

E – INSTITUTE

The Official Newsletter of IPA



The Institute of Plumbing
Australia Incorporated

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Promoting Consistency in all things Plumbing

National Occupational Licensing:

PLUMBERS ALSO WANT THE MONKEY OFF THEIR BACK (see media releases below)

In previous issue I have condemned the current consultation RIS for the plumbing and gasfitting occupation as a sham document and the more I read into it and the more comment I receive across my desk I realise just how far off the rails the NOLS process has fallen. Any similarity between the deliberations and consensus decisions of the wider plumbing industry referenced during the gestation period of what was proposed to be best practice is at best tenuous. At no time in my involvement did cost implications (up or down) feature as the main component as it does in the RIS. Nor did dumbing down of qualifications (the other equal main component of the RIS) in fact in all discussions that I was privy to it was always stressed the highest level of qualification and the widest scope of work was required to protect public health. We must never forget that the first reason for plumbing is to protect public health.

The RIS nominates the Training Package CPC08 Plumbing Certificate III as the base qualification and this is the correct approach as it covers all aspects of a general plumber but the NOLS process has deleted at least two important aspects of that training by excluding Stormwater Drainage and Roof Plumbing from the licensed occupation both of which are essential components in providing safe and healthy living conditions, once again public health is dismissed as unimportant contrary to the views of industry.

Further dumbing down introduced after consultation is the removal of “experience” at entry levels. It is my understanding that industry agreed (maybe reluctantly) that specific terms of additional experience to gain a Full licence were not required due to the built in period of experience through serving an apprenticeship and then further study to sit the certificate IV subjects required to attain a full license. Is the omission of any requirement for experience just another mistake in this faulty document or a snide way of introducing institutional training? The Monkey does pose

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the question but unfortunately does not differentiate between entry level and full license level.

For those of you looking for further clarifications the promised information sessions have commenced and dates and venues are attached for your information, probably best to register on the Nola website www.nola.gov.au in case of any late changes.

The comment period for the Plumbing and Gasfitting RIS has been extended to 5 October 2012, see below for links.

The views expressed in this editorial are those of the Editor and have not been canvassed across the membership, if you agree, disagree or wish to comment please contact

Stephen Movley
secretary@plumbing.org.au

Links to Consultation RIS:

Consultation Regulation Impact Statement outlining proposals to reform occupational licensing for the plumbing and gasfitting occupation have been released by the COAG National Licensing Taskforce.

The document outlines three possible options for occupational licensing reform – the status quo, national licensing and automatic mutual recognition.

The consultation period for this Consultation RIS has been extended and will remain open until 5 October 2012, but this **date may be extended**. For more information about national licensing and the proposed reforms, go to www.nola.gov.au.

[View the Consultation Regulation Impact Statements](#)

[Make a submission on the Consultation Regulation Impact Statements](#)

[View frequently asked questions about national occupational licensing](#)

[Email the COAG National Licensing Taskforce](#)



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Media release

24 August 2012

REAL ESTATE PROFESSION WANTS THE MONKEY OFF ITS BACK

Real Estate Institute CEOs have joined forces in their response to the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) on national licensing for the real estate profession.

Institutes from Queensland, the ACT, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory have boycotted COAG's "survey monkey" which asks for feedback on the RIS. REIA is concerned about the pre-determined nature of such an approach.

REIA President Ms Pamela Bennett says "The survey monkey is nothing more than push-polling and intends to coach responses. It doesn't allow for any alternative under national licensing to what the RIS has set forward and further restrains our response to the proposed new regulations and the detail contained within these".

"We vehemently contest the dumbing down of standards for our profession and the abolishing of compulsory professional development will leave both agents and consumers worse off" Ms Bennett added.

"Reducing qualifications for real estate agents from Diploma to Certificate IV will deny them vital knowledge about running a professional real estate business," says Ms Bennett.

"We're stunned that consumer benefits haven't been considered in the quantitative analysis outlined in the RIS. Choosing where and how we live is a fundamental and crucial decision in anyone's life. Shouldn't it be handled by a highly qualified professional?"

