

E – INSTITUTE

The Official Newsletter of IPA



The Institute of Plumbing
Australia Incorporated

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Promoting Consistency in all things Plumbing

National Licensing:

We are really living in rarefied air at this time of uncertainty with a National Occupational Licensing Authority (NOLA) setting up shop in Sydney and forging ahead with transition policy and the headache of marrying IT Systems across the country, for maintaining a national register of licensees as required by the national law, and yet on the other hand we still must endure a COAG National Occupational Licensing (NOLS) Taskforce that is living way past its use by date and continuing to push in the opposite direction.

In the plumbing and gasfitting occupation where this Institute was mostly involved there have been a number of milestones reached in this drawn out process with possibly three standouts:

1. In June 2011 after 18 months of intense deliberation the advisory committee phase with input from stakeholders, industry regulators and the taskforce reached agreement for a system of national licensing/regulation of the plumbing and gasfitting occupations that later became known as the “three tier sub-option 1”. It was far from perfect or best possible practice but considered a fair share of the risks between the federal, state and territory governments, regulators, the consumer and the plumber and gasfitter.
2. Some eighteen months later the NOLS Taskforce belatedly issued a series of Consultation RIS’s including for plumbing and gasfitting and it appeared that without exception all occupational stakeholders and the ancillary jurisdictional regulators were aghast at how far from the agreed position the Taskforce had strayed.
Overnight the preferred option of national licensing in the form agreed to at the advisory phase changed with regulators and stakeholders reverting to remaining with the status quo of mutual recognition so as to maintain the existing eligibility and qualification requirements considered essential to

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mitigate risks in carrying out plumbing and gasfitting work in the ever expanding, ever more technical ever more essential services that are the modern plumbing and gasfitting systems of today.

3. Currently we have the unusual aspect of public consultation on a Decision RIS for the Plumbing and Gasfitting Occupations (and also similar consultation documents for other occupations). Forward notes in the Decision RIS indicate “This is the second stage of a two-stage Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) process which includes a Consultation RIS followed by a final Decision RIS”. Although not mentioned in the document it is understood that the proposed consultation will not amend the Decision RIS but may input into policy advice to Ministers that in committee will make the final decisions. Further compounding this situation is that the Amendment Bill for the Occupational Licensing National Law Act and the associated Regulations for Plumbing and Gasfitting are written around the Industry preferred option of National Licensing Three Tier Sub-option 1 meaning that if lower skilled options are chosen it will lead to even further delays in this drawn out process of achieving a mobile workforce and a seamless economy.

Although there are numerous matters that could and should be raised with the applicable Ministers, when considering that the Decision RIS is of some 340 pages a similar size rebuttal document, although it could be considered necessary, is unlikely to get much traction at this late stage considering the amount of notice taken of stakeholders so far. I am yet to meet anyone that agrees with this statement in the RIS “*This Decision RIS incorporates jurisdictional and stakeholder views on reform paths following a consultation process.*”

A couple of points that could be expanded on in a concise manner to those Ministers and Treasury Officials charged by COAG to make the final decisions including improving the mobility of the workforce and the ever increasing risks related to the drying climate and associated needs to ever more efficiently use and reuse water, in all its forms, and more efficiently produce and use energy.

Mobile Workers:

Natural disaster – First Responders, require a wide scope of national license, qualifications and skills to secure and make safe gas and drinking water services, provide safe water supplies, safe sanitation and shelter. This is no place for narrowly scoped and narrowly qualified licensees.

Natural disaster – Second and ongoing Responders, require all of the above but may include more specialised licensees in later stages of response.

Large Projects – Additional workers attracted from interstate are more likely to be employed in the general category requiring a wide scope of license, qualifications and skills with more specialised licensees more likely to be existing permanent employees.

The Traveller – A general plumber and gasfitter with a wide scope of national license, qualifications and skills has a much increased chance of gaining work, especially casual or short term, over a narrowly licensed individual.

The Mover – A person moving interstate for reasons other than predetermined employment is more likely to be employed or gain work in the general category requiring a wide scope of license, qualifications and skills over a narrowly licensed individual.

