



Fellow Practitioner Issue 174 Dated 27 September 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- **The Minefield of Supervision**
- **This is what the Act says:**
- **Supervision required**
- **Screw the double standards!**
- **Beehive Installs New Urinals (Just a Laugh)**
- **Never Give Up**

IN OTHER NEWS

Are our qualifications being pushed in a predetermined direction?

You are probably aware our NZQA qualifications have been under review and some believe have been hijacked by educationalists.

There is a big push for a level four qualification and this is possibly why - the government has set two ambitious targets for 2017: to increase the proportion of 18 year-old who achieve NCEA Level 2 to 85%, and to also increase the proportion of 25-34 year-old achieving NZQF qualifications at level 4 or above to 55%.

Nice targets but what about the damage being done on the way?

Response from the Governor General

You will remember we sent a letter to the Governor General drawing his attention to the

The Minefield of Supervision



This is the type of sign you would expect to see in a third world country but we are warning you, we need them here.

Since the beginning of time skills have been handed from one person to another, and over the years the only thing that has changed is the formalisation of that transfer and the application of qualifications. (Oh and the exchange of about \$10 thousand dollars

currently).

Our industry is no different, but what HAS changed is the expectation placed on the qualified tradespeople, and we believe the gazetted qualifications have caused a number of problems.

Supervision is one of those problems.

In 1976 the PGDB changed the qualifications and added a new licensing class called "Craftsman".

There are various theories about why the Board did this, one being that too many tradespeople were going into business and failing so they wanted to give them extra skills, but the theory we think is more likely is that at that time a person who qualified as a registered plumber gasfitter or drainlayer was automatically responsible for their own work and was able to go out in business for themselves straight away.

Its been said business owners were concerned they were training people who would qualify and leave once given registration status, so adding an extra qualification/licence class, one where they had to do two years under the "supervision" of a Craftsman would slow down the exodus.

Apparently it got the backing of the industry support group at the time, which was an employer's only association, "the self proclaimed voice of the industry".

The creation of the Craftsman status, now called Certifying, shifted responsibility to the supervisor.

The downgrading of the registration qualification, now licensing, where someone is qualified but not qualified to an extent where they don't take responsibility for the work, has caused the system to move responsibility to the supervisor simply to meet the requirements of the Act.

manner in which our rights had been taken away from us during the Plumbers Outfitters and Drainlayers Amendment Bill process.

The Governor General assented to the Bill on 13 September 2013. While noting our objections it was explained that the Governor General exercises his power to give Royal Assent to Bills on the advice of the Prime Minister.

Here's hoping that when the Prime Minister spent the weekend with the Queen that she gave him a good swift kick for the manner in which he has been dealing with us.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

Re New Appointments

So not only are they f**king us over every which way, now they are denying any of us the opportunity to nominate ourselves.

I can't believe this clown thinks that this lot of puppets are doing such a good job that he doesn't need to go out and get some fresh thinking.

I suspect he is worried that no one would apply, or maybe he wants to trot out the old Peter Jackson jokes again and again. Friday the 13th news indeed.

Dear Editor

Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Annual Appeal day.

I'm all for supporting charity so now that the Plumbers Board are a charity does that mean we will see Bickers and the other clowns out on the streets in their clowns uniforms collecting for the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers annual appeal?

In essence the qualification has created the problem.

This is what the Act says:

supervision, in relation to any work, means that the work is undertaken under the control and direction of a person authorised under this Act to do the work or, in the case of [sections 19, 21, 22, and 25](#), a person authorised to supervise work under those sections as is sufficient to ensure—

- (a) that the work is performed competently; and
- (b) that while the work is being undertaken, appropriate safety measures are adopted; and
- (c) that the completed work complies with the requirements of—
 - (i) regulations; and
 - (ii) in the case of sanitary plumbing or drainlaying, regulations under the [Building Act 2004](#); and
 - (iii) in the case of gasfitting, regulations under the [Gas Act 1992](#).

Compare: 1976 No 69 s 2

The consultation currently undertaken by the Board appears to be another Band Aid to cover for poor decisions in the past. There is a simple fix to the supervision problem, create a qualification that has an end result of the tradesperson being responsible when they qualify.

Now people will say we already have that at Certifying level, but what about all the people who don't make it to that level? Certifying numbers are reducing - which makes the supervision requirements even harder to abide by. In 2011, 8128 Certifying authorities supervised 2157 Licensed Authorities. As of today 6,864 Certifying Authorities supervise 2185 Licensed Authorities. This is the "good work" the minister says the Board has been doing.

Those numbers do not include the supervision required of apprentices, or exemption holders.

Supervision required



We now have a system that gives people what the educationalists call an "OUT" from the industry". A stop point, or as the educationalists like to call it a "cap stone", where people get to, and are called qualified.

For our industry they get to Licensed level and that is their "out", but are they really qualified? They have spent four years of their lives getting trained and yet they can't apply their trade unless they are "Supervised". Perhaps their license should read "Supervision required, do not leave unattended"

Even if these licensed people stay in the industry they don't really have to take responsibility for their work – that responsibility is with their supervisor. The supervisor even pays for them to be licensed as being under supervision. Are you starting to see why people are leaving the industry?

Now there are varying types and levels of supervision and these are dependent on the circumstances. We feel it is very difficult to have a "one size fits all" scenario. There is supervision required for apprentices; supervision for others under training, there is supervision of non authorised people, supervision of employees of similar qualification as the supervisor, and supervision of licensed people.

