



## Fellow Practitioner Issue 197 Dated 17 March 2014 Special Edition

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### IN OTHER NEWS

#### Letters to the Editor

##### Dear Editor

I'm new to the industry and I can't believe some of the shit you say has been going down.

How can the Plumbers Board get away with pissing people around like this?

I've been sheltered to all of this but now that I'm licensed I can see exactly what you are saying.

Why doesn't someone do something about it?

**Ed:**

Hi supporter – well where to start. Firstly you can believe it all and it is not getting any better and that's why we are fighting so hard.

I can tell you now most of us would prefer to be out making money or spending time with our families rather than fighting with people who won't listen and are allergic to good practices.

### PAY NO FEES TO THE PGDB

The Federations "Pay No Fees To The PGDB" protest stepped up this week and the format letters you will need are now on line at <http://www.plumbers.co.nz/forum/fellow-practitioners-update/41/fellow-practitioner-pay-no-fees-to-the-pgdb/1642/>

This is the process you need to follow

1. Apply for a waiver or exemption of fees.
2. Applications have to be IN WRITING stating reasons. The Federation has provided some form set letters for you as detailed above. Please personalise them as required.
3. Download license application forms from the Board's website <http://www.pgdb.co.nz/trade/licensing.html>
4. Application must be in the Registrar's hands by 31 March 2014 – we suggest sending it in the last week of March
5. You want to get some sort of receipt that the Board have received your email/fax e.g. read receipt or printed report from your fax
6. The Act states you can legally work while your application is being processed

If you haven't **purchased** enough Continuing Professional Development points you will also need to apply for a section 52 exemption for which there is a fee, hence the reason for applying for a waiver of fees.

If you are supervised and your supervisor is protesting we recommend you apply for an exemption as well. We have provided an application form for you to complete.

We ask that you personalise the letters and add your own little twist in the letters so the Board can't send out a formatted letter to everyone. Now remember your application and letters must be in to the Board by 31 March 2014 for your existing license to remain valid.

### WHAT IS A WAIVER?

We read on the Plumbers Forum about the application of the Waiver and Refund Policy by the Board Secretariat and how it has affected one individual.

<http://www.plumbers.co.nz/forum/plumbing/1/unbelievable/1638/>

No one will be held accountable because the web of deceit is so intertwined that if one looks stupid they all look stupid.

It is at the stage now that they won't back down. What the industry has to remember is the likes of the Registrar still gets paid his quarter of a million dollars no matter what.

The five lawyers know their jobs are safe as the Registrar needs them to cover his arse and protect him and the Board all the time.

Change isn't going to come easy and by sitting back letting them get away with it only leaves them scope to strengthen their position which makes it even harder to deal with them.

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### Dear Editor

I've been supporting the Federation for over three years now and you may only have a thousand or so people on your membership list but believe me you have a bigger support base out there than you think.

When the Federation first started very few people had heard about you and the talk was it would never last. I would use the knowledge of the Federation to generate conversation but now I can't as the conversation is about what you are doing.

The impression I get is people are still living in fear and won't step forward. This doesn't do the industry any good.

What is going to stop all this fighting?

It would appear the Board Secretariat refused a waiver of fees until the fees were paid. It doesn't figure when to "waive" simply means "to refrain from insisting on" So if you have a policy that is a waiver policy for fees etc it would mean they would refrain from insisting on payment - not pay and then have it refunded.

Here is an example: you apply for a waiver of fees on hardship grounds but it would seem the Board is saying payment must accompany the application. How stupid is that where you must pay the money you are telling them you don't have. We wonder if this is the tactic they will attempt with the Federations protest action. We say "see you in court".

### HEAVY HANDED REGULATION STOPS HERE.



The Government has a BMW fleet and a "CASH COW" in the funding of the Plumbing Gasfitting and Drainlaying Board. For the last decade the industry has been forced to follow the thinking of the Board and all we have received is

increases in the demands on us.

Many people throughout the world have been hitting the streets because the Bureaucrats have ignored them. At the end of the day most people just want a fair deal and are fed up with the antics of the "Fat Cats" The Federation has put up with more than most:

- In 2010 the Regulations Review Committee (RRC) upheld complaints from the Federation and recommended the House of Representatives disallow the regulations reported on.
- The Board, the Boards CEO and Master Plumbers CEO at the time cried to the Minister of Building and Construction and that set in place a series of events that continue today.
- The Boards CEO cut off regular meetings with the Federation.
- A call by way of petition to the Social Services Committee for there to be a Commission of Inquiry into the Board was rejected in favour of waiting for the 2013 follow up report by the Office of the Auditor General which still hasn't been seen.
- A vote was held in the House where three National members of the RRC voted against their own recommendations.
- The motion to dismiss was defeated and the Board was given time to correct the situation it had created.
- The Board failed to correct the situations and again were the subject of complaints to the Ombudsman and RRC. Both organisations found the Board had acted unlawfully.
- Minister Maurice Williamson intervened and attempted to rush an Amendment Bill through the House to cover the unlawful activities of the Board. After saying there was an explosion at Pizza Hut

**Ed:**

Thanks for your comments about support as it can be a lonely road for the Federation Committee to walk sometimes.

Comments like that help keep our spirits up.

It's a simple answer to your question – fairness and equality. Who has had the most failures?

On Friday this week we will be looking at failures.

What failures have there been?

Were they governance failures or management?

Who was responsible?

Who was held accountable?

Why doesn't the Government take action? Why doesn't it appear the CEO cares?

Why more reports instead of action?

### The Time is Now

We have all worked hard over the last few years fighting to get Fairness and Equality in Plumbing, Gasfitting and Drainlaying Regulations and Legislation so lets follow it through and ensure it happens this year.

Think hard about the future. Do you believe there will be change if we don't push for it?

Lets do it now.

Nelson and that the Board would be insolvent if the bill was not passed (both exaggerations of the truth) the Bill was passed legalising the activities of the Board.

- There was no negotiation with the industry just a do as you are told we don't care message.
- The Board are still the subject of complaints to the RRC and the Ombudsman and still have no standing within sections of the industry.

You will notice every legal avenue to get fairness and equality in plumbing gasfitting and drainlaying has been tried and has been stone walled by people who want to stick to their own agendas at our cost.

Even with regard to this protest letters were sent to the Social Services Committee, The Board, The Prime Minister's Office and the Minister of Building and Construction informing them of the planned action. The Social Services Committee weren't interested but did take the time to reply. The others have done nothing.

So it looks like it will be more of the same where a sledge hammer is used on the industry because of egos and incompetence by the Government and regulators they appoint. Let them deal with the public when it all turns to shit.

### Bully Tactics



With this protest action we can expect exclusion and bullying tactics. We can expect the Board Secretariat to try to impose on us and breach the regulations and policies they wrote. There will be claims about "intent" and interpretations but at the end of the day it is bully tactics because they don't have the capability to communicate and negotiate with the industry.

We realise the protest action is not for everyone and some still live in fear of the Board but at the end of the day just supporting the Federation is helping. The fact that people are even thinking about protesting is a failure on the Board and Secretariat's part.

The Federation is happy for you to contact us with any questions or issues. We will be running a register of issues and if required will seek legal support by way of class action against the Board. Please keep us informed of what is happening to you. Contact us on (04) 527-7977, 027 6564811 or [wal.gordon@xtra.xo.nz](mailto:wal.gordon@xtra.xo.nz)