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## IN OTHER NEWS

**Why doesn't the Government slap a bit of retrospective legislation on this lot.**



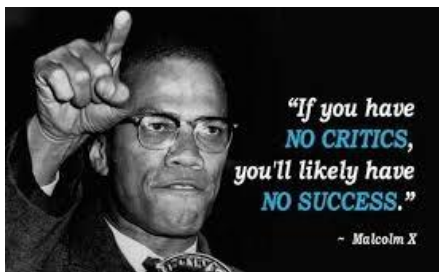
**Some still have their snouts in the trough, as 80 former MPs are still claiming generous travel perks.**

**It was reported in the Dominion Post last week that each is entitled to taxpayer funding for as much as 90 per cent of a business-class return trip to London and a dozen domestic flights annually.**

**This year's biggest spender claimed more than \$16,000 left Parliament 26 years ago.**

**The people obtaining this perk imposed a \$700,000**

## Now is not the time to go quiet.



drainlayers are busy, but is that enough for the future or are practitioners falling into the trap of becoming complacent with temporary financial stability.

The danger of success is complacency so we ask you "is what you are doing today getting you closer to where you want to be tomorrow?" The word around the country is that plumbers, gasfitters and

We know that when business is good we get the impression that ALL is well, but is it enough to protect us for tomorrow or should we be taking the good times and making tomorrow even better? Do we do nothing or do we take control?

The Federation has worked hard to get progress in the industry (both on our own and in collaboration with others), and there has been a lot of success in persuading others to change, but there is still a long way to go and the Federation needs you to keep giving us your thoughts, opinions and ideas.

The Federation has stayed true to its purpose and will continue to do so. It is not ruled by the almighty dollar and is not pushing for change to increase its own coffers. Some organisations supporting the Government's line of thought have perhaps become arrogant and inflexible when it comes to issues affecting practitioners and in particular training and qualifications.

Politicians don't appear to care about the plight of our industry but remember it is only 53 weeks until the last possible day for the 2017 elections. Now is the time for you to think about the future and let others know your thoughts. Find options and don't just take what is thrown at us.

Practitioners are the future so why keep quiet and accept the scraps that are thrown to you when you can have the whole meal? Speak up for improvement and don't let the government dumb down the industry to meet their numerical objectives.

As an industry we need a unity of purpose so let your thoughts be known to the organisations you belong to and don't let a few rule the majority. If we all unite, we will lead and prosper but if we remain quiet will we be paying a high price for our silence?

bill on the taxpayer last year.

Apparently, the snout in the trough will come to an end as the perk only applies to those who entered Parliament before 1999.

Particularly galling will be that Jenny Shipley was on this list, and was one of the Directors of the failed Mainzeal. Many of our members got burnt by this and there is still no outcome to the legal action being taken against the Directors of the failed company.

### Review of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006



This was a question asked on the Plumbers Forum last week:

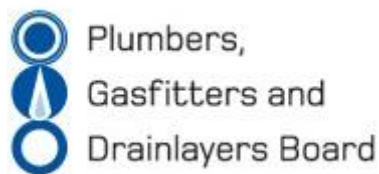
*“Exactly WHERE are things at with the review of the 2006 Act - I haven't seen or heard much about it apart from in the Fellow Practitioner. Is it nearly finished, has it really started, are they going to ask ordinary practitioners for any feedback?”*

Good things take time and Government Department actions taken even longer. It would appear whoever is reviewing the Act is quite within the law as the Act states:

### 187 Review of Act

*(1) The Ministry must, after the expiry of 3 years after*

## How is the Relationship?



We have had many members ask what the relationship is like with the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board as an organisation.

If you cast your memory back through past editions of the Fellow Practitioner you will find that the Federation has never mixed its words about anyone whom it thought was doing the industry harm and inclusive in the list of people was the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board.

We are happy to report a very improved relationship with the Board since June 2015, which coincided with the arrival of Martin Sawyers the Board's Chief Executive and Registrar. Martin Sawyers inclusive attitude was welcomed after the years of exclusion the Federation had endured under the previous regime of Chairman and Chief Executive.

