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IN OTHER NEWS

A look in the Crystal Ball



Here's some predictions for the future in no particular order:

- The Government will push ahead with its bully tactics and pass the Amendment Bill.
- The Regulation review Committee will not look at the complaints made until the Bill is passed and will report the issue as resolved.
- No one will be held accountable for the unlawful taking of nearly \$2 Million from the industry.
- The Board will

Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Department of Credibility?



Last week the Board announced a few new policies and alterations that effectively increase the powers of their dictatorship.

Two policies have sparked a great deal of debate throughout the industry – the first being the “Fit and Proper Person Policy” and secondly the “Examinations Policy”.

Fit and Proper Person Policy

“Fit and proper person” is a term that describes an assessment of an individual’s suitability for a specific occupation or privilege. The Board have been pathetic in the way they have “consulted” and announced this policy, so to help explain - this is the nature of the questions other Government Departments ask in their assessments. We have made them relevant to plumbing.

- Have you, in any country, previously had an application for a Plumbing Gasfitting or Drainlaying authorisation rejected?
- Have you, in any country, been the holder of a Plumbing Gasfitting or Drainlaying authorisation which has been suspended or revoked?
- Have you, in any country, been convicted of any Plumbing Gasfitting or Drainlaying regulatory offence?
- Have you, in any country, been convicted for any offence?
- Have you, in any country, been handled by way of diversion for any offence?
- Have you any history of adverse physical or mental health or serious behavioural problems?

Nothing too onerous in that – if this is the format they use (and who knows exactly what they are considering because they don’t feel the need to share this information) - but where the problems arise is with the standard, in that no standard had been stated. No one knows what must be achieved and probably the biggest problem is the organisation imposing the policy fails itself to meet some of the standards that could be reasonably expected, and yet they will be sitting in judgement on those wishing to enter the industry. Kind of pot, kettle, black

interpret the passing of the Bill as being a win and will continue on with its attempted intimidating tactics.

- The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) will not start its review of the Board until at least the second half of the year.

- The OAG investigation and final report will carry over until next year after annual licensing time.

- Nearly all government agencies or departments that deal with complaints about the Board will use the OAG report as an excuse to do nothing.

- The report will state there have been improvements in some areas and that the Board still needs more time. No one will be held accountable.

- The Qualifications Review will go through without the support of the majority of the industry.

- Apprentice numbers will drop as will the number of trade's people licensing.

- Industry will get sick of continual costs imposed on them and will increase prices accordingly.

- There will be a shortage of experienced qualified trade's people in the industry.

- At licensing time 2014 there will be turmoil for all.

situation perhaps?

One of the standards may be to do with ethics, in that a person acts in accordance with accepted principles of right and wrong. Some unethical actions are:

- unlawful taking

- dishonesty

- complaints made in relation to any plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying service provided or operated by the person or in which the person is involved, particularly complaints made by users of the service

- a history of persistent failure to adhere to legislation

So does the body sitting in judgement of us have the ethical standing to do so? We say NO, especially where they state in the Info Brief *"This requirement affects people applying to be registered in the licensed class and will not affect trades people renewing their existing licences or applying to be registered in the certifying class."*

In the next breath in their policy they state:

An applicant must satisfy the Board they are a fit and proper person to be entitled to:

- *be registered under section 36 of the Act*

- *be issued with a practising licence under section 44 of the Act*

- *a renewal of their practising licence under section 51 of the Act.*

Simply a two faced lie! Exactly the sort of duplicity we have come to expect from this organisation. Don't be fearful, just add the risk factor to your price and tell your customers that the Board are making our working lives a nightmare and we are constantly wondering where the next attack will come from.

Examinations Policy

Currently examination candidates for examinations 9192 licensed plumber, 9193 licensed gasfitter and 9197 licensed drainlayer must be enrolled to complete, or have already completed, their National Certificate for the trade they applying to sit their registration examination in.

From 1 September 2014 a person will be required to have COMPLETED their National Certificate in order to be eligible to sit these examinations. (Now first question is does "completed" mean "finished and passed" or "have a copy of it" because we all know that it takes the Polytech's, Skills and NZQA at least 6 weeks to get the National Certificate to you after you do your last block course – we presume "completed" means passed

- The Board will target individuals in an attempt to impose their will on the industry.

- Master Plumbers will continue to support CPD offering discounts and other enticements to help increase or maintain membership.

- Master Plumbers will continue to support the Board in order to influence decisions in their favour.

- Master Plumbers will open up their membership in an attempt to boost numbers.

- Master Plumbers grass root members will get sick of its direction and demand change from their executive.

- More and more people will reject the regulation of the industry.

- There will be continual attacks on the Federation as they are seen as competition and a handful of malcontents.

- There will be the establishment of a coalition between the Federation with similar organisations or the establishment of a political party to fight the corrupt tactics used to regulate the industry.

