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IN OTHER NEWS

Is “She’ll be right” costing us?



New Zealanders pride themselves as being relaxed and laid back but has that attitude gone too far?

Are we so relaxed about everything that we have become accepting of substandard service, governance and leadership.

When we look back at the battles the Federation has fought over the last seven years and the changes we have been pushing for we see a lot of partial results and changes.

We see a lot where the industry has had to be accepting of what has been chucked at us and have had to put up with second best.

Outsiders could well ask why

Is it Policies, Personalities or Implementation?



It's election time very soon and we all have our democratic right to vote, but the big question is who do we vote for? We see all the parties making promises and offering what are effectively payoffs for votes but what substance is there too it all?

For the last nine years nothing has been done by Government to help our industry. So do we blame the industry, do we blame the Minister of Building and Construction, the Government or the Government departments supporting the Government and Ministers?

Those of us that have been around for a while know that no matter whom gets into Government not everyone will be happy and the Government will have ups and downs with health, education, transport, housing, the economy and the environment.

Perhaps what people should be looking at is who is going to take control of the Government Departments and the manner policies are made and implemented. The Government Departments and Ministries are supposed to provide advice and an efficient service to the Ministers, but the big question is do they? Do they actually communicate with the industry to find out what is needed or do they just make a decision themselves. The last decade would indicate they ask the Ministers what they want and then stack the facts and

we haven't pushed harder for better results and the response would have to be that getting something was better than getting nothing.

Ten years ago our industry was so down trodden that anything was an improvement and now we are having to go through an entire rebuild phase because we accepted what was thrown at us like scraps to a dog.

Times have changed and we live in a world of user pays so the Federation believes we should be more demanding on where our money is being spent.

We need to start demanding quality for our money.

As taxpayers - are we getting value for money from the Ministry of Innovation and Employment (MBIE)?

What would happen if we demanded the review of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006 be completed and placed a time line on it, because as it stands it is still going to take years for there to be recommendations, consultation and then have it presented before Parliament for debate and then have it passed into law.

We are expected to wait and put up with the total incompetence of it all.

How about the Government imposed Industry Training Organisation Scheme (ITO's). This is proving itself to be a failure. We don't even have to work at discrediting this scheme as it is doing it to its self.

alternate facts to meet the needs of the Minister.

Let's just use our industry as an example. Money was taken from the industry unlawfully, which we proved in the Regulation Review Committee (RRC) hearing. The RRC members of the National Party basically walked out of the hearing and into Parliament and voted against their own recommendations. No matter what party they are from, is that the type of behaviour we want from a Government? But the big question is who did they get their advice from?

Instead of saying to the industry "yes we did wrong how can we fix the problem and the lack of trust" some bureaucrat recommended the Government implement retrospective legislation that made everything the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board had done unlawfully, lawful. They smashed the industry with a huge hammer. They basically said "Screw you, you will do as you are told and pay what we say" They also laughed at the decision of the Ombudsman and undermined his credibility.

We have been waiting years for the review of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers 2006 Act. It's not the Minister doing the review but the Ministry Of Business Innovation and Employment (MBIE). So why isn't the Government kicking their arse to get it done? Simple, the Minister of Building and Construction came up with some bright idea about regulation of occupations in the construction sector so there was no need to review the Act because changes to Occupational Licensing would require changes in the relevant Acts.

Where is the so called review of Occupational Regulation and Licensing in the construction industry? We hear a rumour it's been reported on once and the Minister didn't like it so they went back for a second go and now nothing has been done. Will the results ever be trusted? We think not.

Whatever happened to advertising for vacancies on the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board? It seemed to us that as soon as the Federation started to vigorously push for change, appointments were made with no opportunities being given to the industry, but we must admit there were a couple of good appointments made over that time but even so others should have been given the opportunity to join the Board.

Even outside our industry issues, you have a Government claiming to have everything on track and you could look at ACC where it was in strife, and how did they get it back on track – they levied (taxed) the vehicle owners by way of registration. All of us paid extra tax to cover their incompetence. Just like our prosecution and discipline levy where we get taxed to pay to investigate and prosecute unauthorised people whom we have no control over.

We come up with solutions such as restrictions on the sale of plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying materials and the Government don't want a bar of it because it impedes on the rights of the DIYers. Very much a case of create the problem and then let someone else pay to police it.

It's not an easy choice about who to vote for because all we have

It is looking more and more like a money grabbing and wasting middle line of bureaucracy that is not adding value at all.

Look at the apprenticeship scheme where at the end of the apprenticeship the apprentice is not deemed workplace competent and must continue to be an apprentice by a different name for another two years and we accept it and put up with it.

