

# E – INSTITUTE

## The Official Newsletter of IPA



The Institute of Plumbing  
Australia Incorporated

Issue 19  
May 2008

### **National Consistency**

Three talkfests, summits, forums call them what you will held in recent times, all in Canberra, and amongst a number of outcomes and many disappointments a common theme input by industry has been the need for national consistency. Of course this is no surprise to this Institute and the many other plumbing organisations that have long championed national consistency in plumbing regulation and licensing. Council of Australian Governments (COAG) had a go a few years back, the National Plumbing Regulators Forum (NPRF) under instruction from COAG had a go, Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards Scheme (WELS) had a go and in fact achieved consistency, trouble was it was consistently wrong as they disregarded industry and conveniently forgot the only consistent thing we have that is the requirement in all States and Territories that products installed in a plumbing system must be Watermark approved.

### **WELS Stakeholder Forum**

The WELS Stakeholder Forum held 11 March 2008 was a 4 hour event attended by about 90 people from both the Plumbing and White Goods industry's and was advertised as an opportunity to express views about the WELS Scheme and for the WELS team to provide updates on proposals to expand the scheme and to introduce minimum water efficiency standards for WELS products. It must be said that the WELS team gave themselves a glowing report card in relation to development of improved registration system, review of the WELS Act, cost recovery etc. all feel good things for bureaucrats but not very impressive to the assembled delegates. Responses to questions from the floor were sparse and in fact ignored in some cases or taken as suggestions to be followed up (not sure when!) Delegates tried to get the message over that it is a minefield for manufacturers, suppliers and plumbers when trying to ascertain what is allowed to be installed when non-approved products (no watermark) are given a zero star WELS registration and ware-housed direct to developers. When these activities are reported there is no feedback to Industry as to the outcomes, if any, from any investigation. It is to be hoped that the input by the stakeholders is taken up but industry will have to stay on the case as the next forum is now pushed back to 2009. To stay in touch with what is happening try the "inkwells" newsletter at [www.waterrating.gov.au](http://www.waterrating.gov.au)

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### **NPRF Industry Forum**

On the 13 March in Canberra the NPRF hosted the 'Barriers to National Consistency' Industry Forum. This forum was also well attended by a large cross section of the plumbing industry and was touted as an opportunity for the NPRF to engage with key stakeholders. Industry was certainly given the opportunity to express its views with a round of speakers during the morning session given free reign to tell it how it is. Apart from specific issues the general view was that any barriers to national consistency are not put in place by industry and in fact industry has championed national consistency for many years. Workshops held in the afternoon session reinforced this view with outcomes such as a cohesive, united plumbing industry, maintaining an industry voice, competence based licence renewal, industry engagement with regulators, a national code (Plumbing Code of Australia), enforcement of Watermark, make WELS work, a national licence, consistent training delivery, consultation, take up of recommendations of the parliamentary review report "Managing the Flow".

### **2020 Summit**

Then we had the PM's 2020 Summit 19-20 April, it did not produce many new ideas as it was supposed to do but tended to follow the government spin. Once again an underlining theme seen in many reports is the need for national consistency and if plumbing had been represented nationally consistent training and regulation would have fitted under most of the headings just as importantly as those put forward by the supposedly 1000 best minds in the country!

### **Plumbing Diploma**

Issue 18 outlined some concerns being voiced around industry regarding training for Cadet Plumbing Designers within the Plumbing and Services Training Package and the soon to be endorsed Construction, Plumbing and Services Integrated Framework Training Package. Well we are putting action into those words and in the Institute's continued pursuit of national consistency in all things plumbing have dedicating our 2008 Australian National Plumbing Forum to "Training – a journey not a destination" - A discussion on how the CPC08 Training Package may benefit all sectors of the wider plumbing industry. To allow debate and input from the wider plumbing industry we have invited representatives from many sectors of the wider plumbing industry including employees, employers, designer/consultants, trainers and regulators to address the forum and discuss their views with the aim to encourage industry to form a working group to progress the matter in an agreed conclusion.

**2008 Australian National Plumbing Forum**  
**Training – a journey not a destination**  
**Melbourne Exhibition Centre**  
**Tuesday 17 June 2008**  
**In conjunction with the**  
**Designbuild Exhibition and Plumbing Show**

The format of the forum will be:

2:30pm Registrations.

3:00pm to 5:00pm Presentations from Industry Sector Representatives.

5:00pm to 5:45pm Open Forum / Panel Discussion

5:45pm to 6:00pm Conclusions and the way forward.

6:00pm to 7:00pm Fellowship Drinks and Nibbles.

To make this work we need you and a wide cross section of industry to debate the issues and reach conclusions acceptable to the wider plumbing industry.

**REGISTER NOW** at [www.designbuildexpo.com.au](http://www.designbuildexpo.com.au)

(The Exhibition opens at 12:00noon and runs to 9:00pm so there is still plenty of time to see the show before and after this important forum)

Your input into this Newsletter and other IPA matters is always welcome and in fact sort after.

Comments on matters raised in E-INSTITUTE or suggestions for future issues are welcome and may be sent to the Editor at:

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You have been sent this Newsletter as a member of the IPA or as a professional member of the wider plumbing industry. If you do not wish to receive further issues please send a reply email with UNSUBSCRIBE in the subject line.