



Fellow Practitioner Issue 281 Dated 20 November 2015

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IN OTHER NEWS

Competence



There has been a lot of discussion about competence and incompetence over the years and as tradespeople we have ALL been regulated by the use of competence or incompetence as a measure of performance.

Allan Day has put a lot of work into competency and reminds us of this definition published in 2006 by the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board.

A competency is comprised of knowledge and skills and the consistent application of that knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace.

Prevention is better than cure



Has the Government ever heard that prevention is better than cure, and cheaper?

We saw this week that the Government is to provide \$980,000 in funding to restore the health of Lake Horowhenua.

“The Government is committed to turning around the poor water quality of Lake Horowhenua. This funding will go towards a \$1.2 million project that will involve a scientific assessment of the lakebed sedimentation and native fish populations, community planting days, an education programme, development of a plant nursery, completion of storm water treatment upgrades and the repairing of fish barriers,” Dr Smith, Minister of the Environment and Minister of Building and Housing says.

This is the same ministerial position that stated there was NO money to pay a refund to tradespeople after money was unlawfully taken from them by a Government appointed board.

It's nice that the environment is being looked after, but this is very similar to the health and safety of the public. It is OUR industry that is probably doing more than anyone to protect the health and safety of the public and the environment.

It's due to our diligence that the public's health and safety is safeguarded. Imagine if effluent flowed in the streets, imagine cross connection between sewage and storm water, imagine water systems polluted with sewage, sewage polluting wells, no hot water to wash hands or water stored at the wrong temperature.

We could talk all day about the things we do to protect the health and safety of the public and the environment, and you would have to ask why the responsibility of our industry was ever moved from the Ministry of Health to Building and Construction - because it has been going

We're fully supportive of Allan's view that the above definition promulgated by the Board, reinforces the wording of Section 32 and is all about the Board's performance, not ours.

Every working day most tradespeople meet the definition of competency as required and expected by the Act as highlighted by the Board's statement above.

It is good to see the Board's new Chief Executive, Martin Sawyers and the Board have implemented the new Continuing Professional Development (CPD) scheme.

A lot of consultation and work has gone into changing the scheme where we feel they are now starting to meet the intent of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006, in particular Section 32.

This section is a requirement upon the Board to "promote" over and above what we already know and do.

The wording reinforces the intentions, for example "the matters must be necessary," "no undue costs," "no restrictions to obtaining the License," and "must promote".

Until now most courses in our opinion did not comply with the Act as the courses were repetition, a repeat of

backwards ever since.

When there was risks of Avian Influenza (Bird Flu) and Ebola pandemics what advice was given to practitioners in our industry from the Minister of Building and Housing? Were we advised to take extra precautions to prevent exposure to the viruses - after all we deal with people from all walks of life who travel and we also deal with their human waste.

For example with Ebola when an infection occurs in humans, the virus can be spread to others through direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes in, for example, the eyes, nose, or mouth) with blood or body fluids (including but not limited to urine, saliva, sweat, feces, vomit, breast milk, and semen) of a person who is sick with or has died from Ebola, objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with body fluids from a person who is sick with Ebola or the body of a person who has died from Ebola.

What we are saying is that we as practitioners in the plumbing gasfitting and drainlaying industry take the risks and provide the protection to others and fund that protection but what help do we get from the Government? It's very much like expecting doctors to fund the health system because they chose to be doctors and cure the sick.

As with a lot of things they are after the fact and get funding where we are the preventative measure and get nothing but told we are incompetent and have to prove our competence every year. If we are so incompetent why aren't people sick in their hundreds of thousands due to poor sanitation etc?

How about the Government encouraging prevention instead of cure?

The industry is screaming for appropriate training in place of assessments but it all costs money.

How about appropriate levels of funding? The money they have given for the health of Lake Horowhenua would provide 1,385 weeks of training for apprentices and that is over and above what is funded now - real training that produces decent tradespeople.

And what about the Government grant of \$130,000 from the Community Environment Fund to support an initiative by the New Zealand Landcare Trust to support citizen participation in scientific research on environment monitoring and restoration, that would supply another 200 hours of training or \$89,700 grant from the Community Environment Fund for the restoration of the Whangawehi stream on the Mahia Peninsula - another 138 weeks of training.

what we are already qualified in and therefore were not in compliance with the Act.

There is no doubt there are some good refresher courses and a few that supply new information but not to the extent that our licenses should be dependent on them.