There is the 100% funding of the Regulation of our industry when no other regulated industries are treated in the same way but we accept it under the threat of prosecution if we don't adhere to the regulation.

We have had nine years of having "Claytons" Ministers of Building and Construction. Yes the Minister you have when you don't have a Minister. A blank space producing nothing for the industry but costs.

We know they will call us shit stirrers and malcontents but who really cares when what we want is a more productive industry.

How can we be discredited by the powers to be when all we want is improvement in our industry, representation, leadership, Governance and all those other things that make for a good industry?

The Federation believes the time has come for things to change. We have been regulated for over a century and you would hope that every year there has been improvement but there

seen so far is the promises of gifts. What we want to see are some promises about how the infrastructure in New Zealand will be controlled to give us all a fair go.

It seems to be we continually get Governments that have an ambulance at the bottom of the cliff mentality.

Imagine this – you take all of the Government departments and have them focus on how to get people to voluntarily adhere to the legislation and put in place support for those activities. Ease back on penalising the backbone of New Zealand commerce and have people follow willingly and not be forced to adhere to regulations and legislation.

We want to see a Government that will take responsibility and lead by example. The following article is an example of how a local body is following the example of government tactics now.

Prove us wrong



The governments tactics of prove us wrong is flowing on to local bodies and other organisations. They use their position and power to make the onus of proving a fact on to the person making the accusations and no matter how accurate or

logical the accusations are the accused fight to support their version of events.

The Federation has examples of the Government doing it, the Police, Insurance companies and now Councils. We have to accept ALTERNATE FACTS, to coin a phrase from President Trump, or use resources and money to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the true facts are correct when they are obvious. MONEY, POWER AND BULLY TACTICS appears to reign.

The problem with no one taking responsibility is that it has a flow on effect. Look at this situation which was reported to the Federation this week.

A sewer was layed in 2013 to a new dwelling in West Melton. Another drainage company called to camera the drain, which was found to have a 200mm dip in it about 6m from the lateral.

I was engaged to excavate and sort out the problem. I excavated from the lateral and first had to get around all the services, at one point the power Cable was 50mm below the surface. The danger tape was under the cable (always a good thing).

I excavated and found the sewer and the drain was all over the place, no chip was found, and within a distance of 12M, the sewer was falling backwards 40mm, (no 200mm dip). We rang the council and explained what our findings were and we had the inspection notice with us stating sewer 1:60 on bed of chip.

hasn't.

Perhaps as an industry we have reached saturation point where ideas have been tried and failed and we need to pick the things we know have worked in the past and re-implement them.

Let's get off the Hamster wheel and stop reinventing the wheel.

Let's make the changes needed to cater for modern technology and techniques but bring back the real skills that make real tradespeople.

Bring back real trade progression and make our industry a career not a four year stop gap with a partial qualification jump off point.

Everyone in our industry needs to use their voices and demand value for money and quality products from those whom believe they rule us.

It is time to step up the game and make the demands for what we deserve. This is not without risk but how long are you prepared to accept the scraps instead of sitting down to eat the main course?

No 1:60 fall and no chip, photos to prove. The council had passed this drain. The council rang back after some time and said it's not their problem as it was 1:60 and on a bed of chip at time of inspection.LOL.

So we are trying to figure out what happened after inspection???????? My point is, the council pass a drainage inspection (by a builder that has done a little course in Wellington, or a failed drainlayer that was only registered and became a building inspector) the drain went pear shape, and the council take no responsibility at all. Your thoughts please. Certified drainlayers should be doing the inspections.

So on reading that complaint it would seem the Council's ALTERNATE FACTS are that after they had inspected the drain something or some person has come along and removed the drain chip, altered the fall on the drain and backfilled the trench.

You can understand earth movement but the disappearance of the drain chip is a bit of a worry. Does the Council expect us to believe the chip was removed after their inspection? It would appear so.

Is the Council possibly covering up for a failed system of inexperienced inspectors performing drain inspections? There is no experience better than hands on experience when it comes to our industry and it's all very well knowing the technical aspect of the job but if you don't know how to apply it in a practical way then you will seldom get it right.

We agree with the writer in this instance that certifying drainlayers should be conducting the drain inspections and likewise for gasfitting and sanitary plumbing – these should be conducted by Certified trades people. When we refer to Certified trades people we mean those that have done an apprenticeship and have been proven to be workplace competent with their hands on skills as well as their technical knowledge.

This is a prime example of why certifying qualifications should not be granted by the Board where the applicant has not done an apprenticeship. Remember this was the case with three members of the Institute of Professional Engineers of New Zealand (IPENZ) where granted Certifying Gasfitting status.

It appears New Zealand is far too accepting of the next best thing and the make do attitude. See the side column for some more discussion on this issue.

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