

E – INSTITUTE

The Official Newsletter of IPA



The Institute of Plumbing
Australia Incorporated

Issue 50
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Promoting Consistency in all things Plumbing

National Occupational Licensing:

This Institute will be making a submission to the Consultation Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) for the Plumbing and Gasfitting Occupations including comment on the associated draft Occupational Licensing National Law Amendment Bill 2012 and the associated National Regulations on the basis that plumbing and gasfitting is a stand alone profession providing an essential service to the community and not just a construction trade at the beck and call of builders. Yes we service the construction industry but a large percentage of what plumbers and gasfitters do is directly associated with the community and the existing built environment in protecting public health and safety.

Disjointed as it may seem across state borders, licensing of plumbers and gasfitters in Australia is seen as world best practice and envied by many countries both developed and developing. National consistency can only improve on that best practice if it includes the best of the best in state regulation and encompasses the full and widest spectrum of what is plumbing, unfortunately none of the proposals put forward in the RIS manage to do that in their presented form making stakeholder decisions and support difficult.

To keep members informed the following is an excerpt from the executive summary of the Institute's submission, you will note that as is our usual form we have made suggestions against our more negative comments:

Of the options available for comment in the Consultation Regulation Impact Statement (RIS) we support adoption of the Option 3 Sub-option 1 – Three Tier National Licensing as the option providing the most opportunity for nationally consistent high level qualifications. Our support for this option relies on the inclusion of recommendations noted below including the broadening of the definition of plumbing work to include all aspects of plumbing as noted in the National Construction Code Volume 3 – Plumbing Code of Australia and all parts of its referenced Australian Standard AS/NZS3500.

In this issue –

**National Licensing RIS
Regulation of Plumbing in
Western Australia**

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When viewed against commercial considerations none of the national licensing options are best practice legislation as they will undoubtedly have an ongoing financial impost on many for the benefit of a few. Furthermore the restrictive view of what is plumbing and gasfitting work, the reduction/removal of required qualifications, experience and training, the reduction of qualifications for a “certifier” and/or a “contractor” included in all or some of the options provided by the RIS all correspond with a decrease in the ability for “licensing” to mitigate risk to public health and safety and the environment; the very reason for licensing in the first place.

As we move through this submission a view is emerging that the RIS in its present format is a flawed document and does not fully represent stakeholders views inputted into the system over the past two and half years. The document has become so overblown as to be difficult for the plumber and gasfitter in the street to fully understand or more importantly to be able to verify the full impact of the assumptions made. Adding more complexity is the late addition of concepts that are not fully costed and therefore using assumptions in place of facts making it more difficult to reach a considered opinion on the merits or otherwise when comparing options.

Although we have offered qualified support for three tier national licensing to Option 3 Sub-option 1 we will be willing to consider Automatic Mutual Recognition if it is to be revisited in a more in-depth study with a preferred option of a hybrid model encompassing say four general and nationally uniform licenses based on the Option 3 Sub-option 1 National License model at tradesperson and full license levels under Automatic Mutual Recognition with contracting and specialised licenses at the discretion of the individual Jurisdictional Regulator under existing mutual recognition with harmonisation where achievable. The four nationally consistent licenses would need to be governed by a committee/group/board of jurisdictional regulators and industry stakeholders.

The Institute of Plumbing Australia support for National Licensing includes Option 3 Sub-option 1 of the RIS with the following qualifications:

To be included or adjusted (also see details below):

- Knowledge and experience to be prescribed in the National Law and its Regulations including that the qualifications for a tradespersons registration include that training is delivered as part of a structured contract of employment and training..
- Business qualifications to be included in qualifications for a business licence.
- Eligibility for a Restricted Plumbers’ License to exclude other than an individual with Electrician qualification.
- Restricted Plumbers’ License to exclude commissioning and maintenance of heated water temperature control devices – delete require qualification CPCPWT4013A
- Scope of Plumbing Work to include all as noted in the National Construction Code Volume 3 – Plumbing Code of Australia and all parts of its referenced Australian Standard AS/NZS3500.
- In the Occupational Licensing National Law Amendment Bill 2012 –Schedule 3 there are a number of definitions that we do not agree with (see detailed responses below)
- Mandatory for Contractors to display license number on all advertising material, stationery and electronic media.
- Exemption from the requirement to hold a license – section 5 of PGO National

- Regulations should be tightened up to prevent automatic granting of exemption.
- Water plumbing work to include fire hydrant and hose reel work including commissioning, inspection and testing
 - Eligibility for issue of a license should include in addition to VET qualifications independent testing of practical and/or theoretical competency associated with the particular license at time of application and prior to issue.
 - A nationally consistent skills maintenance requirement should be included in the National Law / Regulations.
 - Design is an essential part of plumbers work allowing orderly installation of the many parts that make up the whole and should be included in the description of all aspects of plumbing and gasfitting work.

The Institute Council urges all members to air their views by making a submission to the Consultation Regulation Impact Statement, note extension of time for submissions, now close in Canberra on **Friday 12 October 2012**.

The industry preferred way is by written submission on your letterhead either sent by email or post and to assist we have attached a proforma two page submission that may give you some ideas, feel free to copy and paste. The attached also gives you the postal and email address for the COAG Skills Taskforce.

Note that all submissions will be published on the NOLA website unless marked confidential.

There is also an electronic survey available on the NOLA website but it is viewed by many to be push-polling and is not recommended.

Any member wishing to view the Institute's submission please email the secretary for a copy at 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 12 October 2012. 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](#)

Links to the National Law Amendment Bill 2012 and associated National Standards go to:

www.nola.gov.au/legislative-package/

Note that the amendment bill and the regulations are written as for the RIS Option 3 Sub-option 1.

The regulation of plumbing in Western Australia:

The main story in this issue is National Licensing and responding to this has absorbed most of the industries spare time, in Western Australia the discussion has to a large degree been academic as the state government has yet to adopt it either through the suggested template legislation devised at a COAG level or with local state legislation. With a full review into Western Australia's plumbing legislation pending and a state election early 2013 it appears unlikely that Western Australia will be there when National Licensing, in whatever form that eventually takes, commences but that should not detract from Western Australian plumbers and gasfitters having their say on the proposals outlined in the Consultation Regulation Impact Statement and the consultation draft of the National Law and its National Regulations.

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.