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IN OTHER NEWS

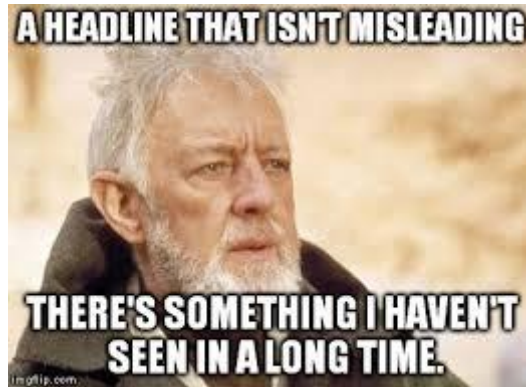
Supervision

Many of you will have attended the CPD course by now, and we'd be willing to bet the big surprise is Supervision – and how it should be applied to apprentices and exemption holders. Those of you that are employers should ask your apprentice next time they go on a block course (especially the first year one's) just how many of their cohorts arrive in company vans and are out "doing the work" on their own in their first year.

One of our members did this just recently – on a block course where their apprentice is 6 months in to the trade and there were two apprentices out in vans on their own doing a wide variety of plumbing. We'd love to see the PGDF attending first year block courses and informing apprentices of the Supervision rules.

We're not sure how many apprentices are attending the CPD courses with their bosses, but it's important they understand when they

Turning Prisoners into Plumbers



This week in the media it was stated "Turning prisoners into plumbers is unlikely to make ripples into the wider industry because of a national shortage". This was part of a story that announced 16 Rimutaka Prisoners had graduated with a Level 3 NCEA certificate in plumbing and gasfitting.

This isn't anything new and it would be interesting to know how many prisoners who participated in this scheme throughout the country back in 2012 have actually progressed on to get jobs in the industry.

The Federation was told this back in 2012; *"The Department of Corrections' overarching goal is to improve public safety and reduce re-offending. Research shows that offenders who find sustainable work after release from prison are less likely to re-offend, and more likely to become productive members of society. As most offenders will be released at some stage, the Department has an obligation to ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills to reduce the likelihood of re-offending following release."*

It seems to us this is very much an ambulance at the bottom of the cliff scenario. Look at all the young people out there who are **paying** to attend the same pre-trade plumbing course who can't get apprenticeships. They are spending thousands of dollars (around \$6000 for a pre trade course we believe), and get NO assistance from the Government. Recently we were told not even 3% of those that qualify go on to get apprenticeships.

In 2012 the Federation asked Corrections the question "What is the placement strategy for obtaining work in the plumbing industry for inmates upon release? Corrections stated at that time the partnerships with CPIT and WinTec allowed offenders to progress their training on release with further training with those institutes. Both organisations endeavoured to identify and promote likely candidates to key employment contacts.

are putting themselves and the public at risk – just in case they have a boss who doesn't think this information is important for them to know. The practicality of the PGDB being able to get around the country to do this is probably nil – so perhaps there could be some agreement with SKILLS that this is carefully spelled out at first year block courses (and reiterated during that first year at follow up block courses). Well worth it we think.

From the Media

Gas Meters and Distribution Systems

Energy Safety occasionally receives reports from gas meter owners that meters have been removed and placed into houses or garages for storage while work is being carried out on consumer properties.

Worse yet, we have received reports that distribution system pipes (the pipe supplying the gas meter) have been dug up and thrown in the corner of the property. The question is: what can gasfitters legally do with gas meters and distribution systems? The short answer is – nothing.

The Gas (Safety and Measurement) Regulations 2010 (GSMR) state that gasfitting starts at the outlet of the gas meter. Most gasfitters do not have the permission of the meter owner or distribution system owner to work on the gas meter or the upstream supply pipe. Unless they have permission, the only thing a gasfitter can do is remove the union on the

This scheme places the prisoners at an advantage over others in that they get their courses paid for them by the taxpayers of New Zealand, and then they get help with placement. You really do have to ask if this entire Level 3 training is nothing more than a money-spinner for the training organisations and the polytechs.

It is a situation that could end up blowing up in people's faces and shows the complete and absolute disconnect between government departments and the industry. Our industry has a fit and proper person requirement for registration. Obviously someone who has served time in prison has done something reasonably major to get there – and then they go on to complete a pre-trade qualification, and perhaps an apprenticeship and suddenly they may not get over the hurdle of the fit and proper person requirement. So what happens then?

While we are sure each case would be judged on its merits – is there likely to be pressure put on to “bypass” the fit and proper person requirement – otherwise we could have very red faces from Corrections and Skills, or will these people have wasted several thousand dollars of taxpayer money and their own – and not be able to jump the hurdle.

Of course they may be deemed to be “fit and proper” – but four years of an apprenticeship and a pre trade before that is a lot to gamble. Someone with a modicum of common sense (and that would be us) might suggest that all the ducks are lined up BEFORE schemes like this start. Perhaps some basic questions might have been asked and answered.

The other thing that intrigues us is why school teachers direct those “less academic” into trades, and Corrections think prisoners would be likely candidates to “go into trades” – it simply reflects society's view of tradesmen – something we need to change. Why aren't Corrections offering to train these ex cons as lawyers or accountants? It might be these professions are more in line with their backgrounds... (we say tongue in cheek). Seriously though, we don't think this scheme is well thought out at all.

Is anything actually being achieved by having this Level 3 training or in fact any training that doesn't take people through to a stage that they are competent and responsible for their own work. You would have to be extremely naive to believe the partially trained people are not applying what they have been taught to earn money for themselves and this would most likely be in the Black Market. This means the industry misses out on work and the Government misses out on taxes etc.

So in fact Corrections could be assisting ex cons to continue breaking the law once they leave prison by arming them with enough information to be dangerous.

We'd love to know how much Weltec are being paid by Corrections for this service – and in fact an OIA request may just get that answer for us, along with how much Corrections are paying per prisoner for the Level 3 qualification – we can then compare this to what law abiding young people are paying to get Level 3 through the same

outlet of the meter.

A gasfitter cannot undo the union on the gas meter inlet, or the unions related to the regulator. This does not preclude operating the meter inlet valve to isolate the installation.

If a gasfitter, or any person, interferes with a gas meter or the supply pipe the GSMR impose a penalty – you can be prosecuted for doing this work without permission from the equipment owner.

If a person needs to remove a gas meter or distribution pipe, the process is to contact the consumer's gas supplier who will arrange for an authorised technician to do this work. Nobody is allowed to bypass this process to enable a job to go faster.

The only time an unauthorised person may work on a distribution system or meter without prior permission is to make the site safe in an emergency. After this emergency it is most likely that you will also have to notify WorkSafe under either the Gas Act 1992, or the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015, as well as notify the distribution system owner.

institution.

The Right Mix



Is this the situation that is being created where people are being given basic knowledge and if the shit hits the fan they hand their problems over to someone who is properly trained? In our industry does this create a risk to the public?

Not only that, we as an industry have to carry all these partially trained people.

We have Government and Government sponsored organisations telling us what we need as an industry but no one seems to want to listen to what we believe we NEED as an industry. No one wants to fund any changes and there is no proof other people's ideas are going to work.

We fund our own industry regulation yet have no say about the direction of the industry. There is lip service paid to us and we are expected to follow the direction of others.

This has been going on for a long time now and we don't have a sense of humour anymore. It's literally just sarcasm and a general dislike for the bureaucracy that is restricting the progress of our industry.

However, not to worry as the fact that Jellyfish have survived for 650 million years despite not having brains gives us hope.

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