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IN OTHER NEWS

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

It seems to me that we are the only industry that has all these issues going on and that have an Industry Board that does nothing for the industry.

All this fighting doesn't make an environment that makes the industry attractive.

Why can't the industry get together around a table and resolve the issues after all we are all adults.

Ed: Yes you are right in what you say and the Minister of Building and Construction and the Building and Housing Group need to take some responsibility for that as does the Board

The Future



make no apologies for this.

We not only want accountability but we want a future for ourselves, for our licensed and certifying staff and mostly for our apprentices. We noticed this statement from Labour associate spokesperson for Building and Construction Raymond Huo this week: *"Public scrutiny has proved to be more effective in providing leadership to the Government's 'super ministry' than the super ministers themselves."*

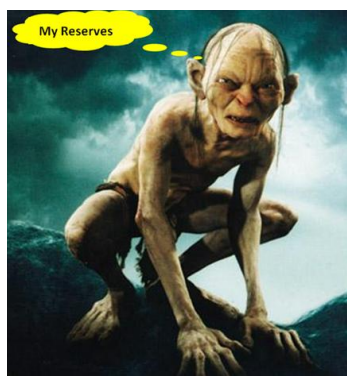
We can relate to the above statement, in that public scrutiny helps mould the way to the future, rather than the opinions of a few people in positions of authority, or influence, telling us what we need.

People and organisations with character do the right thing even in the face of opposition generally for two reasons – firstly because they want to make change for their future, and secondly because they refuse to change to ways that are wrong.

We will fight for what we believe we need - not what others tell us we need.

Soon we will be looking at the people and organisations and how they influence our direction. If you have any opinion on this issue let us know and we will include your views.

The Financial Statements



Further to our comments last week about the Board's Financial Statements, we noticed this recorded in the Board's minutes:

Financial Statements: *Cash reserves were currently sitting at around 7-8 months (Board Policy was 3-6 months), and this would be revisited once the committee had assessed any impact from the downturn in*

licensing revenue. The Chief Executive reminded the Board that

and Master Plumbers.

The Federation is the only organisation that has requested meetings to sit around a table to find common ground but none of the organisations above seem to be interested.

We get the impression that it's all about egos and status and to sit around a table and have issues torn apart for corrective action is more than some people can take.

They would sooner attempt to lay blame on others to cover their own incompetence.

Dear Editor

Regarding the re-certification of CPD Courses – I had a look at the courses on the Board's website and there are hundreds of courses.

Are you telling us we are paying for all these courses to be re-accredited to the Board's CPD Scheme?

If we are how much is that costing us?

Ed: The Board stated that all CPD courses would be re-accredited to ensure they met the Board's competencies. It would appear the Board is doing that at our cost and also are accrediting new courses free as well.

In 2010 the cost of accreditation was \$200.00 per course.

Initial accreditation of courses was for a period

nearly \$500,000 of reserves had been committed as part of the fees review and over \$300,000 would be held in memorandum accounts. If this is taken into account, reserves would come back within the policy range.

We just don't get the logic with this statement. The Board have told us discipline and prosecutions make up for nearly 50% of the Board's expenditure. We now have Memorandum Accounts in place to control the excess levies taken from practitioners, and hold them in reserve for discipline and prosecutions.

Based on the comment above, it would indicate the CEO wants to retain the money in the Memorandum Accounts, as well as keep 3-6 month of equivalent discipline and prosecution levy funds in reserves.

This is simply a "double dip". We believe the reserves kept by the Board should simply be enough to close the organisation down, if need be, and meet its lease obligations and employer obligations. As all activities are paid by the industry in advance there should be no need for excessive reserves and the Board should operate within budget.

If the Board is to persist in holding reserves at a level of 3-6 months operating expenditure it should exclude discipline and prosecutions as this is dealt with by the Memorandum Accounts.

Submission on Competence Reviews

Policy
The Board's Competence Review Policy can be found [here](#).
No Link

Consideration of section 32 principles
The Board has been guided by the principles set out in s32 of the Act when considering the proposal to prescribe participation in competence reviews as a standard term and condition of a licence. The record of the Board's consideration of those principles can be found [here](#).
No Link

Making a submission
Submissions on the Board's proposal are welcomed and must be received **by 5pm on 17 January 2014.**

There are three ways you can make a submission...

- you can complete an online submission at www.pgdb.co.nz/consultation/current

Here's one. The others must be secret

The Board is again consulting on Competence Reviews and they are so busy putting a spin on what they want to achieve that they again got the basics wrong!

Wanting to be informed, we read through their "on line" documentation and read "The Board's Competence Review Policy can be found here", but there was no link on "here" and we went nowhere.

