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IN OTHER NEWS

Letter to the Editor



Dear Editor

I took your advice regarding using the Microsoft prompts to encourage me to think about change and this is what I came up with.

For those people out there who use computers you will know the Microsoft XP program is now obsolete and no longer supported.

Based on that I think we should rename the Board `XP` as the

Licensing Update



Do you know what this is?

It is a Tobacco Smoke Enema Kit (1750s – 1810s). The tobacco enema was used to infuse tobacco smoke into a patient's rectum for various medical purposes, but primarily the resuscitation of drowning victims.

A rectal tube inserted into the anus was connected to a fumigator and bellows that forced the smoke into the rectum.

The warmth of the smoke was thought to promote respiration. Doubts about the credibility of tobacco enemas led to the popular phrase **"blowing smoke up your ass."**

It is believed this odd tool may have been used heavily during what has become commonly known as the "Phil Routhan regime," and it looks like it may have been resurrected reading the latest edition of the Board's "Info Brief".

The Board state:

"there have been 7,942 authorisations and licences renewed this licensing year to date (22 April). The number of registered tradespeople who have renewed their licences is up by 18.25% compared to the same time last year."

It's good to see the Board have finally admitted last year was pitiful when it came to licensing.

All types of figures can be thrown up to support whatever stance is to be taken, but what we do know is that last year there were 9629 authorities issued to registered persons (being Certifying and Licensed Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers) for the year.

One month into the new licensing period only 6,657 authorities for the same group have been issued. That's 2,972 authorities (30.86%) DOWN on last year's total.

A very important thing to remember is this figure includes those who have protested in a legal manner and whose fate is still to be decided, and according to the public register 182 new registrations since 1 April 2014.

So what's next from the Board – are we going to see five numerical analysts employed to balance the figures in the way the Board

industry no longer supports it, the system has become seriously unstable and inflexible to the point of imminent destruction.

I strongly recommend that we upgrade to a more stable and amicable system that will be much more `user friendly` and easier to work with, and so avoid massive failure of previously unseen proportions in the industry.

ED:

EXCELLENT!! It would be great if that could happen but like a lot of XP uses we fear the existing system will continue until complete failure happens and users are forced to take up another system at great cost.

Dear Editor

I followed your link to the Board's Annual Business Plan and agree with you that it's just a cut and paste and rehash of last years.

How can the Board Chair have the nerve to say in the last Info Brief.

"The business plan for the next year will be adopted by the Board at that meeting and will be published on the website shortly after. There is a busy year ahead for the Board. It is pleasing to see that we are moving

wants them?

The Good News Story

Mr Jackson, Chairman of the Board had this to say in the Info Brief:

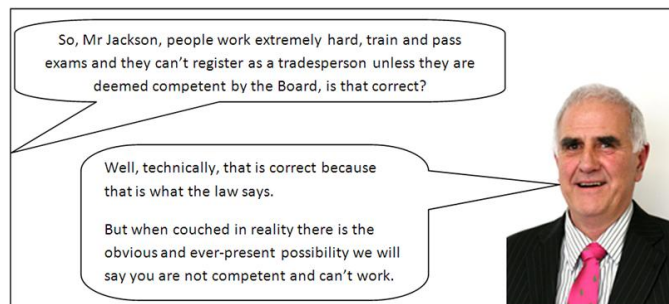
"We recently looked at the sustainability of the number of people working in the industry, and that is a good news story too. At the end of last year there were 850 more trainees in the industry than there are tradespeople who will reach retirement age in the next five years"

Get out the **Smoke Enema Kit** as while those 850 trainees may replace the people reaching retirement age, (who you would presume are Certifiers), the face is that very few of those trainees will have the 7 years to get to certifying level or even qualify at licensing level. What of the people who just choose to fall out of the industry? Remember at the moment there are over 22,000 registrations on the register and only 6,657 issued authorities.

That's only about 30% of the registrations that choose to get authorities. Why do 70% of the registrations not get authorities to work in the industry?

Just to clarify – registration is when you first apply to get on the register after qualifying and passing your registration exam. Authorities are the practising licences you need to work in the industry.

Are you being penalised for putting in the time and effort to learn how to protect the public? Our view of the situation...



The Government tell us about the benefits of being in a regulated industry but what and where are they? The above photo depicts what we believe the situation is.

We pay for the regulation of the industry, continually have to prove our competence by buying Continuing Professional Development Points, pay to prosecute members of the public who choose to do plumbing, gasfitting or drainlaying, yet they let suppliers sell items for doing sanitary plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying to the public.

In a lot of ways you could liken the system to a gangster protection racket from days of old where we are paying protection money to go about our lawful business.

Governments have spent billions of dollars to stamp out that type of behaviour but here is our Government and the Board resurrecting

into a period of stability rather than the rapid change of recent years.”

If there is a busy year ahead then they must have items that aren't in the Business Plan as all I have seen listed are routine activities.

Ed:

Yes it does make you wonder what's going on doesn't it. It seems the link between Governance and Management is failing and there is no accountability of either.

We noticed this on the Board's website:

TEMPORARY OUTAGE

Due to unexpected phone connectivity issues our 0800 support is temporarily unavailable. We apologise for the inconvenience caused by the disruption.

Our service provider is currently looking into the issue, and we should have things back up and running soon.

Perhaps the Temporary Outage is more of a Permanent Outage for the entire organisation.

