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## IN OTHER NEWS

### Letters to the Editor



### Dear Editor

What can you tell me about the labour market in Christchurch? Is it worth going there?

### Ed:

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment release quarterly reports on this subject and the June report was just released last week.

Here's a brief of the report.

### **Canterbury labour market**

*The Quarterly Canterbury Job-matching Report for the June 2016 quarter was released on 16 November 2016 by the Ministry of Business,*

## What a week



The Federation hopes you and yours are all safe and have survived nature's fury this week.

Earthquakes and floods dominated recent days, and will do for months or even years to come. Our sympathy goes out to those affected, as also does our support if needed.

It is heart warming to hear so many stories of people going out of their way to help others in this difficult time. We know of a number of businesses whose staff has worked all week in the adverse conditions without even the slightest whimper. We congratulate all the practitioners out there who have gone the extra mile this week to help those in need and have put themselves at risk to get the jobs done.

Its times like this that we are called upon to do the extra but sadly we receive little thanks for it because there is so much else going on. Well the Federation notices and we thank practitioners for their professionalism and dedication to the industry. The health and safety of the public take a real hit at times like this and our industry helps maintain the balance.

We are not out the public eye like the emergency services but we do maintain order behind the scenes by repairing the broken gas lines, fixing the burst water pipes, clearing the blocked drains and so on. Our efforts help maintain health and comfort for the public.

We all know the consequences if the public don't have the basic needs and we should be proud we do our bit to maintain those needs.

*Innovation and Employment. The report provides employment demand and supply information on the Canterbury rebuild and wider recovery.*

*Quarterly Canterbury Job-matching Report - June 2016*

*Some key findings for this quarter are:*

*At 71.5 per cent, the labour force participation rate is near an historic high, though down slightly on the June 2015 quarter.*

*The unemployment rate is 3.2 per cent, which is near the historic low of 2.9 per cent in the June 2014 quarter.*

*Job vacancies in the construction industry in Canterbury are declining from recent highs, which is consistent with the rebuild levelling out.*

*The difficulty faced by businesses in sourcing both skilled and unskilled workers is easing.*

*Local labour supply is tight and is expected to remain so for the next three years as work continues on the rebuild.*

*Migrants are the main source of increased labour supply.*

*Modelling shows that the rebuild has reached a ceiling of output at approximately \$1.2 billion per quarter, and is likely to continue at this level until around mid-2017.*

## More Double Standards



Remember how the Government passed retrospective legislation because they didn't want to pay a couple of million dollars back to plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers?

They claimed it was a mistake in wording – well look at this one as it

seems more about the number of votes they can rescue after another MISTAKE!

### ***WINZ to start reimbursing clients***

*NZ Newswire on November 22, 2016, 4:01 am*

***Work and Income is about to start reimbursing 49,000 current and former clients who were underpaid on their accommodation supplements because of a coding error.***

*Social Development Minister Anne Tolley says reimbursements will start this week for 22,000 current clients, who will receive a total \$14 million.*

*It's estimated that 27,000 former clients were underpaid a total of \$15m and from next week they will be able to go online to assess their eligibility.*

*The incorrect payments date back to 1993.*

*The error also meant 65,000 current and former clients were overpaid a total \$53m.*

*They won't have to return any money.*

*"While we can't go back and change an error from 23 years ago, the government is doing the right thing by everyone affected," Mrs Tolley said.*

*It was announced on the radio that most people concerned will get around \$500.00 but one person will get around \$20,000. All we got was a kick in the teeth.*

*Did the Government do the right thing by our industry – NO WAY, they just kept the money and changed the legislation to make it legal. Really if it wasn't for double standards this Government wouldn't have any standards at all.*

Look at the first two sections of the report where the rate is NEAR to an historic high and the other is NEAR an historic low. What a spin to put on things. If you haven't achieved the figures to make it historical then you haven't achieved it.

#### Dear Editor

Have you been watching the bank scam on the go?

My bank notified me the timings for taking money out of my bank had changed from 10pm at night and would be processed during the day.

