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IN OTHER NEWS

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor

I've been following the Paul Gee case on the Plumbers Forum. It certainly looks like he was set up but surely the Board wouldn't be capable of doing such a thing?

You would think the Board wouldn't want something like this hanging over their heads so why don't they end it?

Why don't they get an independent lawyer or judge to review the case and end it once and for all?

Ed

The Board are ending it – they have introduced the “Dealing with Unreasonable Behaviour Policy”.

Here is a prime example showing the Board is capable of doing such things and when caught out refuse to hold people accountable and learn from the mistakes or deliberate unlawful activities.

They seem to be addressing this as an issue affecting one individual whereas in

Has it all started again?



About seven years ago the regulation of the industry got so bad the Office of the Auditor General was asked to investigate the operations of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board.

In 2010 they produced a report making a large number of recommendations to get the Board up to a minimum standard. One of the recommendations was for the Board to deal with historical issues.

Here we are in 2015 and the Auditor General has given the Board a pass in their follow up report saying the Board have reached the minimum standard but in the process have they started again with a new set of historical issues.

Continuing Professional Development still haunts them, the Paul Gee investigation is showing unacceptable/unlawful behaviour by the Board on a daily basis, the unlawful taking of money by the Board from the industry is still fresh in everyone's minds, supervision and terms and conditions of licensing are still hot topics and of course there are conflicts of interest and allocating of certifying status qualifications to individuals who have never completed apprenticeships or sat qualification exams. Another list of historical issues – and in our opinion these would constitute a “fail” mark for the PGDB in so far as their stated aim of protecting the health and safety of the NZ public.

Was the report just a new starting point? It seems the focus may have been on results for a purpose that is not measured. Yes it was all about achieving the purpose of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act – a purpose that has no measurements in place. No performance criteria for the Board only an annual report that highlights the Board's results, and looks remarkably similar year after year.

It would seem the Government and Board have been focusing on results and as a result have got no change. Perhaps if they were to focus on change they may get results, because it is not always about fixing something that is broken. Sometimes it's about creating something better. All we have seen is the Board putting Band Aids on a gushing wound. Memo to the PGDB – it ain't working!

reality it affects every registered tradesperson in the industry.

We need to have confidence that we will be dealt with in a fair, reasonable and lawful manner.

The longer this case is the subject of criticism, the more the Board's credibility is undermined.

Simple action is required and that is a judicial or independent review of the case.

Both Paul Gee and Wal Gordon, who assisted him, have stated they will participate in a review of the case but it seems the Board are more likely to impose their new "Dealing with Unreasonable Behaviour Policy".

There seems to be a huge lack of honesty and integrity in the regulation of this industry. Perhaps the Minister, Dr Nick Smith has it wrong in his claim that nothing would be achieved by sacking the Board.

Dear Editor

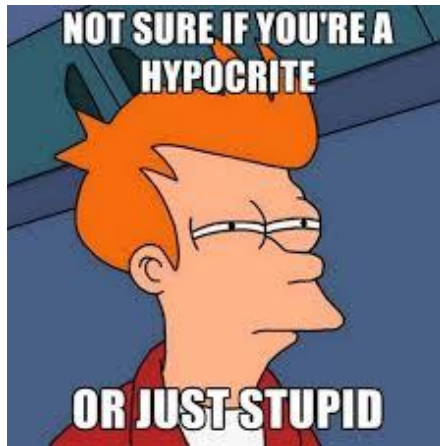
I read with interest the string of comments about taking protest action against the Board and thought this may interest you.

Protesters have clashed with police at a National Party fundraiser attended by Prime Minister John Key.

Auckland Action Against Poverty had signalled its plans on social media to demonstrate outside National's regional "Summer Party" at the Royal Akarana Yacht Club at 3pm on Sunday.

The group's spokeswoman is former Greens MP Sue Bradford, a veteran

Hypocritical



Have you ever taken the time to read information given out to the public by the Board that shows what they think of you? This is from the Board's Continuing Professional Development "Course Development Guide":

"Kinesthetic learners predominantly learn by "actually carrying out a

physical activity, rather than listening to a lecture or merely watching a demonstration." They are commonly known as doers and learn from taking part in the instruction; and tend to struggle with learning methods that include reading, writing and listening.

Their behaviour may seem disruptive during a course, as they tend to need to play with something while they learn; the instructor needs to accommodate these characteristics by maybe having koosh balls available to be played with during instruction or building practical activities into the course.

It is estimated that most practitioners in the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industries are kinesthetic learners; something the course developer, and course deliverer, needs to keep in mind. Merely using PowerPoint and one-way communication, with a few questions at the end, is not likely to be effective in meeting the learning objectives of the course"

Here the Board is telling the Public the majority of us in the industry have "Kinesthetic" tendencies and that merely using PowerPoint and one-way communication, with a few questions at the end, is not likely to be effective in meeting the learning objectives of the course – so why is it that that is the way they communicate with the industry in all aspects of their regulation? They don't even follow their own advice.

Very soon the Board will start their 12 month consultation process for fees and levies. No doubt it will start out with screeds of information with no real content. We will be expected to believe their figures and trust that they are accurate. We will be expected to accept their percentage allocations in this so called "sophisticated scheme" which is simply time allocation which all of us do every day.

Apparently there will be meetings in some centres (obviously to meet the needs of the Kinesthetic learners) so we URGE you to have your say in the consultation documents and also attend the meetings. It is really important that we show up in numbers and don't miss this opportunity be heard. Yes, we know the Board don't have a great history of LISTENING, but we aren't going to let that discourage us from giving them our opinions – so don't let it dissuade you either!

protester.

As Mr Key arrived at the venue about 50 protesters pushed forward, forcing police to form a protective barrier around him.

They shielded Mr Key and escorted him inside the club. A small group of protesters also ran up stairs into the yacht club.

Auckland City police district commander, Superintendent Richard Chambers, told NZ NewsWire the protest action is ongoing.

He says he can't comment yet on whether there have been arrests.

"Police always endeavour to balance demonstrators' rights to protest peacefully with the rights of others to go about their lawful business peacefully," he said.

If people can protest about poverty we could certainly protest about the cost imposed on us and the pathetic regulation of our industry.

Ed:

We can't argue with that but we have an issue in our industry where people don't want to get involved in case the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board take vindictive action against them, People seem content to live in fear rather than to stand up for themselves.

Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment Reviews



**MINISTRY OF BUSINESS,
INNOVATION & EMPLOYMENT**
HIKINA WHAKATUTUKI



Two members of the Federation Executive Committee met with representatives of the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment this week.

The Ministry is currently reviewing the operation of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act, as required by section 187 of the Act and this work will also feed in to the development of a wider occupational regulatory framework for the building sector.

As part of this process the meeting was called to discuss the scope for the Federation's input to the Review.

It is anticipated the review will kick into gear at the end of this month so we urge you to participate and make your views known. If we don't speak up we cannot claim we pushed for change.

The Federation Committee knows it has asked for your help before and the powers to be have still ignored the industry but we must be persistent. Nothing will change if we all sit back and do nothing. Remember the Board and Government view a non response as being supportive of their views so if we don't support their views we need to say so.

We also encourage you to recruit others to join the Federation so they can get the truth about the reviews so they can make informed decisions about the future.

Take the opportunities to have your say. Surveys will be sent out electronically – if you don't have an email paper copies may be made available.

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