

**A Dog, A Ute and a Cell Phone**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- **A Dog, A Ute and a Cell Phone**
- **Far worse interference in our Industry...**
- **Reality Check**
- **Is this the Start of a New Era?**
- **About NZIC**



**IN OTHER NEWS**

**Letters to the Editor**

**Dear Editor**

I've sent these questions to the Opposition in the hope they will get the opportunity to ask them in Parliament.

Further to our phone conversation about the statements Mr Williamson made on the Campbell Live show (1st May 2014) about building repairs to "broken stuff" at his neighbours house Mr Donghua Liu.

I would like questions to be put to Mr Williamson in the House as follows:

1. Did the work he carried out involve any restricted building work, i.e. plumbing, gasfitting, drainlaying, electrical work or restricted building work that needs a licence?
2. Was he contracted for hire or reward, or was he doing the work for free?
3. Did he meet Occupational

It was once said there is more to being a tradesman than just having a dog, a Ute and a cell phone. It now looks like you need to have a degree, a position in Parliament and a rich neighbour who donates to your political party. We have determined you don't need telephones as they get you into trouble.

The Federation doesn't wish bad fortune on anyone, but sometimes when it happens you laugh and think there may just be such a thing as "karma", and Maurice Williamson's demise falls right into that category.

We feel at times his speeches in Parliament have been belittling to tradespeople, a greater than thou attitude, so it is probably quite fitting that his mouth got him into the situation he now finds himself.

We would love to thank Mr Williamson for all the time and effort he has put into ensuring our industry was regulated in fair and equitable manner - but it isn't - so we won't.

Our parting thought for Mr Williamson is that at the end of the day, "the couple of Plumbers" and the "handful of malcontents that complain at every meeting" still have their jobs, their dignity and their motives aren't in question. Sometimes it pays to be on the side of the right.

**Far worse interference in our Industry...**

It was a "mistake", and "how much blood do you want?" are some of the comments made about Maurice Williamson. The Prime Minister and others in Parliament act surprised and tried to downplay Mr Williamson's actions, but are they just as guilty as he, for trying to downplay his actions.

What is inappropriate interference in a democratic society by a

Health and Safety requirements while on site?

4. Did the work require a building consent from the local authority?

**Ed:**

Well done and we hope the Opposition gets the opportunity to ask the questions.

Another writer said the most important questions were:

- Did he have a Ute
- Did he have a cell phone
- Did he take a dog with him?

\*\*\*\*\*

**Dear Editor**

I find it quite disgusting that we are required by legislation to follow people who are continually getting it wrong.

Maurice Williamson and numerous Board Chairs and Board members have made a huge number of mistakes at our expense.

You would have thought there would be continual improvement from Board to Board, but we seem to start afresh every time and then the new Board's make their so called mistakes.

Our industry will never get ahead if there is no change in attitudes.

**Ed:**

We agree with you totally.

It seems to be that there is continual abuse of position and a pattern of behaviour that wastes resources paid for by us and we

person or persons holding Ministerial authority? The Federation has been exposed to people in positions of authority using these very positions to influence outcomes before.

In 2010, a formal complaint in regard to the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board, was heard, debated and decided upon by the Government's Regulation Review Committee.

The perception is the unanimous decision of that committee was not to the liking of the then Minister Maurice Williamson, pressure was applied and the motion of the Committee was withdrawn from the House.

One week later the motion was modified, and one considered be more to the Minister's liking was re-submitted. However the new motion of the Government Committee again appeared not to suit the Minister and he opposed it in the House with the support of the National committee members who then, under pressure to follow the party line, voted the opposite way.

In 2013 Maurice Williamson again involved himself in matters pertaining to the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board, matters that were already in the hands of the Ombudsman and Regulation Review Committee. This time the Minister apparently approached various parties stating that there was a slight mistake in the legislation that needed to be changed and that he wanted it done under urgency as the Board would become insolvent.

This misleading statement was told to the House, however the truth was exposed the Board had about one million dollars in reserves. Again this time the Regulation Review Committee, with a National member majority, would not make a decision, the net effect of that was to support the Minister's quest.

The end result of the Ministers interference is that the recommendations of the Ombudsman were over ridden and ignored by the Minister, that no compensation was paid to Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers as per the Ombudsman's recommendation, that the illegal taking of moneys by the Board resulted in what surely must be yet another Government embarrassment of resorting to validation retrospectively, to conceal the incompetence of the Board and it's legal advisers. Every Tradesperson is now burdened with a new fee unfettered to fund the prosecution of the public at large, a situation unheard of in a democratic society.