- The Federation will increase in numbers and will continue fighting for fairness and equality. More people will become outspoken.

Letters to the Editor

and finished the final block course, NOT necessarily having a copy of the certificate in your hand – but then this may not be the PGDB's interpretation).

Additionally will you be able to enroll for the exam prior to receiving your National Certificate if you are confident of passing, given that there is also a month of time between enrolling and sitting?)

Where the hell did this come from? Has anyone stopped to look at the impact on the trainee and on the employer? Think about it logically. A person finishes their National Certificate in say November. They can't sit the registration exam until June the following year and then it takes three months for them to be marked and distributed. If the trainee has passed then they have to apply for registration, so there's another two months.

We are looking at 12 months when the trainee is no man's land. We are presuming that once they get National Certificate they are no longer a trainee and will then need to work under an Exemption ticket.

Does this also mean that the supervision requirements change – bearing in mind an apprentice must work under direct supervision for one year, but then works under the direction of a supervisor, but an exemption holder works under direct supervision for two years? So effectively if an apprentice finishes his National Certificate in March, but cannot sit the exam until June, on 1 April in the new licensing year what is he? A trainee – we don't believe so, an exemption holder – yes we think so.

A situation arises then that said trainee may have been working under the "direction" of a supervisor up until 31 March, but then becomes an exemption holder and has to go back to working under the direct supervision of said supervisor. If this is not the case then we want the PGDB to spell out exactly what category of license these people fall into, what supervision they require and how they will be treated under the disciplinary system?

Also of interest is that trainees pay only \$45 for their licence, but exemption holder's pay a lot more.

We wonder if there has been another back room meeting where this money grabbing scheme, which stifles people's progression has been dreamed up. We know at one of the earlier TROQ meetings (a meeting organised by Skills to look at the new qualifications) the Master Plumber representative, who was the chair of the meeting, openly stated he didn't want to employ a lot of Certifiers. He was happy to have people at licensing level. Is this scheme a ploy to retain staff at below the licensing level for a longer period of time so the employer gets a greater return on their investment in the apprentice?

DO YOU REMEMBER! There was a time when once you were registered you were classed as fully qualified to run your own

Dear Editor

I am amazed after watching Campbell Live the other day that the Board chair and CEO had refused to be interviewed on this very important matter plaguing our industry.

How is it that the Board Chairman (who is ultimately responsible) can be absent from important events such as the Regulations Review committee hearing into fees and the Campbell live interview on the same matter?

No other Board Chair in the country could have the Minister front up and be hung out to dry while the Chairperson hides in the shadows.

I can understand that Mr Bickers may feel completely embarrassed and ashamed by his actions but being the Chair he has a duty to front up to the public of this country.

It is easy to see why the Board has lost its way with a coward at the helm.

Dear Editor

The web site will not allow me to donate money to the cause. Could you email me bank account details? You are doing a good job.

The TV thing last night let many people know about the plumbing board.

The problem is that we have to show our current licence at every inspection and send a

business, but then Master Plumbers involved themselves and lobbied for a second stage called Craftsman, why because they found that every one upon registration became a Chief whereas Master Plumbers wanted an endless supply of Indians.

What of the cost to the apprentice? They could lose up to 12 months pay at licensing level. The employer will have to provide up to an extra 12 months of supervision and could have to pay for an exemption license. Why? Undoubtedly all these costs will be passed on to the consumer.

That's how we see it and we certainly don't see it having any advantage to industry, OR CONSUMERS. We will be looking to see it this could be deemed to be a "term and condition" of licensing that should have been consulted on.

Obviously a lot of concerns could have been laid to rest if the Board actually consulted and communicated with the industry. They seem to forget that communication is a two way activity which includes "listening".

Campbell Live



Didn't I do well Flip? You sure did Flop.

Last week saw Campbell Live outlining some of the plight of our industry and it was only the tip of the iceberg. The link is www.plumbers.co.nz/forum/fellow-practitioners-update/41/.

The Board showed just how "independent" they are by directing the media to Flip Flop Williamson. They made no comment. Zip – nada – nothing! What was surprised about that?????

Here's some of the messages we received:

- Good work... on TV 3. I complained on my return from Aussie about the Board 6 years ago about fees... wrote to Shane Jones then Williamson... protested at meetings in Auckland. Master Plumbers pushed the new system. The best way is what they do in Aussie with the PIC in Victoria... No work over \$500 without compliance, they changed the law here in 2006 with a Bill only to boost sales and allow DIY plumbing... I was told to F@#k off by your mate... I've complained many many times about Asian cowboys Board does not want to know...

copy of it to be included with paperwork when a job is completed for sign off for Code of Compliance.

Ed: Thanks for that. We had problems with the donation process so we have put the details up on the website. The site will be getting a spruce up as time permits.

