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IN OTHER NEWS

Double Standards Again

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has started paying back staff who were short-changed on their holiday pay over several years.

The underpayments, which date back to a 2004 change to the Holidays Act, came to light in 2016.

The ministry, which is responsible for enforcing labour laws, paid \$1.9 million in November to current staff left out-of-pocket.

They are still finalising calculations for former employees so cannot provide a total at this stage; however, they anticipate the total will be well below the \$11.98m provision.

Well done to those who are getting it, **but shame on**

Festive Season Comes with a Blunt Warning



Another year has gone by and the progress in the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry has been pitiful. Sure individual businesses are doing well but in the big picture of the industry not much has changed. We just seem to be paying to reinvent the wheel and the industry is not progressing.

Consecutive Governments have ignored the progression of the industry and have simply re-enforced regulations and legislation. The review of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006 will bring refined legislation but little else that will be of advantage to practitioners.

This was a chance to be big and brave but we suspect it will be more of a tweak than a large scale change. There were several suggestions made by a range of industry people that could have seen some really useful and progressive decisions made by this Government – unfortunately we suspect that by the time MBIE officials have their say, and the policy analysts who are extremely risk averse make suggestions it will be small scale stuff suggested to the Minister.

When the Federation appeared before the Regulation Review Committee a few years ago we were told by a member of the committee that the advantage to plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers was that we operated in a regulated industry where no one else can operate. What a load of bullshit.

With the current funding model there is NO advantage to registered practitioners, only costs and risk. We pay the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board to regulate us to NO advantage to us.

We pay the Skills Organisation to continually redevelop the

the Government!!

The Government used retrospective legislation on the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry to keep money unlawfully taken from us. Where is the fairness here?

It seems its okay to change the legislation and make legal ALL the unlawful activities of the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board but not okay when it's a government ministry! Talk about double standards!

It just shows the contempt the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry is held in.

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor

For your "Can you believe it?" files.

We have started a project which involves a public toilet block.

The original design for this huge waste of money showed a floor waste gully (FWG) in front of the disabled basins.

This was fine until the engineer involved," note not a plumbing person", decided that the channel drains at the doorway needed to be connected to the under floor waste system.

So he decided as an expert in all things plumbing, to put the channel drains outside the building perimeter and reconnect the under floor waste system to the new FWG positions including the basin wastes into the channel drains outside the

apprenticeship scheme to NO advantage to us. Numerous overseas trips using industry money in search of the almighty silver bullet to solve training problems have resulted in very little. We don't see why following others is the standard in our ITO. Don't employees at Skills get paid enough to be innovative? They say they consult with the industry but that just seems to be with the YES people that agree with them.

The Federation has not received any "consultation" opportunities from Skills – it would be questionable if the only industry body that was consulted was the one that is a shareholder in Skills – how unbiased would their opinion be?

Also if it is only the group schemes that were consulted – again missing out on a wide range of practitioners. Let's be brutally honest here, there are not that many employers that take on apprentices as a per centage of our industry, why weren't they ALL consulted with? Let the users of the product have some feedback on what they are paying for or what changes are proposed.

As an industry we don't get any real say in what direction training and regulation go in. It seems to be a lot of time wasted and wasted time is worse than wasted money. Wasted money means we pay more for nothing, but wasted time means we have lost part of our lives. It affects our future. We can always make more money but we can't make more time.

Another year has passed without any real advantage to practitioners and the Federation appologises that we haven't made more in roads. We have pushed for accountability and progression but it's a slow, painful process. fairness and equality doesn't appear to be in place either. That's within and outside the industry. Look at the period we can be held accountable for illegal activities. For a non registered person its 5 years. For a registered person we pay for the privlidge of being held accountable FOREVER.

We note the number of protests and strikes going on at the moment, nurses, doctors, teaches, headmasters, aircraft engineers, and the list goes on, but who is batting for the plumbers, gasfitters and drainlayers? We are forced to comply for no advantage. Where is our industry representation for fairness and equality?

It's Time for a New Game Plan



The Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Federation of New Zealand Incorporated (The Federation) continues to be a non profit incorporated society whose purposes are to:

1. Advocate the positions and viewpoints of our

members to ensure fairness and equality in regulations and legislation imposed by the Government on plumber's gasfitters and

building.

