



Fellow Practitioner Issue 222 Dated 5 September 2014

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IN OTHER NEWS



Dear Editor

Firstly well done to the Federation for its work and congratulations on finally getting a person on the Board.

I saw in the Plumbers Journal John Leen, MPGD Board Chairman talking about membership and that he feels Master Plumbers have 3,500 extra members at its fingertips because that's estimated to be the number of people employed by Master Plumbers members.

If they change their membership criteria how will that affect the work of the Federation?

Ed:

The perception is that Master Plumbers are going through a rebuilding phase after not adapting to the

Can Regulation and Legislation Change Behaviour?

Shock, horror, and disbelief are some of the terms used to describe events throughout the country this week, tied up with dirty politics. No doubt the government departments involved will take action to try and prevent further occurrences. No illegal behaviour can be justified or defended and hopefully the Government will look at all contributing factors.

We have seen it in our industry when regulation and bureaucracy push people to the edge, where they feel their options are limited and those of us who have had dealing with individuals saw marked differences in their behaviour. Even the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board saw behavioural changes in people to such an extent they felt obligated to install security doors and camera systems to protect staff.

We aren't defending actions of individuals that are illegal, but we do ask the question – "What is so wrong when individuals feel they have no option than to break the law?"

We know the Board are attempting to prevent members of the public from becoming victims of poor workmanship etc., but what about the circumstances they are creating in order to reach their bureaucratic goals - the people who have lost their jobs, their businesses, have had to pay exorbitant fines and costs and their loss of reputation. We believe regulation is bad when it creates victims to prevent victims.

There is no argument from us that there needs to be regulation but it needs to be fair and equitable and above all, common sense needs to be applied. When people start to do things they normally wouldn't do then the regulation is failing. We have people protesting, we have people not licensing, we have practitioners frustrated beyond belief - and the list goes on and they are all actions these people would normally not take.

Regulation and legislation can have a positive and negative effect on behaviour and simply imposing the regulation on practitioners without listening to their needs and compromising can get a variety of reactions.

What we want are solutions to bad regulation and the only way we will get that is through strong industry representation. This week we are looking at governance but first a letter to the Editor regarding Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

changing environment of the industry.

Increasing numbers appears to be one way they feel they can regain the good reputation they once had.

Increasing numbers is good for any organisation, particularly where a fee is paid, but it is what they do with those numbers that counts.

If they were to use those numbers without listening to the practitioners the industry would get more of what we have had over the last decade.

Imposing on the rest of industry what is not necessarily needed or wanted will not achieve anything.

The Federation believes everyone should have a voice and should have a say and vote in the direction of the industry not just follow their bosses vote.

From the Media

Jade Cooper, Newstalk ZB August 26, 2014, 6:40 am

An Auckland plumber had to fight for his life yesterday when a client's pit-bull attacked him.

Jeff Donighi approached the open front door of a Papatoetoe property, calling out to the occupant he'd finished a job under the house, when the woman's pit-

Letter to the Editor (CPD)



We received a number of letters regarding the CPD scheme recommendations in last week's edition of the Fellow Practitioner. This letter we felt said it all.

Dear Editor,

This a great scheme to monitor skill levels within the industry and the main things I am impressed with is

its simplicity, it's workable, it is logical- mentors, and helps genuine cases (not just putting the boot in for the sake of it when the opportunity arises like the Board does) and above all the new scheme would be fair to us and all others concerned.

Probably for us Practitioners the big advantage here is that it would by far and away totally user friendly and non-invasive into our working lives.

The Federation has EXCELLED here in all respects, you have clearly pointed out that all practitioners are under a sustained and illogical mindless attack by this Board where the only reason for their CPD programme is to provide them with an illegal means to stop practitioners working, -pure and simple.

The nature of the Federation scheme offers guidance, support and assistance, isn't dictatorial, demanding and punitive while still offering the best solution to the question of Upskilling.

The Federation has done all of us proud and has just struck a mighty blow for common sense.

Regards- John Gorman

We thank John for taking the time to send us his thoughts and for supporting us.

So having identified a system which we feel will meet every ones needs in the industry how do we get the Board's failing system replaced? The Board don't appear receptive to others ideas and have a set work programme on what they believe are their priorities.