We are firm believers that time and effort should be put in to the training of apprentices so they are qualifying at a higher standard and a more uniform standard throughout the country.

The Federation also believes in training for journeymen, if this qualification is implemented, to assist them in achieving their registration. They have a great wealth of knowledge and should be recognised for their efforts.

Times are changing and in some ways we are going back to the future, back to a time when the apprenticeship training set the tone for the future. A time where those qualifying pushed those above them in the industry to raise their standards.

This is an industry responsibility and we should all make the effort to support change.

It seems that every time the Minister of the Environment visits a site he dishes out a few hundred thousand dollars to get the votes of the people who care about the environment, well we care and we look after it every day of the week and throw in the health and safety of the public for good measure.

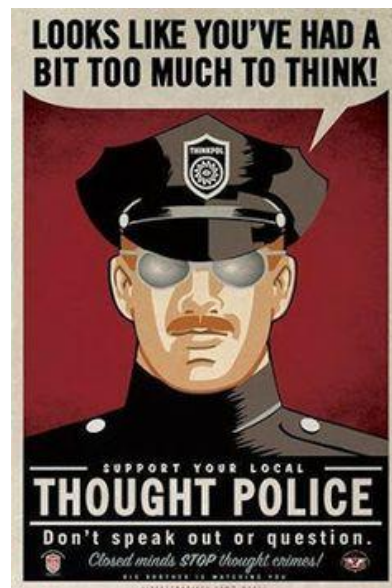
All we are after is fairness and equality and all we get is treated like mere tradespeople who don't contribute anything to the country but increasing the sales of Ute's , cell phones and dogs.

Time for some real thought from the Government about industry governance and regulation!

Prevention is better than cure

Prevention is cheaper than cure.

The Thought Police



Isn't it amazing how fresh attitudes make a difference.

We are referring to the attitudes of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board which seemed to have changed of late, where practitioners views are being recognised and acted upon.

The Federation longs for the day when the Board becomes industry focused rather than regulation focused. When that occurs we can all move forward and prosper whilst

protecting the health and safety of the public.

The last five years has seen a period of conflict where it was not politically correct to speak out or question. Now the Board seems to have gotten over this with some changes in staff but we think the Government and Minister of Building and Housing are stuck in the same old political correctness rut.

This reminded us of a question we asked five years ago "what is political correctness"? One of our supporter responded with this pearl of wisdom.

There is an annual contest at the University of Arkansas calling for the most

Take the bloody nose and move on.

The changes to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) will cause a few issues for the suppliers of training. We say keep your chin up. No one expected you to save the world, otherwise you would have been born wearing a cape and tights, with your undies on the outside.

The Federation thanks you for all your efforts in helping practitioners get points so they can license each year and now ask you to continue supporting the practitioners with training initiatives to up the skills of trainees as they are the future of the industry. We admire those of you who have contributed a lot both financially and time wise to help maintain the industry.

Training is not stopping it is simply refocusing so as providers you may not be able to control what is happening but you can control the way you react. The entire focus on training in the industry is changing so keep your head up, think wisely and make the best of it. Obtaining knowledge and skills needs to start with the trainees so later in life it is habit not a burden, this is our future.

appropriate definition of a contemporary term. This year's term was:

"Political Correctness."

The winner wrote:

"Political correctness is a doctrine, fostered by a delusional, illogical minority, and rabidly promoted by an unscrupulous mainstream media, which holds forth the proposition that it is entirely possible to pick up a piece of shit by the clean end."

Take the time to carefully think about that and what we get told by the Minister of Building and Housing and his advisers the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment.

Voltaire once said *"To learn who rules over you, simply find out who you are not allowed to criticize"*

We have been in an environment where Political Correctness ruled and where people and organisations were afraid to put their heads above the parapet and stand up against meaningless regulation. We say get rid of the political correctness and let's start talking.

The actions by the Board and Chief Executive of late show some glimmers of independence where they may live up to their title of being a Independent Statutory Board so perhaps now, in conjunction with the industry, we can let the Minister and Government know what we want so we can better achieve the purpose of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006.

In saying that it is also our responsibility to raise the game of the industry. Business owners know there is a "glass ceiling" imposed by the consumer with regard to price and expectations and this has created a micro economy where non qualified people are thriving while legitimate practitioners struggle.

We need to lead and not follow so we can break that ceiling imposed on us. We need to change the attitudes and restrictions and the Government needs to recognise what they have been doing is a farce.

Political Correctness is nothing more than thought control.

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