



Fellow Practitioner Issue 369 Dated 22 March 2019

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IN OTHER NEWS

Proposal 2: Create a New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology with a robust regional network of provision

The Federation supports the creation of a New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology to offer high-quality vocational education throughout New Zealand, building on and expanding the regional presence of the current Independent Training Providers (ITP) network.

The bringing together of all 16 existing ITPs will allow for consistency throughout the country. The Federation believes and is confident the combining of the ITP's will prevent duplication and cut costs to the industries and the NZ Tax payer. The benefits also will flow on to provide consistency with teaching competencies of trades Nationally.

The provision of training is a **MUST HAVE** for the Federation who believe training has been lacking due

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) REVIEW FEDERATION SUBMISSION.



The Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Federation of New Zealand Incorporated (The Federation) is a not for profit incorporated society, registration number 2540725 established in September 2010.

The purposes of the Federation are to:

- Advocate the positions and viewpoints of our members to ensure fairness and equality in regulations and legislation imposed by the Government on Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers.
- Help influence regulatory and legislative outcomes
- Educate our members on developments regarding affirmative action and related regulatory changes
- Do anything necessary or helpful to the above purposes.

Our members range from apprentices through to licensed and certifying tradespeople, including some business owners.

The Federation is one of three main plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry groups in New Zealand. The other two groups are the New Zealand Plumbers, Drainlayers and Gasfitters Association Incorporated and the Master Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers New Zealand Incorporated.

The Federation has been grappling with the current system for a number of years and has found the Industry Training Organisation (ITO) support for the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying industry to be a failure. There is no communication, no accountability and input from the industry has been selective by the ITO, mainly involving only their shareholder the Master Plumbers, Gasfitters and

to the nature of the contracts undertaken by the ITP's and the ITO. This is reflected in the inconsistencies currently being produced by different teaching organisations.

Strong skills' training is needed backed by trade knowledge. Industry input into the provision of training is a must. Consolidating training and resources should free up resources. The Federation believes the savings should be invested in more polytechnic training by way of courses.

The Federation believes having all the Polytechnics working to one programme will allow for consistency in teaching and training in both practical and theoretical knowledge. It will also prevent some qualifications that don't provide skills that employers recognise and value.

The Federation believes the formation of the New Zealand Institute of Skills & Technology will allow for efficient and effective education delivery.

The government proposal is that the institute would be governed by a national Council appointed by the Minister of Education. The Federation believes this is a positive approach however it should also have industry input which could come from the Industry Skills Bodies.

The proposal indicates that each region would have a Regional Leadership Group to advise the institutes' national office and TEC on local skills needs. This is fully supported by the Federation.

The Federation is pleased to see that the Open Polytechnic of New Zealand would be incorporated into the institute

Drainlayers NZ Inc.

Apprenticeship/employer contributions to training have increased from \$3,000 to over \$12,000 in the past seven years. This cost is greater for the people in the regions who incur travel and accommodation costs. More emphasis has been placed on the employer providing the training and polytechnics under contract to the ITO have simply been assessing individuals. The ITO seems to have been a layer of middle management that simply did what they wanted and only consulted with those who had a similar line of thought to them.

One major point the Federation wishes to make is that not all apprenticeships are the same in the construction industry. For example in most cases a carpenter apprentice will spend months if not years on the same project under constant supervision. A plumbing apprentice, unless on commercial sites, will only spend a few days or a week on the same site. The plumbing jobs are much smaller than say building a house, so an apprentice plumber, gasfitter or drainlayer will be getting a greater scope of work.

There needs to be effective, consistent training across the country and this hasn't been achieved under the current system. How can training be consistent when there is a total reliance on the "on the job" training provider - the employer? Apprentices should be taught at the Polytechnics and then practiced in the skill on the job. This also allows for apprentices working for companies who don't do all things plumbing, gasfitting or drainlaying to still get training in the skills they need to become a qualified tradesperson.

At the completion of an apprenticeship an apprentice should be "workplace competent" and be able to perform the skills of the trade unsupervised.

The Federation is fully supportive of the Government proposal and believes there is more opportunity for the industry to hold training providers and training designers to account. Something sadly lacking at the moment.

Trust in the training system and the providers is a must and that currently does not exist to any great extent. The proposal allows the opportunity for new processes, procedures and people who can progress the training for our industry by providing the trust and accountability required whilst allow the industry to have real input into the training required. This last point is a key to success. Industry MUST have real input into the training system.

The Federation believes the skills shortage in our industry is partially due to the responsibilities amassed on the qualified tradespeople and employers. We are very confident those people don't mind handing on their skills and knowledge but we also believe there is a responsibility on the vocational education and training system to actually provide the skills and knowledge needed. This should be consistent across the country.

The Federation believes any training scheme must allow for industry

for the provision of online and distance learning. This will finally allow for consistency in training.

