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**IN OTHER NEWS**

**Letters to the Editor**



**Dear Editor**

I went up to the Board this week to provide support to a fellow practitioner trying to sit his Certifying Plumbing exams with the use of a reader writer.

We were greeted by one lawyer and the Board's examinations officer. Unfortunately Max Pedersen was conveniently sick, suffering from a condition called chicken lightus.

The meeting was heated to a point that they needed the senior lawyer to stand in for Max.

Again they have dictated their terms and conditions. A shame they seem to make it up as they go along

**Cowboys in the Industry**



He doesn't look like the plunger, manometer, laser level type to us, so what is this term "Cowboys"?

We always thought a cowboy was an animal herder who tended cattle on ranches in America, traditionally on horseback, and who often performed a multitude of other

ranch-related tasks like fencing, fighting Indians and after lunch, killing a few sheep grazers.

We may be right with our description, or close to it, but to a lot of New Zealanders a "Cowboy" is someone who comes in, does dodgy work, rips you off and then is never seen again. Now that sums up some real mongrels that are out there, but does that really cover all the people we are dealing with? Aren't we dealing with mostly "unqualified people" and a few unlicensed who choose to take the risk for various reasons?

The Government would have the public believe the only way to deal with "Cowboys" is to hang them, and that we should supply, (and pay for), the rope. We know there are a few out there that deserve that treatment but the majority simply needs educating and pointing in the right direction.

Don't get us wrong - we are not going all soft, and are still of the opinion if you do the crime you do the time, but we do feel there are other ways to get everyone on side without hanging them first, after all, prevention is better than cure.

There are a lot of partially trained people out there that have abandoned the system because the system abandoned them. We say clutch them up and get them legal!

As for the numerous others -property owners, home handymen, handymen for hire, floor layers, DIY stores promoting sales of plumbing, drainage or gasfitting goods and subsequently hiring out specialist tools e.g. "crimpers" etc., and the list goes on – we should educate them. There should be a proper campaign to tell these people that what they are doing is possibly illegal, and what the consequences could be of getting any sanitary plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying wrong.

Tell them about explosions, cross contamination, blocked sewers and the like. Tell them about the consequences such as no insurance, sick people, dead people and tell them they risk getting hard punishments and costs equal to trades people, not the paltry \$2,300.00 fine and \$113.00 court costs they get now.

and when asked to put pen to paper the ink dries up.

The licensing officer and the lawyers feel that it is stock standard practice to give an acceptance to an exam, 3 weeks before sitting the exam, to a practitioner that has a learning difficulty.

They are aware that this practitioner does not have a computer and feel its okay to bully him with lawyers.

I thought that this is very unreasonable. Where have all the plumbers gone from the Board. It seems our Board is run by lawyers and bureaucrats that don't understand our trade.

#### Dear Editor

I see there is conflict with Master Plumbers but I want you to know a large number of Master Plumbers grass roots members support your actions.

We are hopeful our Executive will help the Federation in the fight and remind the executive that you are judged on who you are, what you say and do, but mostly you are judged by who you hang out with.

And remember when you sleep with dogs you pick up flees.

#### Dear Editor

Just to be nosey I occasionally log on to the Board's website to see what crap they are throwing at us.

I note this week that since the start of the year they have only put out four media releases for the first five months of 2013.

Tell people employing unlicensed people that they will be charged as well - don't just tell them to "ask for the card". This Board is pissing around throwing a glass of water at a raging fire. Feedback from our own members tells us that less than 1% of customers ask to see their card – so it just isn't working.

### The Political Disease



Why aren't politicians licensed and why don't they have to undergo "Continuing Professional Development" (CPD), after all their impact on society can do far more damage than any explosion or outbreak of disease.

In saying that though, they are probably a disease in their own right and if nothing else Flip Flop

Williamson's Amendment Bill has taught us that some politicians are rotten to the core with no morals and no personal standards. Say one thing: do another, vote one way in committee and vote the other way in Parliament. We've also realised that so many of these people that represent us don't even care about how this affects us, or their other constituents. They care more about holding on to their "seat" and collecting their big, fat, taxpayer provided pay check and perks.

If we are required to do CPD and license every year why don't politicians lead by example and do the same, and let the cost come out of their own pocket the same as it does ours! Let them pay 10% of their income to license every year. After all the dodgy dealings we have seen over Flip Flop's Amendment Bill we can see why people overseas get sick of politicians and hit the streets in violent protest.

The corruptness of it all is a disease that only exposure to the light of day can cure, so let's get it all out in the open.

The Government and the Board don't seem to realise that the more exposure we have to the incompetence of the Board and the lack of accountability, the wider spread the issues will become and the deeper we, the Federation, will dig.

We need to ask the question - "Is the Amendment Bill covering up expenditure and activities that we have not yet discovered? Is it going to make legal both issues and expenditure that simply shouldn't be legal?"

Politicians are going to vote on this soon so we hope they really understand what they are making legal because we will expose all eventually. We urge you to continue writing and phoning your MP and letting them know your views on the PGD Amendment Bill. Don't lessen the pressure simply because time has gone by.