The funny thing is most people we have spoken to didn't even know the Board has a 0800 number.

the behaviour.

How could we stamp out a lot of illegal plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying? By STOPPING the selling of sanitary plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying fittings to the public.

The Government and Board are continually looking for ways to make our lives more difficult in the way they regulate the industry, but leave the public to do as they want. When was the last time you saw a member of the public prosecuted for employing an unauthorised tradesperson to do their work?

In fact from memory there was even a couple who admitted in the media they knew a person was unauthorised when they employed him to do their job, so where is the fairness when they aren't prosecuted?

Remember when prostitution was illegal and the police would target the "Johns" (the customers) because if you take away the illegal market you take away the illegal supply.

Are the regulation and qualifications causing the problems – we believe they are. And before anyone from the Secretariat or the Board spouts off again saying the Federation is against regulation and upskilling – let us be very clear - it isn't! What we are against is POOR, heavy handed regulation and unnecessary upskilling that is linked to our licensing.

Remember it was the Federation that strongly suggested mandatory upskilling around the introduction of the new Gas Code 5601 when it came in – and we were met with a very ho hum response from the Board itself.

The Government seem to have washed their hands of us and has left us in a situation where we train for seven years to get to certifying status and then that qualification is only valid until the next licensing period where the Board can take away our right to work, we have no say in industry matters and if we do we are labelled as malcontents.

We believe the system is creating the black market in the industry which is forcing legitimate people out of business only to join the black market out of necessity to survive.

The Federation is very much of the opinion that people get legal or get out but that stance is getting very hard to justify.

Is the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board an organisation in conflict?



Is the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board an organisation in conflict - we believe it is.

Organisation conflict is when a group believes that others have or will take action that is at odds with their own goals

Dear Editor

I heard at a meeting last week that a number of gasfitters had been sent a letter regarding the Energy Safety Register informing them they had to get on the register so they can enter high risk work.

But it seems about 80 letters were sent to licensed gasfitters who obviously can't certify work. It was stated this was a MISTAKE and they don't know how it happened.

So it appears mistakes happen. This mistake cost the industry in administrative costs and caused confusion. I didn't hear of any accountability but you could rest assured if it was a mistake made by a tradesperson they would be all over us like a rash.

Human mistakes do occur but only if you are not in our regulated industry where everything is by the book for us but the book is thrown out the window for their own cock ups.

Ed:

We tend to agree with you. It is very much a case of do as we say not as we do by the Board. There is no leading by example or even setting of a good example.

Gas Certification

and interests.

A regulatory body that employs five lawyers is an obvious sign of an organisation in conflict mode, one that has lost the respect and confidence of the industry.

Here are the recommendations made by the Ombudsman which was the catalyst for the Government making a decision to change the law to legalise the unlawful taking of money from the industry and is an example of the disconnection by the Board.

"Therefore, pursuant to section 22(3) of the Ombudsmen Act 1975 I recommend as follows:

1. To the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment and the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board, that they together or separately make proposals to the Minister of Building and Construction concerning the desirability or otherwise of:

a. legislation to validate the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board (Fees) Notice 2010 as it relates to the disciplinary levy; and

b. funding to assist the Board to arrive at a satisfactory arrangement with registered persons who have paid excess amounts of levy under that Notice.

2. To the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board (regardless of the outcome of 1 above), that it enter into discussions with representatives of persons registered under the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006 to achieve a satisfactory arrangement with persons who have paid excess amounts of levy under the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board (Fees) Notice 2010 in respect of the disciplinary levy.

How much of that occurred? Well, the Government changed the law to legalise the Board's theft of the money but they took it a step further and also legalised the unlawful spending of the money - but as far as number 2 goes - NOTHING happened at all.

The Board flicked the industry the "bird" and went about their merry way demanding the industry fall into line with their decisions which has only served to escalate the conflict.

There is nothing in the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006 which states that Board must be combative and impose on the industry. In fact their own website states: *"The Board consists of ten ministerially-appointed members representing both the trade and the public"*

Representing both the trade and the public is very interesting as we don't see any representation for the trade, even though six people are required to be trade qualified. Only two people are required to be appointed to represent the consumer - not the entire ten.

There is the perception that a number of precedents have been set and now no one wants to back down and rethink the actions of the Board. No one wants to take responsibility and make change, they

The Federation organised the meeting in Wellington with ESS and it was well attended (nearly 50 gasfitters) which shows that people really do want to know how this thing is meant to work.

There certainly were lots of questions with some direct answers and some not so direct.

This link will take you to the presentation if you are interested.

[www.plumbers.co.nz/forum/
?topic=1669.msg8347](http://www.plumbers.co.nz/forum/?topic=1669.msg8347)

just appear to keep on pushing the limits in the hope the industry will fall into line with their regulation.

The news for the Board and Government is that the situation will get worse until there is fairness and equality in the regulation and legislation. This year there was protest at licensing time – next year will it be a total rejection of the regulation of the industry? This will depend on the Board's and Government's actions.

So is the Board in conflict - **YES THEY ARE.**

Too Bad So Sad Bye Bye Maurice



Prime Minister John Key has accepted the resignation of MP Maurice Williamson as a minister.

Maurice Williamson resigned as a minister after revelations he phoned a police officer after a businessman linked to him was arrested on domestic violence charges.

Mr Key said he will appoint a new Minister outside Cabinet early next week and in the meantime, Nick Smith will act in the Building and Construction portfolio.

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