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IN OTHER NEWS

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

Regarding the Fit and Proper Person policy. Mr Jackson kindly listed the nature of questions to be asked under the Fit and Proper Person policy.

As an honest person I feel I need to turn myself in to the Board as I fail to meet two of the criteria.

Question 6. Do you have a mental or physical condition that may render you unable to perform the functions required for the practice of sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, and or drainlaying?

Answer: I have given my body to the industry. I have buggered knees which make me unstable on a roof and I can hardly walk. I have stuffed elbows and shoulders which causes me to lose grip sometimes.

Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Amendment Bill Update



We thought the Amendment Bill was to have its third reading this week as it was third on the Governments order paper but it looks like we were shunted down the order yet again. This isn't a priority for the Government even

though it was rushed through under urgency. We guess when you make the rules and change the law you can do what you want.

In reality the third reading is a formality and the Board will get it's get out of jail free card. After the third reading, whenever that is, the Governor General gives the Bill "official approval". We will write to him outlining the lies and deceit that have occurred during this process. We will follow through until all avenues are exhausted.

So what then? What are the Board and Government going to do to win back the confidence of the industry? We believe they are so arrogant they will take a hard line stance and do absolutely nothing. We will be expected to forgive and forget. They are the ones that created this situation and they are the ones that made it about the money. We have not even heard a hint of an apology from any one of them.

Have any of them actually approached the industry to negotiate a way through this? NO they haven't. They have all had their heads so far up their backsides, looking internally, that they missed the point totally. The point being that it wasn't about the money, but it was about what was right, about our rights to fairness, and both the Government and the Board backed by their cronies took it away from us, why - to cover their incompetence!

The Board members should hang their heads in shame when in the presence of tradespeople. It is our considered opinion this is the worst Board in the entire history of our industry. We wonder how the Board's Bi-century will view this year's activities.

Taking the fight to them.



When you think about the lack of credibility the Minister and Board now have, it's no wonder the people in the industry with morals, honesty and integrity get pissed off. We fund a Board with about \$4

I have hearing loss and I am grossly overweight as a result of the injuries. A house would have to be lifted at least 800mm for me to get underneath.

In essence if I was a thoroughbred I would be put down but on top of that the Boards policy wants to discard me like a wet bus ticket.

I am still capable of working but the Boards policy would say I am not.

Question 8. Have you engaged in sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, and or drainlaying in a foreign country when not permitted by or under the law of that country to do so; or if permitted to do so, in contravention of a condition of the permission?

Answer: Yes I have

I have installed water pumps in the Soloman Islands to get drinking water to a school which didn't have any. I have repaired a gas heater in Russia to get heat in -18 degrees.

So editor, should I hand myself in?

ED: Well the Board claims no one relicensing will be asked these questions but their policy states:

4.1 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.*

This is another example of the industry being misled

Million a year and what do we get for it? We get told we benefit from them protecting the reputation of the industry. It takes you back to the gangster days and the protection rackets that went on then – pay us or don't work.

Last week we told you the Federation had put in a lot of work over the last two and a half years and is not going to succumb to the Industrial Exclusion tactics being used by the Board and the Government. We stated the time is right for us all to stand together and make the difference needed to return this industry to where it should be.

The response to our request for "Industry Board Members" has been great and next week we will be putting in place the start of discussions by that group. One question that has been asked is "what time commitment will there be?" We anticipate addressing the issues one at a time, so your time will be what you want to put into the issues as obviously you will feel strongly about some issues but aren't too worried about others.

The manner in which the Federation Administration Committee has been operating electronically for the last two and a half years is that anyone on the committee can raise a subject and send out an email requesting feedback. That gets the discussion going and gets a good balance of ideas. The ideas are then put together into draft documents and sent out for final discussion. We then produce the final documents and send them out to relevant organisations.

We operate on the premise that all ideas and thoughts are good and the only dumb statement or questions are those that are not stated or asked. Your ideas and opinions are what we want, to win back what we have lost as an industry. So time commitment is as much as you want to put in. Some administration committee members are putting in 20 plus hours a week into Federation activities and others make their commitments as they see fit, after all we all have real jobs and families.

If you are interested just contact Wal Gordon at wal.gordon@xtra.co.nz

All we ask is for your ideas, opinions and a little bit of your time. Help make the difference needed. We will still be asking all members for their views and ideas. We feel the "Industry Board" will be our industry future.

What's on the Agenda so far:

- Follow up action on Continuing Professional Development
- Investigate conflicts of interest affecting PGDB decisions.
- Set Industry Board operating procedures
- Investigating PGDB compliance costs
- Investigating risk to the industry and costs
- Determine best training required for the industry
- Set some measureable objectives for the industry

This proves it's about numbers for funding.

For quite some time the Federation has been voicing its concerns that we believe the training system currently in place for apprentices is failing the industry. We are of the belief the system is not producing qualified people at an appropriate level and the

by throwaway statements in the Board's news letter.

If push came to shove they would refer to the policy.

We know of people who haven't done apprenticeships but are deemed to be certifiers so who knows what a fit and proper person is anymore?

