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E L E C T R I C A L W O R K E R S R E G I S T R A T I O N B O A R D

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Presiding Member's Report

I am pleased to present the twelfth annual report of the Electrical Workers Registration Board.

With the Energy Safety Review Bill now at the Select Committee and next year's anticipated migration of the Electrical Workers Registration Board and the Electrical Workers Licencing Group to the Department of Building and Housing, further change is inevitable in our ever evolving industry.

While none of us oppose change in the technical advancement of our industry, most of us dislike change for change's sake. There are some in our industry who claim that we have had too much change in the last twelve years - from "Wiring permits" to "Certificates of Compliance"..... from Inspector certification to self certification.... from the "reg's book" to codes of practice, and now ASNZ2000-3000. Where to next?

The fact is that we as an industry have been steadfastly moving forward, away from a prescriptive bureaucracy based regulatory regime, to a professional competence based and self certifying regime. We have become a professional industry. We are an industry that has resisted calls to "dumb down" our registration criteria. We are an industry that is concerned with the ongoing competency and safety of our stakeholders, the electrical practitioners and the safety of the public those practitioners serve. We are an industry that is moving forward and we can look forward to a sound future.



Standards on Line

The shift to a standards based compliance system has caused a substantial increase in the cost of compliance. This has been especially evident in the case of Trainees needing to ensure they have the full range of standards, regulations and codes of practice necessary for their electrical qualification.

Your Board is acutely aware of the cost of compliance to industry.

A decision has been made to make available on line all relevant standards, regulations and codes regularly used by our industry. This will be at no charge to all who choose to pick up a practicing licence in the next round of licencing.

A complete list of standards and documents available was detailed in the May 2005 issue of ELECTRON. The standards and other documents will be able to be downloaded and printed and will also be made available free on line to Trainees who qualify.

This action by the Board is part of Board policy to ensure practitioners are receiving value for their annual licence fee.

Refresher Courses

Over recent years numerous registered persons have questioned the need and relevancy of refresher courses.

Comments in some media have also highlighted the continued need for these courses and the need for improvement in the quality of the courses offered, especially with regard to testing and certification. Coupled with the call for an upgrade of courses was the need to accommodate the requirements of “SiteSafe” to avoid course and cost duplication for some practitioners.

Last year the Board approved a benchmark course that met its criteria and that of SiteSafe. While at this stage only a course that satisfies the requirements of Electricians and Inspectors has been developed, work is underway to produce similar targeted courses for both EST's and Line Mechanics.

The new refresher course structure will be available for incorporation into the next licencing round.

Supervision Code of Practise

The Board supports the Code of Practice being developed by the Electrical Workers Licensing Group covering the supervision of trainees. Industry is aware of the increasing number of electrical accidents and deaths involving trainees. Subsequent investigation has highlighted the need for a Supervision Code of Practice to ensure practitioners practise their responsibilities as supervisors of electrical work.

The Board accepts its responsibility to ensure the competency and safety of electrical practitioners, especially trainees, and sees the code as a valuable tool to ensure ongoing trainee safety.

Public Awareness Campaign

Last year the Board approved a new national advertising campaign that was published nationwide in 40 daily and suburban newspapers.

The advertisement, boldly headed WARNING, highlighted the presence of unregistered and unlicensed electrical workers and the dangers of allowing work to be carried out by such workers. It also reinforced the Certificate of Compliance regime and the need to have work certified.

Initial feedback was positive so the Board approved a re-run of the campaign this year.

Later in 2005 more than 1.4 million follow-on brochures are to be sent out with consumers power bills.

While the WARNING advertisement dealt with unlicensed workers, this new brochure deals primarily with electrical compliance, the requirements for a Certificate of Compliance and the use of electrical safety certificates, the need to have a current practicing licence and the availability of a complaints process for unsafe or unsatisfactory electrical work.

The Board records its appreciation of the co-operation it received from the six participating electricity retailers in distributing the Board's message.

Energy Safety Review Bill

After several years of protracted progress the Energy Safety Review Bill is now with the Select Committee. The Board has been involved with the Bill since its inception to ensure the best outcomes for electrical workers and consumers.

The Board has made submissions on the Bill, raising concerns about some areas while endorsing other aspects. When passed the Bill should address several of our industry concerns, in particular the lengthy disciplinary process.

Complaints Against Electrical Workers

This year has seen the Board deal with a substantial increase in the number of complaints against electrical workers. These are only the complaints referred to the Board by the Complaints Assessment Committees –many other initial complaints are screened out by the committees. (Complaint statistics are illustrated further on in this report.)