The Federation is also supportive of Centres of Vocational Excellence that would work closely with Industry Skills Bodies to develop and maintain high – quality programmes, curricula and teaching and learning resources.

The Federation would like to see teaching staff in the vocational education system have more time “at the frontline” with learners and employers – more training rather than simply assessing.

Our only hesitation is that sometimes bigger is not better and we would not like to see this NZ Institute of Skills & Technology become an MBIE – an organisation that is impenetrable and not accountable to its “clients” which are government, industry and the New Zealand taxpayer.

Proposal 3: A unified vocational education funding system

The Federation is fully supportive of creating one funding system for vocational education to ensure learners get the skills, experience and support they need to be successful, providers have the funding they need to be sustainable and ISB’s can fulfil their roles.

To date the so called “not for profit charity organisations” being the ITO’s, have been raking in the money from the apprentices, the industries and the Government and have been neglecting the well fair of apprentices including host business’s.

The Federation believes a lot

leadership. This needs to be leadership from right across the industry and not just an isolated few or industry organisation groups that have historically held positions of influence. This may require funding so leadership can come from all levels of the industry not just from those that can afford to contribute.

Proposal 1: Redefined roles for industry bodies and education providers

The Federation is fully supportive of the clarification of roles and responsibilities, so they are positioned to act collaboratively. The overlapping of responsibilities has been an issue and it seems a lot of time and effort has been wasted and in some cases this overlapping has caused conflict. The industry knows what it needs and others shouldn’t be positioned to alter the views of the industry.

The Federation believes the plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying ITO should not be put in a position of leadership but should concentrate on skills and qualification development. The industry should provide its own leadership and the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board (the Board) should continue to set the qualifications and standards. Allowing for industry leadership and input is something that is very lacking under the current model.

The industry needs to have confidence that employees have the skills to successfully contribute and to minimise risk to business and individuals. The proposal should ensure employers and industry has a say and make it simpler for employers to communicate with the training providers, also something very much lacking at the moment.

The Federation is not supportive of micro-credentials at this time and believes this is an industry wide discussion that should be held with the Board who set industry qualifications.

The formation of Industry Skills Bodies (ISB) should aid the industry in giving more direction and control of training programmes and input to the Board regarding qualifications. It is essential the Board set the qualifications and standards as detailed in the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006, however it needs to work with the industry and the ISB regarding qualifications.

The Federation supports the ISB working with the Tertiary Education Commission (TEC) who would be responsible for purchasing all vocational education.

How the ISB is made up is of vital interest to us. We believe the members should be reflective of Industry. The HOW of this will greatly influence the success of this model.

We are supportive of the training providers being responsible for all vocational education and training provisions, including supporting workplace learning, however they must be required to adhere to the standards that have been set by the Board and the industry under the watchful eye of the ISB.

of the money has been squandered on administration, wages, travel and buildings etc and the industries have been starved of essential training. They have also been amassing large funding pools in their bank accounts when this money should have been spent on the trainees in the years it was received.

The overlapping of responsibilities or perceived responsibilities has also contributed to money being squandered.

The prevention of money being wasted is a priority in the eye of the Federation. People and organisations must be held to account for their expenditure.

Funding of industry leadership is a must so all can be involved not just those people or organisations that can afford to participate.

Micro credentials will have an impact in the plumbing gasfitting and drainlaying industry by way of enforcement so at this stage that enforcement should be funded or micro credentials shelved for the time being.

It is a must for ISB's to be funded in recognition of their contribution to formal role in the process – unlike now where the industry is at the mercy of the ITO.

Education providers taking responsibility for delivering and supporting all vocational education and training, whether it takes place at the provider's facilities or in the workplace is fully supported. This cuts out the "middle man" and would provide for better communication on industry and employer needs.

With the cutting out of the "middle man" we would expect to see costs reduce rather than increase in terms of apprenticeship fees.

The Federation is highly supportive of and believe that, over time, programmes that integrate structured learning within the workplace would become the normal, making it easy for learners to transfer between providers and between on-job and off-job training throughout their programme of study. Consistency in training is vitally important.

Trust is a big issue and if employers trust the system then they are more likely to employ apprentices.

Government proposals two and three are discussed in the side column.

MAKING A SUBMISSION TO THE VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) REVIEW

The Federation believes it is vital for every practitioner in the industry to voice their opinion and give their ideas.

Taking a few minutes now can save valuable time and resources in the future for us and future generations of apprentices and tradespeople in OUR industry.

The Federation will be submitting this document as our submission.

The Government requires feedback on their proposals by Wednesday 27 March 2019. Don't sit back and wait for this to just happen – take the time now to forward comments to the Government.

If you want simply forward this document to the Government informing them you support the Federations view or send them an email saying your support the Federation view. Send your views or a copy of this document to:

vocationaleducation.reform@education.govt.nz

Rest assured people opposing change to protect their patch will be submitting in numbers.

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