \$10,580 x 6 = \$63,480 in turnover and 72 weeks of labour to cover the 12 weeks of assessments they attend so where is the incentive?

We need to force change to get ahead.

should we start to offer benefits for our members? It was agreed that the committee should look at this further once we tidy up our membership so we are not giving out false expectations. We are also interested in your views on this? What do you want from your committee? Do you want to see Chapters formed around the country to enable you to meet with other local practitioners; do you want to explore buying options, or benefits? We have kept our focus narrow and to the point – but in the end we are here to represent you and what you need.

Lots to do on the smell of an oily rag but it must be done if we want to get fairness and equality, and to be fair we have had some good success on the whiff of that rag!

We are different to other organisations

Throughout the last two and a half years the Federation has been standing up for what we believe is right and what people have been asking for. At our workshop the Administration Committee discussed a large number of issues, one of which was communication with supporters.

When the Federation was started we opted for the cheapest method of communication - being the internet. We wanted to create a forum where we could get information to you and get your feedback and that has been working well. The Administrative Committee have purely been in existence to collate the information from you and present it to whomever.

At the workshop we decided we wanted to emphasise to you that we are different to other organisations, and probably the biggest difference is that EVERYONE is effectively a committee member and every week is a committee meeting where you get to put forward your thoughts and ideas. An organisation where the majority rules.

We need you to support the Federation with your donations and your ideas. If we don't fight for our industry it will be lost.

Trades Contractors Petition.

Remember your support will make a difference in the construction industry so have a read of the latest News Blog updating on the progress of the Trades Contractors Petition.

You can view the latest News here:

<http://www.tradescontractorspetition.co.nz/news-blog.html>