When I questioned the project manager on the plumbing requirements for any sort of gully trap outside the building to not be the collection point for a surface water channel drain, he advised me not worry about it as the engineer had approved it.

At the end of the project I will be asked to provide a producer statement showing that all the work I did complied with any regulations but the arsehole who designed the system and instructed me to install it will not have his name or qualification attached.

Why do I pay a licence fee to be instructed by someone who has no plumbing qualifications, yet he can tell me what to do?

While I am on the bleat, this one city council has started to insist on a separate tundish outside the hot water cylinder safe tray, which is fine if you are aware of this requirement. We have complied with this and installed the separate tundish outside the safe tray.

This tundish is above the flood level of the safe tray, but the experts who inspect our work and again have no plumbing qualifications, maintain that the relief pipework must terminate 25mm above the tundish. We pointed out the flood level was the safe tray, but the expert involved said someone could drop a sock in the tundish.

More good gossip to follow.

Ed:

drainlayers.

2. Help influence regulatory and legislative outcomes
3. Educate our members on developments regarding affirmative action and related regulatory changes
4. Ensure training and trade practices are focused on obtaining the highest skill levels in the trades and industry.
5. Do anything necessary or helpful to the above purposes.
6. Pecuniary gain is not a purpose of the Society.

The Federation has pushed hard for change but life is too short to continue fighting at a slow pace for what should already be ours. It's time to step it up and get a more productive industry.

Rather than fly around the world poaching others ideas, the Federation believes our future should be home grown and come from our own knowledge base.

Our industry has never had Industry Governance so this is a back to the future concept where the new push will for what has worked in the past.

Meet the Federation's Time Travel Mechanism



Meet the Federation's time travel mechanism, yes the good old boardroom table and who are the people who will pilot the time travel- ALL OF YOU!

This is where we can say "Greetings People of the

Past Your Ways Are Our Future". It's where we can hold the Government, their agencies and the Board to account. It's where we can make decisions regarding training and apprenticeships and tell the ITO and others what we want (and don't want). It's where we can protect and support each other. It's where we can progress the industry to protect our future.

In the New Year the Federation wants to meet with other industry groups, if they are willing, to discuss the process for voting members on to the Industry Governance Board and to discuss membership funding and rules.

Funding may be a big issue as the Federation does not see why our industry should have to fund the regulation of the industry as well as the policing of non registered people. No other industry does this so why should we provide that funding for no gain?

This may well be the first battle with the Government where the industry may have to turn its back on the regulation of the industry.

This is a prime example of individuals being forced to do as they are told by unqualified people but are people in positions of authority.

This is where the industry needs a voice to draw these council's attention to their unlawful activities.

It's very much BULLY tactics and its rife throughout the construction industry. Tradespeople are forced to cover bureaucrats' arses.

The Festive Season

Thanks to everyone involved with the Federation for your support and hard work this year. We hope you all have a safe festive season.

We also wish Allan Day, who has had a turbulent year, a speedy recovery, and also want to pass a huge vote of thanks on to Wal Gordon, who has also had a turbulent year health wise but has managed to keep the wheels of the Federation going.

Thanks to those on the Federation Executive Committee who have kept the wheels turning for the outspoken and silent people in the industry. Your work is very much appreciated.

Best wishes to everyone for the festive season.

This is not the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board fault, but that of the Government.

What thanks have we ever got from the Government for paying for the protection of the public? What thanks do we get from the public for keeping them safe?

If the Government wants to avoid action by the industry then we suggest in their review of the Act they look at governance and its funding. We can't be expected to pay for everything unless we put our prices up to \$120.00 to \$140.00 per hour or even more.

The Government and industry are paying for the continual changing of apprenticeships schemes where apprentices are being trained to pass assessments not to do the real job. Tens of thousands of industry and Government dollars wasted.

We are going to need people who are prepared to advocate for the industry and are prepared to fight for what is right for the industry – YES people, and people wanting to advance personal or organisational agendas need not apply.

We have said it before that enough time and resources have been wasted waiting for things to happen. This time we are not going to wait any longer and we will make progress for the industry happen.

For those who wish to obstruct us, ignore us or slow us down then we suggest you think carefully about your actions as if the industry turns its back on the regulation and legislation then there is no Regulation and no money to enforce it.



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