



Fellow Practitioner Issue 287 Dated 12 February 2016

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IN OTHER NEWS



Dear Editor

Another very good newsletter, it got me thinking about the cash jobs and IRD targeting tradespeople, and our perception of a “cash” job.

Maybe we should look at it differently, for example there are countless business groups that deal in cash and we accept that as normal transactions, for example the green grocer, shop keepers, weekend markets, etc etc.

We do not hear that these people are targeted because

Consultation



The Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board is currently undertaking Public Consultation on the review of Registration and Licensing Requirements.

This is the second round of

consultation, and your second opportunity to have your say.

A lot of people have said to the Federation Executive Committee that attending the Board’s consultation is a waste of time as they will just go ahead and do as they want anyway. This may well have been the case in the recent past, but how long do we hold a grudge for the incompetent regulation of our industry?

At some time we all have to learn to get along for the good of the industry and the Federation believes that time is now. Can we guarantee now is the right time? - Well no we can't, it's all about an educated guess based on facts and behaviours and we feel there have been sufficient changes in the Board to warrant a bit of trust.

The other thing we say is that if you don’t go along and make yourselves heard, then you can’t complain later. Federation members have attended some of the consultation meetings and have been interested in what the industry is saying. The Wellington meeting for instance provided plenty of opportunity for members of the industry to have their say - no one got cut off, and everyone who wanted to speak had the opportunity to do so. We’d love to see these meetings bursting with industry – so get off the couch and attend the one closest to you – you might just be surprised!

One of the main issues the Federation is looking at is the classes of registration and now is the time to change if change is needed before the industry is too far down the wrong track Better to retrace our steps and go down a better path than to continue with blinkers

they accept cash so why should it be wrong for tradespeople to accept cash, in fact given the amount of debt (outstanding accounts) that tradespeople carry we should be demanding that we are paid in cash on completion of the work.

ED:

Good points writer and thanks for submitting your thoughts.

Remember Flip Flop Williamson, the previous Minister of Building and Construction said to the media that all you needed to be a builder was a cellphone, a dog and a ute - well perhaps that perception exists across all the trades.

Perhaps the tradespeople need to rise above the public perceptions and be more professional.

Raise the professionalism which a lot of times is about attitude, skills and trust and how we as an industry portray and present ourselves.

Perhaps as an industry we are giving the government and the public what they have grown to expect from tradespeople.

on.

The Federation believes apprenticeships should be extended by at least another year, possibly two, and when you qualify you are "Registered" - no more partial qualifications where you remain under supervision. This would mirror our colleagues in the electrical industry, would remove the confusion of the public who are genuinely bewildered when it comes to licensed and certifying. They see the word "registered" and assume all is ok.

We support the Journeyman class but feel one of the prerequisites is that the individual MUST have done an apprenticeship. This gives some status to those who have completed an apprenticeship but failed the exam, it means they are subject to CPD and will have to pay a fee we assume. It means that this group can be monitored and encouraged to pass the registration examination. It should not be used as a "shortcut" to becoming a fully fledged tradesperson.

We need to act now so appropriate changes can be made to the NZQA qualifications being worked on. One thing to remember is that it is the Board that deem the Classes of Registration and it is up to the ITO and NZQA to work around those registration classes, not the other way around where the Board follows what the ITO develops. (Although to a certain extent this is what has actually been happening, the cart is pulling the horse).

Let us know your thoughts so we can put forward a comprehensive submission from the Federation.

The Mitre10 Mega Project Ahead of its Time



Remember just over twelve months ago Mitre10 Mega Upper Hutt commenced a fantastic initiative whereby they were going to restrict the sale of sanitary plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying

Time to change perceptions and get people to trust us, even Inland Revenue' as we are allowing ourselves to be targets.

Dear Editor

The new CPD scheme is great and it is fabulous that the Board have finally acknowledged the previous scheme wasn't all it was cut out to be.

I still have a problem though - why do we still have to get points to license this year?

If it is a failed scheme then why waste more resources to get points so we can license?

I would be really pissed off if it was because the Board wants CPD suppliers to get one last bite of the cherry.

Everyone should cut their losses and the Board should allow people to license without CPD points this year.

To continue on with the requirement of points this year is a total waste of our time and money. What are your thoughts?

ED:

Some very good points writer. The existing CPD scheme was dropped

fittings to those people permitted by law to install them - namely plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers.

The project came about because the Government, quite rightly, made our industry a regulated industry but slipped up by not restricting the sale of the products we use, so in some ways they implemented the law but left us to our own devices. Now every year we see more and more responsibility put on the practitioners along with additional costs such as the Prosecutions Levy (tax).

Mitre10 Mega Upper Hutt and the Federation saw the protection afforded by the initiative to restrict sales being:

- The public were protected from themselves in that they weren't able to purchase the items they would need to break the law.
- The general public was protected in that the risk of other members of the public getting it wrong and causing a problem were mitigated.
- The Councils infrastructure was protected from contamination or damage.
- Mitre10 Mega Upper Hutt were protected from liability in the case of someone doing their own plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying and getting it horribly wrong.
- The industry gained in that the liability on the industry to police unregistered people was lessened.

Mitre10 Mega Upper Hutt worked tirelessly in conjunction with Wal Gordon Plumbing Limited to make it a reality and after an extensive trial period report the project hasn't been as successful as anticipated, but has not been a complete waste of time.

This was a HUGE leap forward for the industry, where a retail outlet was stepping up and taking their share of responsibility to protect the health and safety of the public however there was resistance by suppliers and other retail outlets to the initiative where sales seemed to cloud their judgement over corporate responsibility and the health and safety of the public.

We thought the Board at the time would have been singing the praises of the initiative but they weren't much help at all, not even with signage.

The resistance by the public was extensive and showed the true

because it wasn't meeting the needs of the industry and had limited support so you are right - why continue on with it for this licensing period?

You will probably find the Board are attempting to be fair on the people who have already gone out and got points and possibly to support the organisations that have been supplying CPD courses.

We believe the Board should show a sign of goodwill by dropping the requirements for this licensing period - it may go some way to repairing the damage caused when they unlawfully took money from the industry which required retrospective legislation.

extent of home handyman repairs going on in our regulated industry - repairs, the policing of which we as tradespeople pay for.

What was quite astounding and disappointing was the lack of support by the industry. Tradespeople did not help to fill the void left by the restriction of sales to the public.

Perhaps the initiative was ahead of its time and suppliers weren't prepared to take corporate responsibility, where the public weren't ready to relinquish their self given RIGHT to do their own plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying, where the Government and their representatives are loathe to get involved in restricting the home handyman market and where practitioners are not ready to step up and support initiatives that are supporting them.

The Federation thanks the Mitre10 Mega Upper Hutt staff and management involved in the project. They have put a huge amount of effort into the project and bore the brunt of disgruntled customers attempting to purchase items that could be used to do sanitary plumbing, gasfitting or drainlaying.

The Federation has no doubt at all that restricting sales to only authorised people is the future and only time will tell. We hope that it doesn't take a death or a major outbreak of illness before this happens. Perceptions need to change.

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Plumbers Gasfitters and
Drainlayers Federation 6 Tacoma
Drive, Totara Park, Upper Hutt
5018 Ph (04) 5277977 Mob
0276564811 Fax (04) 5277978
information@pgdf.co.nz