Dear Editor

I haven't licensed this year and received an email from the Board as follows:

"I note that you were licensed last year but have not yet renewed your licences this year. To enable us to update our records, could you please advise if you intend uplifting your licences, or would you prefer that I change your status on our database to "Non-Practising" or "Retired"?"

It seems to me the Board is looking for excuses as to why they are 12% down on licensing last year.

If I choose to not license then that is my decision and I don't need someone chasing me for reasons.

I am aware of the laws about operating without authority and don't need a Trade Compliance Officer second guessing my decision.

Those that have paid this year are paying for this officer to ask if individuals have made the right decision.

You would think they would realise their policies, procedures, levies and fees and lack of credibility have caused

system is not training apprentices to be tradespeople. We read this on the internet this week:

Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment Minister Steven Joyce says changes the government made to reward performance instead of funding institutions on a "bums on seats" basis are working. Apparently more students are staying in study, achieving credits and qualifications, and progressing further.

"The changes we have made to the tertiary education sector to reward performance, instead of just getting "bums on seats", are continuing to work," Mr Joyce says. "More students are staying in study, achieving credits and qualifications, and progressing further."

Tertiary providers receiving student achievement component (SAC) funding are performing by measuring providers against four Educational Performance Indicators (EPIs): course completion rates; qualification completion rates; student progression at levels 1-4; and student retention.

We believe this is yet another system that is measuring the bureaucracy. Sure more trainees might be staying in training and achieving the assessment passes but can they actually DP the jobs which they are theoretically trained in? Is the system training people to do the job or to pass the assessment? This is one of the issues the newly formed Industry Board will be looking at on our behalf.

The Memory Fade

Remember Maurice Williamson said in parliament that it would not be financially prudent for the Government to bail the Board out and pay out to Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers or words to that effect?

Well we noted this week the Office of the Health and Disability Commissioner's is looking at a \$400,000 deficit this year, \$332,000 next year, an \$80,000 deficit the year after, and \$28,000 in 2015/16.

The estimates were published after the agency received \$3 million in extra funding for four years in this year's budget. Not only that, but apparently they have received one-off funding of a quarter of a million dollars which will resolve pressures next financial year.

Well we guess someone has done a flip flop.

A Sense of Humour

It's important to have a sense of humour in today's world so here's something to finish the day with.

We note on SEEK that the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Board are advertising for yet another solicitor. We don't know if this is to replace someone leaving or is a new position developed to bolster the Board's ever growing legal division. Maybe the Board should have installed revolving doors in their building instead of security doors. Or perhaps we have had it wrong that the security doors are to stop people leaving not to keep practitioners out.

A couple of points caught our eye in the advertisement:

the problem.

I will not change my mind about licensing until I believe I can trust the Board.

Ed: Yes we agree with you. It is a waste of industry money. They should be looking at the real reasons they are down 12% on licensing.

Dear Editor

Hi on reading your latest newsletter the last paragraph I agree with you on this.

I feel that all plumbers and gasfitters when asked by the Board or council for either of the gas certificates or as the Auckland Council love their producer statements for plumbing, needs to have a charge to it.

I for one have had Council ask for a copy of the gas certificate on 2 jobs; my response "do your job" here is the number only.

For producer statements they asked for one on job a while back now, I told them you supply the form I will fill it out.

Their response was down load it off the council website and give it to them. Well I did that plus printed 10 more so each time I fill out one from the original copy.

I have been told that the form I have is out of date and we are to download one each time we do a job. I have told them no you have what I have given you and I will not do any more without some form of payment.

"Our legal team is responsible for providing a complete in-house legal service, including strategic, operational, regulatory, litigation and corporate legal services. We are serious about our work and work hard, but like to have a laugh as well."

"We are looking for a graduate to intermediate lawyer who:

- has an interest, or experience, in public and administrative law and/or litigation*
- has great people and communication skills*
- is optimistic, honest, hard-working, down-to-earth, organised, detail oriented, and (this is important) has a sense of humour"*

Yep we agree they do need someone who likes to have a laugh and has a good sense of humour because they will certainly see that with some of the issues signed off by the Board.

We feel this may be a prime opportunity for someone, as the clowns on the Board are getting a bit dreary, so a new clown for the circus may inject some life.

North and South Islands to be Renamed



The rumours that Maurice Williamson is going to rename the North and South Islands as Flip and Flop are totally unfounded. As always he will make an informed decision and no amount of interference by malcontents will change his views.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

Based on what you said last week we are funding a Board which is simply meeting its own objectives for its own benefit is that correct?

Ed:

Yes it is our opinion that, as Bureaucrats do, they create administration to cover their arse and keep themselves in work. It's a bit like lawyers who write things in a language that only another lawyer can understand and therefore they keep themselves in jobs. They all make it difficult and put themselves on a pedestal and look down on the rest of us but in reality they are nothing without us.

We have no one to blame but ourselves for letting them away with it but that is about to change. The formation of our own Industry Board from, and for, the industry will give us the protection we need and in reality all we need is numbers. We need to get all tradespeople involved.