Dear Editor

With regard to the Fit and Proper Person Policy, how is this going to fit in with the training of inmates in prisons?

Ed: We think you will find it is a policy that has been a total waste of time and resources and will never be used but is a tick in the box for the Board's achieving the recommendations of the OAG but still has enough power to affect practitioners if the Board want to victimise selected people.

Dear Editor

Is Minister Williamson going to apply the "fit and proper" person test to those that he appoints to the PGDB?

Because currently we have Board which includes professionals such as JP's, lawyers and accountants as well as business owners who have, as the law currently sits, illegally taken money from plumbers, gasfitters and Drainlayers.

Is this "fit and proper" behaviour from professionals who cannot

now with Complete Bathrooms and Refresh it's just builders with a pair of crimps doing our work...

- Great Show on Campbell tonight. Good on Allan Day also, although I've retired and am now 66 years old I'm still doing the odd job and have not relicensed, mainly due to the fact I refuse to do any Mickey Mouse courses to obtain points, anyway keep up the good work. Thank God the industry has you people doing what you are.

- Hi have to say by coincidence had whole family around and saw the programme. Bloody good and most entertaining great job well done.

- Saw the Campbell Live clip tonight, and man I really hate it when the programme makers chop and change to different people to get their opinion but don't put the conservation into the true context of what you are trying to say. The public will watch that and think what a bunch of moaning thieving tradesmen, who just want to rip us off.

- It was good that the report on the crap we have to deal with was shown tonight. Certainly shows the public what we are having to put up with from the Board and Williamson. 10/10 for the picture in the toilet seat. Even my father thought it was a great touch. Keep up the good work and we hope that things may change soon or we can get a real Board in place that live in the real world and do not rob us blind!! Was a great comparison to the electrical guys.

- Well done guys, you looked switched on, professional and it was very informative....but better than that, you came over as trying to be fair, oh and a tad pissed off. Food for thought for the public.....and Maurice admitting to being not happy to be in the frame for it all.....priceless. Love that toilet seat frame...lol.

- The editing of the clip with Maurice placing himself in the "frame" was a one in a million stroke of filming luck, maybe Wal could put the seat on to Trade Me as a fund raiser under the heading "Last time I looked I saw rainbows this time as I look I see places where the sun does not shine".

- I saw you guys on TV. You were great, which was not so for Maurice Williamson's comments. Since when have politicians been able to rightfully claim that they knew the intent of the law drafters but that the law drafters were in a dream and forgot to include vital points? What's more, that the MP's then also missed the errors in the final draft on its passing into law. It's all Monty Python's flying circus stuff, such as made Alice in Wonderland famous.

- Got to see the program using T V on Demand, good hard hitting stuff, by the way, you scrub up really well!

- Hello - I wonder could you recommend a plumber in West Auckland. I was impressed by your values on the TV last night

claim they did not know.

And are the gaggle of 'Lawyers' employed by them also given the same test, as this group of "professionals" undoubtedly advised the Board of "professionals" that what they were proposing was ok.

Fit and proper – what a joke – a group of thieving, lying bastards sitting in judgement on those who have served a four year apprenticeship and want to go out and earn an honest living.

Dear Editor

Re: fit and proper people. When is the spaceship landing to take the misfits back to their lair?

This is extraordinary! You couldn't make this shit up to write a best seller, but I may just try as I'm just about through with these clowns. I met a guy recently who decided not to renew license, he had other income stream.

If what he said is correct and I have no reason to doubt, he was contacted by the Board as to why he was not re licensing. He said he was told when asked if he was ever likely to re license not to leave it too long to relicense in the future or the Board may well feel compelled to audit his work from previous years... nbsp;

and it's a shame you are not up in Auckland. Do you know of a reputable person up in West Auckland? Thank you.

• Hey, Fantastic work on the Campbell show.... heard a few commenting on it today, lots were quite surprised Allan Day hadn't paid his fees for 8 years! I have just come in from my 10 point Feltonnnnnnnnnnn course....zzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzzz...very boring!...10 points though!!..., and good on them for making it free. Mr Simmiss (former PGDB member) was there getting his freebies too!..

• Dear Editor Good stuff, we are proud of you all, go the Federation equality for all! Thanks everyone for your comments and support.

Here are some other comments we got this week.

Dear Editor

Have you seen the latest shit the Board have published concerning being a "fit and proper person" to be allowed to be in our trade. How dare they have the right to ask us questions as to whether we are good enough to be Plumbers Gasfitters or Drainlayers!

How many spineless, corrupt, useless Board members and PGDB employees have been made to go through a similar process, and when they have been found to be sadly lacking, (which a number have), have undergone any form of disciplinary procedure to make amends for their indiscretions?

My blood is boiling at present to think that those inept, useless bastards can sit in their security locked ivory tower with the ability to decide whether we are good enough to serve in our respective trades! This is a bloody disgrace!

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