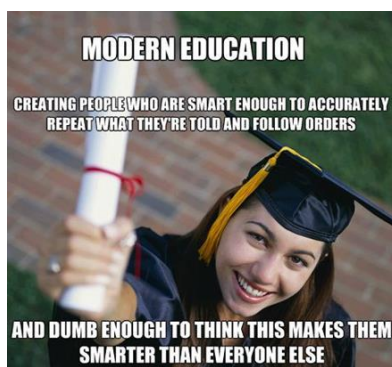
The Federation knows not all issues have been resolved, including some historical issues, so on those matters have agreed to disagree for the sake of progressing the industry. One trait Mr Sawyers brings to the table is that he doesn't expect the Federation to give up its principles and purpose. This has made for a very productive relationship where the Federation is confident the truth in messages is being passed to the appointed Board. The Federation believes this was not the case under the previous regimes.

The Federation will continue to be vigilant and hope the relationships develop even further. The new attitude of inclusion instead of exclusion is starting to shine through, as is the Board's attitude to meeting and working with the wider industry.

For those of you that didn't know the Board has relocated to Level 8 of Solnet House (one floor below where they were before). This has resulted in significant savings for the Board and the industry (approximately \$40K annually). This is just one example of how changes in attitudes are helping to make savings and progress the industry to a more stable environment.

It's a pity the Government couldn't make similar adjustments to get on with the industry.

## The Qualification Discussions Continue



Discussions continue with varying opinions as to what the industry requires and what the Federation has realised is that some people only understand others ideas from their level of perception.

One of the fears we have is that as pressure goes on the

*the commencement of this section,—*

*(a) review the operation of this Act since the commencement of this section; and*

*(b) consider whether any amendments to this Act or any other law are necessary or desirable in relation to plumbing, gasfitting, or drainlaying; and*

*(c) report on its findings to the Minister.*

*(2) The Minister must present a copy of any report provided under this section to the House of Representatives as soon as practicable after receiving it.*

Put quite simply whoever is doing the review can take as long as they want as long as the review commenced 3 years after the commencement of section 187. As long as the review started after 1 April 2013, they are safe.

Obviously when they wrote the Act, they wouldn't want to create any pressure on themselves so they didn't put a time limit on it. Typical of Government where restrictions and time limits are imposed on practitioners but not on their own people.

Ends up to be a waste of time and money particularly if the Minister doesn't have the gumption to hurry the issues along.

You would almost get the impression that the motto for Government departments is "If you don't see it with your own eyes or

Government for more trades people they will attempt to Dumb Down the qualifications. This will have an adverse effect on the standard of the work; it will increase the risk to the industry, the public and undermine the standing of the existing qualifications.

Due to the absence of any help from the Ministers, it would appear the government wants workers who are just smart enough to do the job and do the paperwork and are just dumb enough to passively accept it. A bit of "dumb down the problem until you can solve it with less taxes" attitude.

The Federation is continuing to participate in relevant meetings and workshops to help ensure the industry increases the amount of training apprentices get off the job and to ensure qualifications meet the demands of the industry.

As there is little communication with the Minister of Building and Housing it would be easy to say we are at odds with the Government as to what is needed by the industry.

Moving us from Health to Building and Housing was a policy makers wet dream and has NOT been in the best interests of industry at all, nor for that matter has it been in the best interests of the public and you only need to look at the debacle that Christchurch has been with illegal drainlaying and substandard work to know this.

Don't forget to let us know what your thoughts are.

## **Appointments to the Board.**

We see the Minister of Building and Housing has made another appointment to the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board without the position being advertised.

It seems the democratic system has fallen by the wayside and the same opportunities are not afforded to everyone in the industry.

For those of you who wish the opportunity to get appointed to the Board we are unsure how you go about it apart from reading Mein Kampf or some of Karl Marx work.

This is no slight or criticism on people appointed but more on the dictatorial process used by the Minister. If we were conspiracy theorists we could say it has everything to do with the Occupational Licensing Review (of which we are being told very little). In days gone by such positions were advertised and people with an interest applied, or were put forward by MP's. It appears that for whatever reason the Minister has decided this isn't necessary. Such a shame when the Board are reaching out to Industry and working with them – the Minister decides to slam the door shut in their face. A poor decision by him and his advisers in our opinion.

We re-iterate that this is no criticism on the people appointed – it's just frustrating to see the one-step forward two steps back approach by this Minister who appears in all other instances to want very little to do with our industry.

hear it with your own ears,  
invent it with your small  
mind and share it with your  
written intellect”.

When can you expect the  
process to be completed –  
the Federation would guess  
the next Government will  
be working on it so we  
would expect 2018 or later.

As practitioners we are taxed by way of Levies and Fees to protect the public from themselves but yet the Government and taxpayer pay nothing. As tax payers and as practitioners paying additional tax we expect more from the Minister and the Government.

Perhaps it's time for the industry to play a TRUMP card and show we will not be treated with contempt.

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