REIA is calling for the Government to immediately release the detail of the proposed legislation. Ms Bennett says "How is our profession able to respond appropriately and fully without seeing the detail."

The Real Estate Institute of Australia (REIA) is the national professional association for real estate agents in Australia. For further information or interview opportunities, please contact:

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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NATIONAL HARMONISATION DOES NOT MEAN RACE TO THE BOTTOM

COAG is destroying a good idea by dumbing down national standards. COSBOA has always supported national licensing as a way to reduce paperwork for people wanting to move and transfer their skills and expertise to other parts of Australia. This is a way to streamline red tape but it should not mean that we reduce educational standards required by industry.

Peter Strong, Executive Director of COSBOA, stated today that “when harmonising state and federal regulations we have had governments select the highest penalty rates to then apply across jurisdictions with lower rates but with qualifications we, for some reason, have chosen the lowest level needed and asked those with higher levels to drop back to a lower standard. This disadvantages those who have gone the extra yards and can also have a negative impact on an industry. A good example of this is the recent decision to choose Certificate IV as minimum requirement for real estate agents. The higher diploma standard used in some jurisdictions is what is needed and by choosing the lower level there will be a potential cost to consumers and a disadvantage to those who have achieved the higher, diploma level. Importantly, in this example, the diploma provides the extra knowledge needed to run a business as well as be an expert real estate agent. We support the development of business skills as well as technical skills.”

COSBOA believes that it is essential that members of the ‘first wave’ occupations become part of the National Occupational Licensing Scheme, and have adequate entry-level standards for the profession. This includes electrical occupations, plumbers, gasfitters, refrigeration and air-conditioning mechanics. These are small business people who the consumer expects will have proper training and access to continuing professional development. In the case of the real estate profession, this means that WA, NT, Tasmania and South Australia are all facing a lowering of educational qualifications from Diploma to Certificate IV; it is the extra units that provide the vital knowledge about running a business.

COSBOA is further disappointed that the current recommendations for national licensing contained in the Regulatory Impact Statement for the real estate profession deny the need for continuing professional development (CPD). Most professionals in that industry understand the need to update their skills. It only takes 10-15 hours a year to ensure small business people stay in touch with the latest information and trends facing the industry in terms of legislation, consumer risk and good practice.

Mr Strong added “Dumbing down an industry standard is not the way to go and it is also somewhat galling that we are asked for feedback on the recommendations using the Survey Monkey process. That process will make it easy for the public servants to get the result they want and save them time in analysis but it certainly makes it harder for industry to give the information that we consider to be most important. “

###end###

The regulation of plumbing in Western Australia:

As reported in the August Issue relationships between the Western Australian plumbing industry and its state government have hopefully improved, the Plumbing Industry Reference Group (PIRG) is now a Committee of the Plumbing Licensing Board (PLB) with direct links to the board.

But! Now the work begins to resurrect what the government and the building commission have pulled asunder; for instance do you know that Plumbing Work is now classed as Building Work and is relegated somewhere below demolition in the Building Act now that the Water Services Licensing Act 1995 Part 5A (regulates licensing of plumbers) is referenced by the Building Services Act 2010. The Western Australian plumbing industry has been put on notice by the state government to present a business case outlining the benefits to the public of a strong and independent regulation of plumbing and plumbers in their widest connotation. E-Institute will continue to report on progress.

On a lighter note Congratulations to IPA Associate:

Vacuum Toilets Australia and John Neskudla on winning Best New Product Award 2012 at the DesignBuild Expo in Melbourne



John Neskudla receiving his award (photo courtesy of DesignBuild)

World Plumbing Council to meet in Australia:

A General Meeting of the World Plumbing Council will be held in Brisbane, Australia on the 21st/22nd October 2012 to be followed by an Australian Plumbing Industry Conference in Cairns, Queensland, the gateway to the Barrier Reef.

More information on the World Plumbing Council at www.worldplumbing.org

Information on the Australasian International Plumbing Conference can be found at www.plumbingconference.com.au

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.