After reading all the spin we got to the submission section where it said "There are three ways you can make a submission....." but then they go on to list only one.

If they can't get the little things right, how can we trust them with the bigger issues? Peter F Drucker once said "Management is doing things right. Leadership is doing the right things" - it appears the

of two years so a huge proportion of course was due for re-accreditation.

Currently listed on the Board's website are 339 plumbing courses, 374 gasfitting courses and 282 drainlaying courses.

The accreditation or re-accreditation of these courses would have a prospective income of \$199,000.00.

The Board have chosen not to charge these profit making organisations for this process, to the detriment of the industry.

This sum of money could have reduced licensing fees by about \$15.00 per license.

Our figures for accreditation are estimates as getting the truth out of the Board is like getting a bucket load or rocking horse shit.



The Federation has been receiving messages about the latest Certifying Exams.

It would appear a lot of the people who sat the exam are not happy with the content. We will look into it further and keep you informed.

If you sat the exams let us know what you thought.

Board doesn't provide either.

The Federation will be revisiting and assessing the Board's latest comments. If you have any views please send them to us. We will be publishing our views in the next couple of weeks.

What we do urge you to do though is to read the consultation document very thoroughly – and think about the principles involved.

Terms and Conditions of Licensing



Each time we get consultation from the Board it gives the impression that it wants to legislate its self more power in the name of the "health and safety of the public". The reason we mention this is in response to a comment made in the latest consultation on Competence Reviews.

The Board stated the latest consultation:

"There is no provision in the Act that expressly requires trades people to participate in a competence review although it is clear that participation is the intention of the Act. Most trade's people are very cooperative when requested to take part and that is unlikely to change. However, there has been a situation where a person that the Board was concerned about refused to undergo a review and there was nothing that could be done about it. That is clearly not in the interests of public health and safety, and this proposal addresses the matter".

We know a bit of the background of this case, and we believe the refusal to participate was as a result of the Board not initially following the procedures legislated. This lead to a standoff with the Board who were attempting to impose their will, and the individual sticking to his right that the correct procedures to be followed.

If the Board had the respect of the industry and the industry believed it would be treated in a fair manner, there probably wouldn't be a problem but when you see an organisation trying to legislate itself power to impose its will on others then you are certainly suspicious.

No matter what the Board claims its intention is, what we need to relaise is that every new term and condition gives them a little bit more power over you and your right to fair and equitable treatment when it comes to your right to work.

Simply put, if you don't comply with the terms and conditions they can take your licence away and discipline you.

The latest consultation on terms and conditions again goes on about competency. How many times do we need to prove our competency?



We have had people send us information and asked us for our view so coming up in future issues we will be looking at:

- The qualifications review. Is it meeting industry needs or is it a stop gap because time is running out. Where do we believe it is taking us?
- The influence of personalities in the industry. Who are the people in the positions of influence and what organisations do they belong to?
- What is needed in the future? What do we believe is needed for the industry to progress?
- Do submissions and participation in consultation get listened to? What does it mean if people don't have their say? Is silence a yes?
- Our views on the current Competence Audits consultation. Are the Board trying to break a walnut with a sledge hammer?
- What needs to be done to get change without risking our jobs?

We thought the implementation of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) was to prove our competence each year and now it looks like we will have audits as well to prove we are competent. This tells us the Boards CPD systems are failing and not doing what the Board claimed. If only they spent a bit of time examining their own competency as an organisation we might all be spared some anguish!

Skills Consultation Meetings on the New Qualifications – Update

Over the last couple of weeks Skills have visited some main centres to get feedback on the proposed new qualifications for our industry.

They had a series of questions they wanted feed back on which included embedding the current registration examination into the New Zealand Certificate in Plumbing, Gasfitting and/or Drinlaying – meaning that you do not complete your qualification UNTIL you have sat and passed the examination.

This was unanimously supported by the few people that turned up. It also means that exam study and support will be provided inside the qualification.

Other questions covered the amount of electrical knowledge that should be in the quals, working at heights and confined spaces, and collecting general opinions and thoughts from industry.

What was disappointing was the turnout of industry to these meetings. We think they were reasonably well advertised through several mediums – the Federation newsletter, Master Plumbers communication channels, the PGDB website and SKILLS website, as well as some Polytechnic's communication channels.

If you do want more information about the shaping of the new qualifications, get hold of SKILLS – or visit their website for updates. Industry will again be consulted at the draft stage on the entire qualification.

This effects each and every one of us – if you are an employer, and employee or even an apprentice – in the future you may train someone in this industry and so you need to understand what it involves and what the end product will look like.

Opportunities to have your say on qualifications come about very rarely – don't miss this chance.