It does not end there, right now the Regulation Review Committee with its National members majority is stone walling matters that it will not address. We understand that this is again as a result of influence by the then Minister Maurice Williamson. The time frame of delays and subsequent deliberate frustration caused to tradespeople, is available on the Government web site under "Business before the Regulation Review Committee." We are often asked by our members – how can we help, what can we do. Well here is a classic case where YOU could help. How about emailing your local MP and asking them what the holdup is at the RRC with this matter? Let us know how you get on.

have no control over it.

We don't get to vote on to the Board any representation for the industry even though that is the intent of the Act.

It makes you wonder how many of the Board are National Party Members or supporters?

National always seems to be for the business owner and 30% of the Board are members of Master Plumbers which is an Employers Association.

Is there a possibility appointment is payback for affiliations?

Who knows for sure but the behaviour being displayed would indicate no one can be trusted and when people can't trust you or take you for your word you have nothing.

We remember reading this quote which was alleged to have come from Maurice Williamson:

*"You will never be able to fix something where people breach what the rules were".*

How ironic that he changed laws and legislation to do just that but his statement stands true in that it corrected the legislation but it didn't fix the problem.

Here's hoping the old saying "do the crime - do the time" applies here and that he doesn't return after a couple of months stand down.

With the kick in the guts the industry has had in recent years that would be the last straw.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Reality Check



Childhood is a time when you like Jerry and admire his smartness – maturity is time when you understand that Jerry is the problem, he is a complete prick and you feel sorry for Tom.

As time goes on you get enlightened as to what is happening around you and you seek change or switch off to the issues. Your life experience starts to lead you along a different track and some people say as you get older you get grumpier, but are you getting grumpier or do you realise that change is needed?

Just over three years ago the Federation was formed to get fairness and equality in the plumbing gasfitting and drainlaying industry and has stuck to its values ever since. It has made some headway, but in reality it was conserved too late to make rapid change. It has been fighting not only to change policy and legislation, but fighting well ingrained attitudes and cronyism.

The attitude of "do as we say not as we do" has flowed down from the Government to its appointed Board. Industrial exclusion has been one of its weapons of choice as has bullying and intimidation.

The nature of Maurice Williamson's departure poses a lot of questions but there may never be answers to those questions. Mr Williamson, a very experienced politician, put his neck on the line and got involved in the affairs of a wealthy person who had allegedly broken the laws of this country. A person he apparently did work for, but is not a friend, but who really cares as it's his actions that have to speak. We believe his actions typify the attitudes in Parliament.

What is the standing of a person, when the perception is he tried to use his position to gain advantage for an alleged offender? We have had incidents in our industry where we believe total injustices have been done to individuals by a Board Mr Williamson appointed. The case of Paul Gee is a prime example where Mr Williamson was asked to assist and did nothing but imply he could not interfere.

Does this show the measure of the people in parliament that are meant to represent us? Does an individual have to make huge donations to political parties in New Zealand to get any justice or a measured response? Perhaps it's time for change – for things to be done differently – a system where you have your say all year round. So let's forget about the people for awhile and look at the process.

## Is this the Start of a New Era?

The Westminster system in Parliament has allowed political parties to create frameworks that put their ideas, philosophies and hidden agendas ahead of social needs. A system where people say "you

## Dear Editor

How does an offence become a mistake?

According to the Media, Section 116 of the Crimes Act indicates that if you or I had acted or conspired to “obstruct, prevent, pervert, or defeat the course of justice” we would be facing up to seven years in prison.

Remember there is also an offence of “Attempts to .....”

I just can't believe the double standards but in some ways the financial costs to Williamson will be far greater than the guy from Invercargill who didn't put a strap on the hot water cylinder. So at least that is some consolation.

## Ed:

Yes the financial loss is some consolation but does it excuse the behaviour or the Prime Minister backing MISTAKES?

In answer to your question we can only presume that an offence becomes a mistake if you are a Member of Parliament or one of their cronies.

And now the Prime Minister seems to think that if you are under pressure that is an excuse. Mr Key says Ms Collins has been under a lot of pressure and she made a mistake.

We would love to see that excuse accepted at a discipline hearing in front of the Board.

But it was good to see the Prime Minister apply good OSH Policy and stand Ms Collins down due to stress, which is recognised by ACC, unfortunately those of us that work and get stressed don't have that luxury.