### It Just Makes You Sick

*Parliament is moving to re-write laws to ensure public servants are immune from prosecution.*

In mid January they told the public not to use unlicensed tradespeople over the summer holidays. Very interesting as most people were back at work then.

In late January they gloated about an unlicensed person getting a \$500.00 fine. (They didn't share the information about how much it cost us to get the \$500 fine).

Come February they gave us a reminder to relicence and in March they copied Flip Flop Williamson's media release about the Flip Flop Amendment Bill.

So what have they been doing all year? Have they been sitting around with Flip Flop watching Broke Back Mountain?

Keep up the good work.

#### Dear Editor

I saw with interest the Board's advertisement for investigators and had to laugh.

What sort of person would want to become an investigator in the current environment within the industry?

The Board has no credibility and there have been some right balls up with some of their investigations.

You can't tell me these people are doing it because they want to make a difference in the industry – it's more likely it's for the \$100.00 plus that they get paid an hour for not working in a real job.

#### Dear Editor

Face it our trades are being

*The issue had been subject to recent court action after RSA attack survivor Susan Couch battled the Corrections Department for compensation - it saw her receive a \$300,000 in compensation.*

*Now the Government's moving to restore protections for public servants.*

*It will mean public service chief executives and employees will have immunity from civil proceedings for any actions or omissions in their work, so long as they acted in good faith.*

*However the immunity won't apply to the Crown, it can still be liable on their behalf for any losses suffered.*

More legislation to protect their own. If these people make mistakes or bad decisions then they should be held accountable.

As tradespeople we have no immunity and we always act with utmost caution and in good faith, but will that ever be accepted as a defence for us? – No way - the Board trust us as if we are guilty until we prove innocence, and any mistake was "done on purpose". No mistakes just purposeful, incompetent acts that endanger the public and their property.

More double standards. We wonder who will get the Levy for this lot.

### Industrial Exclusion



Excluding people or organisations because they have different ideas is termed "Industrial Exclusion" and is the weapon of choice by bureaucrats wanting to suppress the opinions of those that don't side with them. It is an abuse of power and position, and takes away basic rights of freedom of speech and

opinion. It sets an industry on track towards becoming inwards looking, where a single line of thought is dominant.

In layman terms it's a form of dictatorship where those in positions of authority or influence use their powers and position to get what they think is best - not what is, or could be best. More frequently we see dictatorships throughout the world toppling under the power of people who have finally had enough and stood up for themselves.

Plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers in New Zealand have been the victims of "Industrial Exclusion" for over a decade. People have followed like-minded people in positions of authority and influence and quite simply the entire system is in melt down. None of the government organisations that should be helping by defending the rights of practitioners (who are also taxpaying New Zealanders), are doing anything and are bowing down to political influence.

The Federation has embraced the fight for right, learning as it goes, and has good examples of Industrial Exclusion:

stolen from us.

A job that was once judged by serving your time and learning off the older guys at the yard and your success being judged on the level of work/service you provided is gone.

Now having to renew a license every year, with conditions of renewal like illegal CPD and coming soon to a life near you...an annual audit...before they give you a license .....which they can fail you for at will and then go you for working without a license in the court system.

People are protecting their mates and ruining their opposition to give them a greater slice of the pie.

#### Dear Editor

If you continuously face challenges, one of two things can happen – you can either collapse under the strain, lose confidence in our ability and walk away defeated – perhaps to fight again later or to just drift into a life of non-challenge.

Or you win a few impossibles and are then encouraged to have a go at the next impossible. Before long, you find the impossible have become possible.

Go the Federation – and keep on winning the impossible so we can work with our heads held high!

- Monthly meetings with the PGDB Registrar cancelled by the Registrar excluding the Federation from that monthly access which was afforded to others in the industry.

- Maurice Williamson refused to meet with the Federation until it worked “constructively” with the Board thus excluding it from Ministerial access for accountability of the Board. (Note from the man with the Ute, the cellphone and the dog – I thought the Federation were working constructively – for no cost they have pointed out weaknesses in the Board’s policies and systems – thereby assisting them in ways their own Secretariat never have).

- A petition submitted to the Social Services Committee outlining issues affecting the industry and was rejected. Excluded from constitutional rights.

- Recommendations to the Government by the Regulations Review Committee voted against by the Government after approaches by Master Plumbers and the Board. Excluded from democratic and constitutional rights.

- The Amendment Bill before Parliament at the moment excluding practitioners from democratic and legal rights.

- Master Plumbers second Amendment Bill submission where they attempted to have Federation opinions excluded because Wal Gordon was only supported by a few people on an email list.

- Suitably qualified individuals being excluded from Boards and Committees because they hold different views.

As you can see Industrial Exclusion takes many forms and is generally so those in positions of authority or influence can gain the advantage and get their own way.

The plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry has been plagued with the so called “working constructively with the Board” syndrome and has ended up going nowhere.

There are ways to combat Industrial Exclusion which will need commitment but before we get into those we want you to send us your thoughts on Industrial Exclusion and what you feel we should do about it.

### Congratulations Fellow Practitioner

*Great Job!*

Congratulations Fellow Practitioner as today is your 156th edition.

Three years of fighting the fight every week and keeping the industry informed of the issues no one wants to talk about.

The wins might be slow but they are still wins. Keep up the fight.