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IN OTHER NEWS

Letter to the Editor



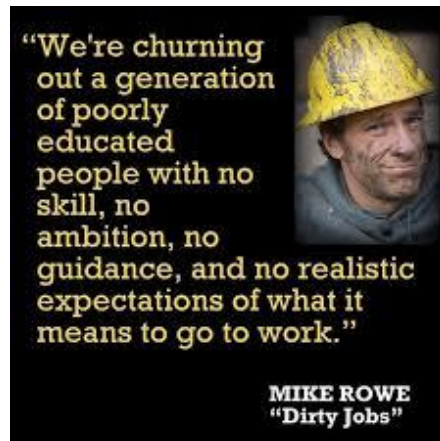
I have recently needed to resolve some plumbing product issues and after searching on the internet I had all the information I needed within 30 minutes.

The PGDB outfit sent me a reminder to get in early with my re licensing.

This created a thought, why the hell do we have to sit in a room for four hours and listen to a load of tripe, when all the information they try to download is available online.

As the sponsors of this program are associated with a company that is going broke it might be a good time for the board to say that as long as you can prove you have internet access then that will suffice

WE'VE WAITED LONG ENOUGH!



Mike Rowe summed it up by saying “We’re churning out a generation of poorly educated people with no skill, no ambition, no guidance and no realistic expectations of what it means to go to work” and to cap it off, in our industry, we allow them to complete an apprenticeship where they are not deemed “workplace competent”.

Then they are expected to pay for further training and complete another couple of years of DESIGN study before they can work unsupervised!

Some organisations accept this and want to alter legislation and regulations to allow licensed people to do SOME forms of work unsupervised - but doesn't that just add complication to an already confusing situation?

The purpose of an apprenticeship is to TRAIN an individual in the chosen craft so they are workplace competent – not partially competent to meet the needs of some organisations.

This is just one of the issues the Federation wants to discuss with the Government, but alas that hasn't happened yet. On 26 October 2017 we requested a meeting with the newly appointed Minister of Building and Construction who responded - but no meeting has been scheduled by her staff yet. Four months has passed and we are starting to feel like we are waiting for something that isn't going to happen.

Why is it that consecutive Governments don't see any urgency in dealing with issues affecting our industry? Is it because they know they have implemented legislation that forces us to protect the health and safety of the public at no cost to the Government. They force us to pay for that protection and to prosecute members of the public who feel they want to do their own sanitary plumbing, gasfitting or drainlaying and they know we don't have a voice to defend ourselves.

We have gone nearly a decade with Ministers who haven't given a rats' arse about our industry and have done the dirty on us a

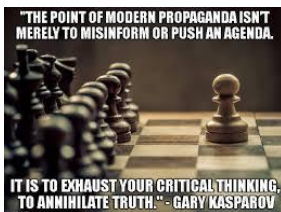
for CPD.

ED: Thanks for your letter. There are varying views on CPD and its usefulness. The problem for the Board is that they are bound by legislation to ensure we are all competent.

Every day of the week we pick up new information which ensures we are competent but the Board has no way of knowing what we know or don't know hence the reason they opted for the CPD format that we have.

It's not ideal but it's better than what we had a few years ago where we were doing weeks and weeks of CPD training each year.

Expiry Dates



Put simply **NEVER PUSH LOYAL PEOPLE TO THE POINT WHERE THEY NO LONGER CARE.**

To progress an industry needs to have knowledge, skills and enthusiasm but alas all of these traits have an expiry date and the Federation fears the industry is rapidly approaching some of the expiry dates.

Just because a Board or Government changes it doesn't mean the clock resets to zero, in fact the clock goes the other way where the Board or Government has less time to correct the wrongs and get go forward action in

number of times. It was only when the Federation stood up to them that we started to get an inkling of change but even then, in the face of change, they still retrospectively changed legislation to subdue the industry and gave us the big fat finger.

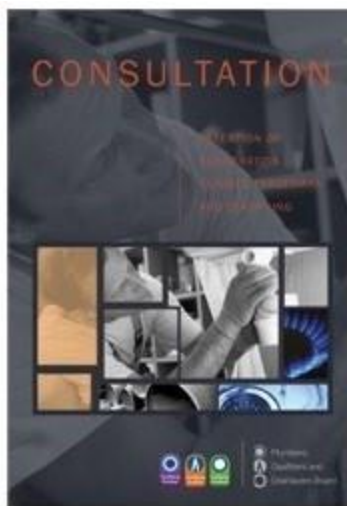
Maurice Williamson, when he was the Minister of Building and Construction, stated plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers get treated the same as any other trade - but that was total bullshit. There is no other trade, the regulation of which is 100% funded by the tradespeople.