The priorities for the Board may be different to those of the industry so as an industry we need to be heard. The voice of the industry needs to be loud and not for self gain. No matter what government structure is in place for the regulation of the industry we still need governance for ourselves. We need a governance structure that will allow industry views and needs to be put forward to the regulatory body. We need a structure which is representative of us all.

bull leapt out at him.

Recovering in Middlemore Hospital with severe lacerations to his hands and arms, he says his military training enabled him to fight off the dog. But he says a child would've had no chance

Ed:

We wish Jeff a speedy recovery from his ordeal.

This is a reminder to all of us regarding our own safety.

INTO THE BOWL



NZ Herald 22 August 2014

Photo / Neville Marriner

If you think national politics is dirty, spare a thought for the two new people appointed to the innocuous-sounding Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board.

Richard Merrifield and Colleen Upton join five re-appointments to deal with a sector which has been the scene of internecine warfare, litigation, legislation, an Auditor-General's inquiry, complaints to the Ombudsman and plain bitterness. Good luck to them.

Ed:

Looks like someone can

Enough Waiting - we need Industry Governance

If you're giving your best to someone and it's not good enough for them, you're giving your best to the wrong person.

There has been a great deal of discussion over governance of the industry and it appears that for years no one has ever considered governance, and in fact a large proportion of the industry believed the Plumbers Gasfitters and Drainlayers Board had that role.

This is what the Chairman of the Board, Mr Peter Jackson had to say in the Board's Info Brief.

"At times there seems to be confusion about the Board's governance role. To be clear, the Board does not govern the industry in the sense of representing, or being an advocate for industry participants and their issues."

So what the Board has is a governance role relative to the functions it is required to perform under the Plumbers, Gasfitters and Drainlayers Act 2006. They govern the secretariat to achieve health and safety outcomes for the public. They are responsible for policy, strategic decisions and for monitoring performance of the Board organisation as it carries out its functions. That leaves the industry to fend for itself.

We have no representation on the Board and no rights with regard to questioning Board decisions.

Put simply the industry has no one helping it to get to where it should be. No one to fight for its rights, no one to push for change, no one to get what we need. There have been self proclaimed voices of the industry and there is the Federation who the government and Board dislike and call malcontents simply because we push for change and don't mind voicing our opinion when people get it wrong.

For our industry to move forward we need to put the Board and what they do to one side and ignore them for a while. This doesn't mean putting ourselves in a situation where we are breaking legislation or regulations but positioning ourselves where we gain a certain amount of control over how the regulation is imposed on us.

If the Board want to impose direct and indirect costs on us for regulation then they will be responsible for the costs being handed on to the consumer.

The Federation knows there are different lines of thought from established organisations and people within the industry and have had tentative discussions with the new CEO of Master Plumbers regarding calling for a joint governance group to plan ahead on related issues for the industry. A divided industry will achieve nothing.

see what we see!

**Alex Mason, Newstalk
ZB September 1, 2014,
3:53 pm**

New Zealand's small business sector is at a crossroads and the upcoming election is crucial to what path it will go down.

The Motel Association of New Zealand's released a list of key questions business owners should be putting to their local candidates.

CEO Michael Baines says small businesses are the lifeblood of our economy and right now no party is standing out with policies to nurture and support those businesses.

He says the attitude among politicians needs to change.

"It's too hard, so we'll just pay lip service to it' and we actually can't afford to do that anymore.

"We've actually got to start looking at pulling apart some of the things we're doing."

Ed:

We say get out to the meetings and ask candidates what their parties are doing for our industry.

We realise there will not be 100% agreement on everything but 90% is better than none. Most in the industry realise apprenticeship training is a failure and that the present qualification regime isn't meeting the needs of the industry or the public.

We know there will be a shortage of skilled tradespeople despite a growth in the number of apprentices. We want to return the industry to its rightful place where our tradespeople are the most sought after in the world. We want to provide opportunities for our industry members to develop and progress.

The regulation of the industry does not provide the industry with what it needs to survive, let alone develop - so that is going to be left up to whatever joint governance group is put in place. Practitioner participation and membership will play an important part in industry development.

We don't want to take away practitioners rights to be heard and we don't want to take away the right to be a member of whatever organisation you choose, but what we DO want is balanced representation for the industry.

Please send us your thoughts and ideas for a better future and type of governance structure we need.

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