I really don't know how successful it would be as they have failed in everything else they have done.

Perhaps they could get Flip Flop involved as a celebrity collector with his rainbow.

We could turn red nose day turn into red faced day.

Dear Editor

Just something to lighten your day.

OLD TRADESMAN PRIDE

As an old tradesman in the industry I thought I would pass this on as I did not want to be the only old fart going unrecognised. Actually, it's not a bad thing to be called an old fart, as you will see.

- Old Farts are easy to spot at sporting events; during the playing of the National Anthem we remove our caps and stand at attention and sing without embarrassment. We know the words and believe in them.

- Old Farts remember when the industry was prosperous, when apprentices were trained, when our qualification meant something, when we were all responsible for our own work, when the industry had input into its direction and when the people in the positions of authority could be trusted.

- If you bump into one of us on the sidewalk we will apologize. If you pass us on the street, we will nod or tip our cap to a lady. We trust strangers and are courtly to women.

- Us Old Farts hold the door for the next person and always, when walking, make certain the lady is on the inside for protection.

The consultation put out by the PGDB seems to want to strengthen the expectations of the Board so that enforcement can be used as their weapon of choice, yet again.

Quite frankly who cares what their expectations are? They are asking questions like:

- What is reasonable for the Board to expect from a supervisor?
- What kinds of things would make a person a good supervisor?
- What kinds of things would make a person a bad supervisor?

These are personal qualities and not everyone will be a good supervisor. Is what the Board asking taking us in the direction of not being able to get a practicing license because we don't have the qualities of a supervisor, in the same manner that we can't get a license because we don't have enough Continuing Professional Development points?

The nature of the questions in the consultation seems to be directed at the Board producing a Policy which gives them more power. Yes we agree there are some supervision scenarios that need addressing but is creating more offences the way to go about it? Surely we should be creating a system that minimises the supervision that is required through being well trained, having proper qualifications and being responsible for our own work.

Creating a policy that is enforceable by the Act is simply a band aid. Why not take action for the future?

Over the next couple of weeks the Federation will attempt to answer the Board's consultation document and get it out to you. In the mean time we would welcome your thoughts.

Screw the double standards!



Has Flip Flop Williamson taken over the role of the smiling assassin?

Remember, he stated the Government didn't have any money to bail out the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board, and the Board would be insolvent if the Amendment Bill wasn't passed? He claimed it was a "mistake in the wording" and the intent of the Act was that the industry should pay.

We saw this happen last week.

"An education union is welcoming the news the Government is giving \$6 million towards fixing Novopay issues. Five million dollars will go towards fixing outstanding technical problems with another one million for training support and payroll staff."

- We get embarrassed if the apprentice curses in front of women and children.

- Old Farts have moral courage and personal integrity. We seldom brag unless it's about our children or grandchildren.

It's the Old Farts in the industry who know New Zealand is protected, not by politicians, but by the hard workers in the Plumbing Gasfitting and Drainlaying Industry.

This country needs Old Farts with their work ethic, sense of responsibility, pride in their country and decent values but the Board and Government are forcing them out for no reason other than some bureaucrat had a rush of shit to the brain.

Your views...

As always we welcome your views and opinions on the direction we should be heading. If you have ideas – no matter if you are an apprentice, an interested person, a licensed person or a certifier – we want to know what you think. You all have an equal voice in this organisation – we make no distinction between a business owner and a trainee – both views are valid and both are important.

Drop the editor a line and let us know what you are thinking when it comes to relicensing time next year? Yes or no? Will you be putting your hand in your pocket and paying the PGDB who just declared a \$922k SURPLUS for your licence?

Obviously the intent of Novapay was to cost the country money. Just another change in direction and another double standard for the Government. It's almost as if the work of the plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers is worthless in this Government's eyes.

John Key stated in Upper Hutt last election that the Government would listen to the Industry as the industry knows what is best for it. Well that was a total load of shit as he hasn't listened to the industry at all.

Beehive Installs New Urinals (Just a Laugh)



There have been so many main stream changes in Government, and flip flops, that Parliamentary Services have had to cater for the needs of politicians for those unexpected changes in direction.

An Investigator (wanting to generate some income for his next overseas trip) was appointed and has concluded that the installation is legally compliant and in conjunction with good trade practice, as it is installed only for private use by the Honourable Minister Flip Flop Williamson and others voted into Parliament to represent the public not the industry.

These honourable people are now able to change direction whilst standing. They no longer have to make a decision about what direction they will go in!



As an industry we are putting up with a lot of shit from the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board but it is not them alone that are hitting us in the pocket. Look at what the ACC are doing.

Did you know that ACC charges a fee of 5.4% of the total of your ACC for payment by instalments? So on \$10,000 you will pay a fee of \$540.00.

Some might say well that's not too bad but most forget that these are provisional payments, i.e. paid in advance so in effect you are paying 5.4% penalty fee on money you are paying to ACC in advance. Where is the fairness in that?

Sure if you are late pay the penalty, (do the crime do the time) - but to pay a penalty on an advance payment is just wrong in our view. If it is an administration fee or set up fee \$500.00 is very excessive as most retailers charge less than \$100.00.

You are receiving this email as a member of PGDF or because you signed up online.

[Edit your subscription](#) | [Unsubscribe instantly](#)

Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers
Federation 3 Jupiter Grove Trentham
Upper Hutt 5018 Ph (04) 5277977
Mob 0276564811 Fax (04) 5277978
information@pgdf.co.nz