Increasing Risks:

Quote from the Decision RIS

“However, sub-option 1 provides an overall increase in qualification requirements at the full licence level. As such, it could not be supported under the Intergovernmental Agreement, which requires that arrangements should be ‘effective and proportional’ to the risks encountered. There has been no evidence that current arrangements have failed to mitigate existing risks or that the nature of risks has increased, therefore additional qualification requirements would increase the regulatory burden, compared with the status quo.”

The statement above and other inclusions and/or exclusions contained in the latest proposal for national licensing in the Decision Regulation Impact Statement (DRIS) for Plumbing and Gasfitting Occupations pose unmitigated risks to:

- Governments, individual Ministers and their Staff if they accept advice that is contrary to expert advice previously provided by industry experts and regulators through the advisory committee process.
- Regulators charged with protecting public health yet required to license individuals and contractors only within restricted scopes of regulated work that do not adequately cover the holistic system that is modern plumbing and gasfitting that is required for such protection.
- Builders (in the short term) and their Clients (in the longer term) contracting with licenced individuals that do not have the spread of qualifications or knowledge required to install, alter and maintain the holistic system that is modern plumbing and gasfitting.
- Building owners, both commercial and residential, required to contract with licensed contractors whose license and commensurate regulatory controls are restricted by narrow scopes of regulated work.
- Consumers living and working in communities that are of ever more increasingly higher density without the required scope of regulatory controls and licensing to provide oversight to the health and safety service that is modern plumbing.
- Registered (licenced) Tradespersons, a lack of on-site experience due to eligibility requirements not mandating completion of training through a full apprenticeship endangers themselves and co-workers.
- Full Licensees / Nominees, reduced eligibility requirements and qualifications and limited scope of regulated work pose risks to themselves and all the above due to being required to work above their skill levels.
- Contractor Licensees – eligibility requirements lacking business qualifications renders this license of very little benefit to mitigating risk to the consumer. Financial and cash flow skills are essential to providing first responders to emergencies in gas and plumbing systems and allowing timely access to materials and equipment and so reducing the escalation of the problem and reducing damage caused.

The quote from the RIS above states that *“There has been no evidence that current arrangements have failed to mitigate existing risks or that the nature of risks has increased,”* but in fact there are new and ever increasing risks related to the drying climate and associated needs to ever more efficiently use and reuse water, in all its forms, and more efficiently produce and use energy including but not limited to the following examples of a single risk expanding into numerous risks:

The mandated tempering of heated water – Plumbers now come in contact with this every day in both residential and commercial locations with tempering valves, thermostatic mixing valves, electronic controlled and pre-set water heaters to full scale warm water systems with ultra-violet sanitation. The obvious risks of scalds and burns are only to the start with other risks including low water temperature where hot water is required such as sinks and equipment such as dishwashers requiring the inefficient use of energy to reheat the water to a higher temperature for correct operation, the growth of legionella and other pathogens in warm water pipes, the list goes on. Although the deleted qualification Commissioning and maintaining thermostatic mixing valves does not fully cover all the foregoing risks it does provide the basic understanding allowing a knowledgeable plumber to handle them.

Backflow prevention – Apart from the obvious risk of backflow or back-siphonage through faulty devices the waste of water through malfunction of vented devices is a directly linked to the drying climate problems and therefore a serious risk. The increasing prevalence of the use of containment as a protection of infrastructure and the use of hose mounted devices in our daily ablutions requiring individual protection, the increasing use of alternative water supplies are only a sample of a mounting number of instances leading to daily interaction by plumbers requiring at least the Full Licensee Plumber to have the skill and qualification to commission and maintain backflow devices.

The IPA is preparing a submission to the Decision RIS highlighting existing and emerging risks and their ramifications, if you know of any new or potential risks or existing risks that are increasing we would like to hear from you; just email secretary@plumbing.org.au

Stephen Movley
Editor

WorldSkills 2013:

42nd WorldSkills International Competition in Leipzig, Germany.

Congratulations to Medals of Excellence winners:

Alex DeKoeyer – Plumbing and Heating

Mitchell Barron – Refrigeration and Airconditioning

See more at WorldSkills Australia





Department of Education and
Early Childhood Development

[Applications are closing soon](#)

[September 16th](#)

[Click here to apply NOW!](#)

The HESG Fellowships aim to provide opportunities for staff in Victorian TAFE Institutes and listed Victorian Government contracted Registered Training Organisations (including Adult, Community & Further Education providers) to assist in the reduction of skills deficiencies in key Victorian industries, to support leading-edge technologies in a contemporary setting, and to build cultural exchange.