After the Elections last year the Federation were hoping we would have a Minister and a Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board that would take action and work with the industry, and we still have that hope. The Board are making an effort and are better than they were a couple of years ago however they are still paying the price for past decisions and actions.

Think of this: If the Government and Board have enough power to not prosecute someone who is clearly guilty then they have the power to prosecute someone who is clearly innocent. So it boils down to trust and morals. This is the trust we as an industry must have in the Minister and the Board and the morals they have to do the job they are elected or appointed to do.

We can't wait until morals and intelligence become trends again.

Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board Consultation



In brief there are currently two classes of registration for plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers who have completed their apprenticeship and passed the appropriate registration exam. On completion of an apprenticeship, an individual can apply for registration into the Tradesman class once they have passed the Tradesman registration exam.

Two years after being registered (and licensed) at a Tradesman level, and having passed the Certifying registration exam, an individual can apply to register into the Certifying registration class.

The practical difference between the two registration classes is that a Tradesman must still work under the supervision of a Certifier. The level of supervision a Tradesman requires will generally be minimal given their level of experience and qualification, however, the supervising Certifier remains responsible for ensuring that the Tradesman is supervised to such a degree that the work they carry out is performed competently and the Tradesman cannot work in their own right without a supervisor signing off for them.

The following is the Federation's thoughts based on observations

place.

To procrastinate or stay stagnant simply means there is forced regulatory compliance in place, and even the Auditor General stated in their report on the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board that forced compliance doesn't work.

The Board has worked hard over the last couple of years to get voluntary compliance but they also need support of the Government and as an industry we need to be all heading in the same direction with a voice to support that direction. There seems to be too many hidden agendas, too many money making schemes, too many retention of staff schemes, too many increase membership schemes and too many outside organisations pushing for what they want.

There is not enough thought going into the direction of the industry or what the industry wants and some of that is the practitioners fault in that very few are stepping up to be counted.

If the industry doesn't step up and take control of its own Governance then we will continue on a downward spiral.

The Federation attend a lot of meetings and the thing that is common at all meetings is that everyone pushes for what is best for them and their organisations. This is human nature but the problem is not everyone in the industry is

and what people tell us. These are our initial thoughts so over the next couple of weeks we will be drafting our submission which will be available in a format that everyone can download and either alter to meet your needs or submit as is. As in the past WE URGE YOU TO MAKE A SUBMISSION OTHERWISE YOU ARE GIVING OVER DECISIONS FOR THIS INDUSTRY TO OTHERS. You don't have to agree with us, but make your voice heard or don't complain afterwards!

So what does the Government want? We believe they want well trained competent trades people and an increase in productivity. They legislate for that by having the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006 with its purpose being to protect the health and safety of members of the public by ensuring the competency of persons engaged in the provision of sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, and drainlaying services; and to regulate persons who carry out sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, and drainlaying.

To achieve that the Government has the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board. They rely on the end product that the industry produces.

What does the Board want? Well trained competent tradespeople. As a regulated industry it's our responsibility to meet the needs of the Board by producing those well trained competent tradespeople.

What does the industry want? Well trained competent tradespeople. A lot of the older people in the industry think they have survived in the industry by being well trained, experienced and knowledgeable. So we need to look at how they get there and what systems were in place.

What do employers want? Well trained competent tradespeople who don't need constant supervision.

What do trainees want? To be well trained and qualified so they can apply their trade without supervision.

To become that they must be qualified and obtain Board Registration, (Assessment to meet the Board's Registration needs). For arguments sake they qualify as a Registered Plumber, Registered Gasfitter, Registered Drainlayer or a combination. They also have trade skills and know their responsibilities (experience). These tradespeople are positioned to take on greater responsibility in year 5.

Trade Skills Years 3 & 4 (Assessment to meet the Board's needs, must pass) Trade skills and knowledge relating to the trade/trades chosen. The employer will have someone with knowledge of the three related trades but is concentrating on the chosen trade and specialist activities of the employer. Specialist hands on skills. The trainee concentrates on employers activities such as plumbing, gas fitting or drainlaying and can return to other trades later to get experience. Employer now has an individual who has the trade skills and is positioned for passing on the knowledge to others.