I predicted to my wife that it was a scam and sure enough the day it started, I noticed the money came out and 4AM in the morning, 18 hours earlier than it used to.

Money being paid to me didn't arrive until the afternoon.

Looks like the bank has use of my money for a longer period than they used to.

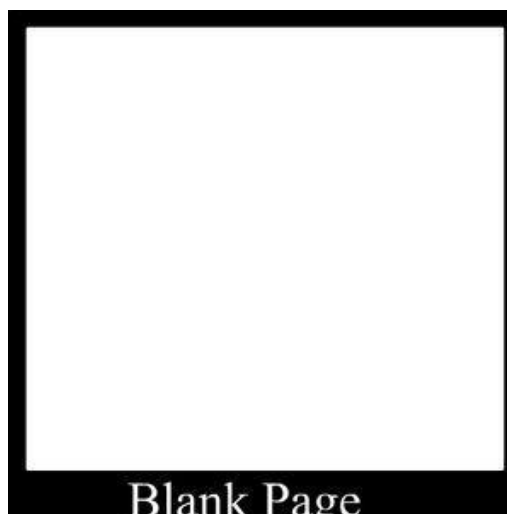
#### ED

Yes, writer it looks like the money is in their pocket longer now.

We don't know how true it is but we were told banks pay interest to the institutions they borrow from on an hourly basis so using your money would be saving them heaps when you look at money being taken from your account and others

If you are as vexed by this as we are, feel free to drop your local MP a letter or email pointing out the double standard, and CC us a copy!

#### It's no mistake



You may have thought the Editor has finally lost the plot and made a mistake or your computer isn't showing the picture, but it's no mistake. This picture displays the sum total of what the Federation believes is the support and guidance the industry gets from the Government.

When was the last time there was a media release from the Minister of Building and Housing pertaining to the activities of the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry? When was the last time there was any encouragement for the Government? Last election at Upper Hutt the Prime Minister stated, "We will listen to the industry as the industry knows what is best for it". Here we are four years later and what has changed – nothing!

The industry is still excluded from the decision making process that affects the manner in which it operates. There is still silence and the imposition of regulation and legislation, which the industry doesn't agree with.

It seems the Government is operating on a big "Blank Page". This may be by choice as how do we as an industry fight against a "BLANK PAGE". The industry gets told nothing until it's too late and the decisions made generally cost us as an industry and achieves absolutely nothing. The Gas Certification system is a prime example followed closely by the Industry Training Organisation scheme.

One of the best things anyone looking at changing things can do is to talk to the people that use the system. Most of us wouldn't go to someone who sits behind a desk all day and who has never been in the field and ask them for their expert opinions on how to change a ballcock. Well the people behind the desk in that wasteland called "policy" seem to be calling a lot of the shots in our industry. They have spent scant time asking US how it all works, what the snags are from our perspective and any suggestions we might have for improvement. Goodness knows the 2006 Act, which was rushed through, had plenty of mistakes, which we have to live with every single day.

The Gas Certification scheme, which was moved to ESS, must have been one of the most stupid decisions ever made by policy makers in the history of this industry. They had a scheme, which by and large worked (the Paul Gee case aside) and swapped it for one that is full of smoke and mirrors, which requires double handling and which is nowhere near as transparent as the previous scheme.

throughout New Zealand on Thursdays.

**Dear Editor**

Here is the best safety sign I have seen for a long time.



Really the Government need to be protected from their own staff when it comes to some of these decisions – but then what would we know – we only use it every day, deal with customers who want to know stuff, real estate agents etc. We obviously know diddly squat.

It seems to be the industry suffers while the Government ignores present troubles and expenses. If they don't have time or resources to help our industry then perhaps they should empower the industry to govern itself.

As an industry, we are not treated equally to other industries by the Government. Conditions have not been created by the Government to help the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry and the Blank Page scenario we face doesn't show any sign of that changing. The big question is how do we change the situation?

It seems we have resolved the exclusion problems we had with the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board but the situation has been shunted up a level to the Minister and the Government.

We need to look at what our options are and start planning for next year. Your thoughts are always welcomed.

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