They are intended to examine innovative approaches that demonstrate potential benefits for, and application in, Victoria. A key outcome of each Fellowship is identifying links between training and industry productivity.

Fellowships available: 10

Value: \$13,000 (each)

Open: Applicants must be employed in a Victorian TAFE Institute or a Victorian Government contracted Registered Training Organisation. Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) contracted as providers of Victorian Government subsidised Training in 2013. Funding is provided through the Skills for Victoria program.

See list at: www.education.vic.gov.au

Applications close on September 16, 2013

Applications are invited in any of the industries listed, but not limited to:

- Advanced/Lean Manufacturing
- Aerospace
- Building and Construction
- Clean Energy Technologies

- Health and Community Services
- New and Emerging Technologies (e.g. Digital)

Applications that can demonstrate a specific skills deficiency in other industries that will directly benefit Victoria's economic development will also be considered.

We're Here to Help.

Our team are here to assist you with the preparation of your application.

Whether you've applied for any grant or Fellowship before, or had previous experience in such applications and have difficulties or would like some more information, feel free to contact us...

Phone us on (03) 9347 4583 or [email us](#)

Thinking of studying Certificate IV in 2014 or know someone that is?

Applications will open mid November 2013 and close 21 January 2014

**To pre-register [click here](#) and send your email address
and we will email registration details to you in November**



A LIMITED OFFER FOR ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING STANDARDS AND TEXTS FOR THOSE STUDYING FOR CERTIFICATE IV IN PLUMBING AND SERVICES

The Offer:

The Institute of Plumbing Australia Inc. through its IPA Foundation offers one time assistance to a limited number of students (up to 8) undertaking studies in 2014 towards a Certificate IV in Plumbing and Services (includes any of the five streams).

The offer is designed to provide some assistance to those students finding it financially restrictive to continuing their studies in plumbing by providing at no charge a set of the plumbing and drainage standards AS/NZS 3500 Parts 0,1,2,3 & 4. Where a recipient can demonstrate that they have existing access to AS/NZS 3500 standards the IPA Foundation may at its discretion offer to assist in purchase of alternative standards or text books applicable to the recipients course of study up to the value of \$250.00.

The offer also includes a free copy of the E-Book - Selection and Sizing of Copper Tubes for Water Piping Systems by Barrie Smith on DVD valued at \$66.00.

Particulars:

Applicants must complete and submit by post, fax or email the attached application form by the due date and to the address as shown on the form.

Applications are to include at least one written reference.

Prior to receiving assistance the recipient must provide written evidence of 2014 enrolment in courses applicable to CPC40911 Certificate IV in Plumbing and Services.

Added benefit:

All applicants will be provided a free Student Membership of the Institute of Plumbing Australia Incorporated for a period of four years or until successful completion of their Certificate IV studies at which time they will be offered full membership at the applicable annual subscription.

Appreciation:

This offer is made possible through the proceeds from online sales of The Selection and Sizing of Copper Tubes for Water Piping Systems and agreement between Author Barrie Smith and The Institute of Plumbing Australia Incorporated.

For your Diary:

Building Australia's Future 2013 Conference:

The Australian Building Codes Board and Master Plumbers Australia will bring you the pre-eminent national construction industry conference of 2013 at Sofitel Brisbane 15 – 18 September. Register at BAF2013@abcb.gov.au

Australian Sustainability Conference and Exhibition

9 – 10 October 2013 at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.
For details see www.australiansustainability.com.au

World Plumbing Conference 2013:

The World Plumbing Council will meet at the 10th World Plumbing Conference to be held at the Grand Hotel, New Delhi, India in November 2013. For details see www.wpc2013.in

Selection and Sizing of Copper Tubes for Water Piping Systems

[Selection and Sizing of Copper Tubes for Water Piping Systems by Barrie Smith](#) (the blue book) is now available in both DVD and E-Book download, visit www.plumbing.org.au and follow the links.

NOTE:

Companion Spreadsheet now available, see www.plumbing.org.au for details and FREE Download. (follow the button links or click on **Technical Book Sales and scroll to bottom of page for **Spreadsheet Files****

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

If you are not already a member why not join and really help us provide a voice for plumbers and plumbing. Simply email the Secretary below.

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.