To get to a level where they can understand the trade skills and knowledge they need Core Skills years 1 & 2 (Assessment to meet

represented.

There are claims by some that they represent huge numbers in the industry but this is generally false. Sure they have members but those members only speak for themselves and not for those they employ.

Because you employ someone and pay their wage doesn't mean you take control of their minds and their free thinking. Everyone has their own opinions and should be able to voice them.

The current situation is people make these claims to the Government and the Government blindly follow based on historical events and claims.

No due diligence is paid to the truth of the claims. This creates problems and little clicks are created in the industry where there is a lot of "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours".

Well the Federation is getting sick of this and wants change and that change will only occur if practitioners get involved.

There is a reason the Federation doesn't accept sponsorship money and that's because it's not free. No organisation or company give money away without a motive or return. Eventually they want a return on their investment.

Right from the start the Federation has turned down the sponsorship deals and has survived on the generosity of those who support the Federation's mission.

the Boards needs, must pass). Core skills that are generic to all three trades such as welding, pipe installation, trade science, jointing, hands on skills taught at tech. Not all firms do all things. Gives knowledge and skills of all three related trades. The employee is useful to employer as they have skills and basic knowledge of all three trades whilst concentrating on the firm's needs.

This is how it looks:

- Recruitment
- Core Skills years 1 & 2 (Assessment to meet the Boards needs, must pass)
- Trade Skills Years 3 & 4 (Assessment to meet the Boards needs, must pass)
- Board Registration Year 5 (Assessment to meet the Board's Registration needs)
- Meets the Board's needs.
- Meets the legislative needs
- Meets the Government's needs

The link to achievement is **TRAINING**. If our training courses provide competent apprentices then the re-enforcement training they get from workplace experience and practice stand them in good stead to meet the Board's needs, and guess what – if our training and systems produced good quality apprentices there would be no need for exams for Registration. So it's up to the industry to push hard for change.

It's also up to the industry to demand better training. You have to remember you are paying for the training so you should be getting the best, not this half baked failing system we have now.

We've talked about the 5 year apprenticeship before and we are repeating it as its important to get an apprenticeship that will move us forward, provide a stock of tradespeople that can fill trade gaps within a couple of years. It's a system that can easily bring people back into the industry and get them assessed to slot into different stages to continue on with their training. We need to change or give up.

This is the opportunity to have your say so make sure you take it! Don't be fooled by cheap imitation ideas that offer a half hearted solution to this either. There will be scare tactics by some about people not wanting to do an extended apprenticeship or about the NZQA points allocated will take seven years to do an apprenticeship. This will come from the same people that pushed for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) so they could make money out of it and look where that got us.

STOP BEING A SLAVE TO OTHERS MONEY MAKING IDEAS. THE INDUSTRY BELONGS TO ALL OF US SO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR

To put it bluntly, most organisations are beholden to their sponsors or members who pay for the services, the Federation isn't.

We are there for the industry and this may seem bullish but we believe we are the only hope for change but that will take industry support and when we say industry support we mean the grass roots support not the corporate bullshit.

Membership organisations in this industry represent the business owner – they DO NOT represent the business owner's staff without their permission, so if you are an apprentice or a Tradesman and you have an opinion, then use this consultation to make YOUR voice heard. Don't leave it to your employer's organisation to have all the say!

Please circulate this newsletter to others in the industry that might be interested. This is something we REALLY believe in – and we need your help to make it happen.

OWN DIRECTION AND USE YOUR VOTE FOR CHANGE.

We'll let you know when our submission is ready but in the mean time talk to others about the consultation and send us more ideas.



The Paul Gee Investigation Review

It's taken a long time to review and compile a report on the investigation into Paul Gee.

The Federation has completed the review and produced all 137 pages to the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board who have read the report and have replied to the Federation

with a thanks, an acknowledgement of the effort that went into writing the report, but we are satisfied with the outcome of the hearing and appeal and will do nothing more about it.

This isn't surprising because if they admitted any liability their insurance company would abandon them. A corporate decision over morals!

The report details a lot of failures around the investigation process, the failure around the "mail merge" to Paul Gee's customers, and shows the legislation does nothing to protect the innocent and can, in our opinion, be manipulated based on personalities.

We suggest everyone in the industry read the review as something like this could happen to any practitioner.

You can find the report on the Plumbers Forum

<https://www.plumbers.co.nz/forum/1810.0/a3137/Paul-Gee-Summary-December-2017-Final.pdf>

Your comments are welcomed.

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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