## New Minister Appointed

voted us in and that gives us the right to rule until you vote us out”. They get support from their cronies and there you have it “do as we say not as we do” and if you don't like it take us to court.

We believe the same has happened in our industry where the cronyism has spread its wings and has taken on the same attitude as the Government of the day. The Federation has applied the hand brake to the spread of the attitudes and has attempted to empower industry members to be outspoken to effect badly needed change.

The Federation is not afraid of change and embraces anything where common sense is applied and that will benefit its members and anyone in general. To that end it has been carefully watching the formation of a new political party which will operate in a very similar manner to the Federation, one where you can have your say anytime and vote for the direction needed in your area. The Federation was new thinking for our industry so perhaps some new thinking is needed in Government.

A political party called the **New Zealand Independent Coalition (NZIC)** is seeking membership to get it to the 500 member threshold needed to form the party. This is what the Federation Chairman Wal Gordon had to say:

*When the Federation was formed we were told it would never get off the ground and would last five minutes and other industry organisations and the Board certainly tried their hardest to make that happen, but by sticking to our values and persevering we are still here and growing in numbers.*

*The Federation doesn't seek favours from anyone and stands its ground. Times are changing and the days of forced compliance are numbered. Look around the world where people are fighting in the streets for their rights- do we want to end up in the same situation?*

*I believe we are smarter than that and need to realise change is needed so we don't follow other countries. Why follow when we can lead? The way the Federation has been operating based on mostly electronic communication and feeding off members ideas every day of the week is forcing change, so why can't the political environment change as well. All it takes is a few motivated people.*

*When the Federation laid complaints with the Regulations Review Committee and the Committee unanimously recommended the disallowance of the regulations to the House, we were utterly disgusted when some of these members of the committee then voted against their own recommendations so they could follow the party line. They voted against their own good judgement. That's just sickening!!*

*When they do something wrong it's put down to poor wording or a lapse in judgement, but when we do something wrong its incompetence or unlawful activities and I'm sick of it. What it should be about is common sense and accountability, so if I can effect change to a system that is wrong then I will.*

*Political choices are individual choices and a lot comes into it, but for me if the current system is not meeting honest and truthful needs,*

Prime Minister John Key this week reallocated the portfolios made vacant by the resignation of Maurice Williamson as a Minister.

Dr Nick Smith will take on the Building and Construction portfolio.

What does this mean for the Federation? Not much at all because we have no control over the Minister's actions.

For us it's business as usual and if the Minister chooses to take some action then that's up to him.

We are more than happy to meet and discuss issues with him.

Welcome to our world Dr Smith.

*then it must be changed. If I can join a party to get it off the ground on the chance it can make that change then I will. It's the price of a lotto ticket but we could all be winners and at the end of the day, it is YOUR vote that counts not what party you belong to.*

*It's a small price to pay for a chance of improvement.*

The government attitudes towards our industry and their lack of help to hold the Board they appointed accountable is not what is needed. As always the Federation is seeking opportunities and providing members with information where they can make their own informed decisions. There are no back room deals, just a willingness to get change for our industry and others. Do we want to endure more of the same from the likes of Maurice Williamson?

### About NZIC

NZIC MPs will give New Zealanders a true democratic voice. They will connect electronically with members and will be transparent regarding major Bills and issues. NZIC MP's will provide open and transparent reasons why a Bill is good or otherwise for their electorate. The electorate will then be asked to vote using electronic selection media to inform their MP how to vote.

The MP's first duty is to his or her Electorate. For instance, if 75% of members were to disagree with their MP's intentions, the Electorate will be the voice and your MP will vote accordingly. None of this "You've voted me in until next election so take what you are given we are voting along the party line."

Bills should be open to genuine robust public debate, so NZIC will be your voice and MPs will not be puppets in Parliament, and are not tied to party line voting. They will truly be "representatives of the people."

The New Zealand Independent Coalition is about putting people first - people who demand honesty and inclusiveness in the governing of the New Zealand democratic process. It is a political identity for independent and inspired thinkers.

NZIC MP's will vote for what is best for their electorates and would make amendments to ensure legislation is effective and serves all New Zealanders

**"It's Election Year, time for new independent thinking,**

**be part of new fresh ideas, join NZIC"**

If you want more information or want to join the NZIC contact their Secretary on (07) 575 9533 or email: [info@nzindependent.org.nz](mailto:info@nzindependent.org.nz)  
For more information and become a member visit [www.nzindependent.org.nz](http://www.nzindependent.org.nz).

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