While many complaints arise from commercial disputes, there is a feeling that the public is becoming increasingly concerned about shoddy work by a range of practitioners in the building industry and is taking action accordingly.

Advertising by the Board advising the public to employ only licenced workers and request Certificates of Compliance has also increased public awareness.

What is unchanged is the recurring type of disciplinary breaches: -

- failure to test
- failure to certify prescribed electrical work
- failure to have third party inspections carried out
- failure to have a current practicing licence.

All of these are basic fundamentals for working effectively in today's self certifying environment. They are an integral part of the public's assurance that the electrical work has been done competently, has been tested and is safe.



Line Mechanics

This year the Board has dealt with a disproportionate number of complaints involving Line Mechanics. In almost every case the complaint has involved a person receiving an electric shock as the result of line transpositions. As well as the serious risk to life and limb, substantial damage has occurred to property as the result of some of these transpositions.

In every case the transposition would have been detected had adequate testing been carried out.

The Board has the ability to address the concerns of Line Mechanic competency through the refresher course process for licensing.

The Board opposes moves by some in our industry to have Line Mechanics de-licensed as the Board has concerns regarding the competency and safety of Line Mechanics and any flow on safety issues.

Appreciation

I would like to personally acknowledge the considerable work and dedication of Board members throughout a busy and fruitful year. There has been a record number of Board meetings as a result of Board initiatives, industry demands, and, unfortunately, a record number of disciplinary hearings.

I feel that we loose sight of the fact that Board members are electrical practitioners and lay members who have businesses to run, jobs to attend and lives to live. I am often pleasantly surprised with the continued dedication of members who attend the Board meetings often at very short notice, and reorganise their own activities to accommodate the Board.

You have a proactive Board and I am proud to serve the Board as presiding member.

The Board is hearing industry concerns. It is endeavouring to balance your concerns with the concerns of the whole industry and address those concerns.

The Board acknowledges the valuable contribution of the staff of the Electrical Workers Licensing Group of the Ministry of Economic Development, the service body for the Board.

In particular, the Board records its appreciation of the exemplary professional services it continues to receive from the Registrar, John Sickels, and Board Secretary, Janine Anderson. Our industry is well served by them and their Ministry colleagues.



Murray Willis QSM

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Murray Willis".

Presiding Member



Registrar's Review

Strategic Plan

As previously reported the Board and the Electrical Workers Licensing Group (EWLG) introduced their first combined three year strategic plan in 2002 and this year the original plan was reviewed with both the Board and the EWLG agreeing on strategy for the period 2005 to 2008.

The mission statement for the revised plan continues the theme of “Electrical Safety for all New Zealanders through the ongoing competency of electrical workers” and the plan gives details of strategic goals, business initiatives and key projects. Copies of the revised plan are available from the Board/EWLG office or the plan can be viewed at www.ewrb.govt.nz

The Board

The Board completed a year in which a considerable amount of its time was taken up by the hearing of complaints against registered electrical workers. The number of complaints heard rose considerably over the previous year's figures. Further detail is provided later in this report.

Board meetings were held on a total of thirty four days and of that total twenty seven days were spent hearing complaints.

Legislative Development

The Board continued its contribution to legislative development through the year by being actively involved in the EnergySafe legislative review programme which ultimately became the Energy Safety Review Bill.

Whilst the Board has made some comment on the Bill, it fundamentally agrees with the amendments proposed and attributes its position to the continued dialogue it has had with the Ministry of Economic Development (the Ministry) on occupational licensing in the electrical industry.

The Board also was involved in consultation on New Zealand Electrical Codes of Practice 50 and 51 which relate to electrical work that can be carried out by homeowners and the owners of electrical appliances.

EWLG Transfer to the Department of Building and Housing

Preliminary discussions have taken place with the Department of Building and Housing on the transfer of the EWLG from the Ministry to the Department and discussions will continue over the forthcoming months. It is an objective of the Board and the EWLG that the transition of the EWLG to the Department will be seamless.

Dissemination of Information

Further agreements were reached with Standards New Zealand during the year for the dissemination of information to persons who uplift Board practicing licences and to Trainees.

In the early part of the year under review the Board distributed copies of AS/NZS 3760:2003 to all practicing licence holders and Trainees.

At the end of the year it was announced that further agreement had been reached with Standards New Zealand which enabled practicing licence holders and Trainees to have access to all Standards referenced in the Electricity Regulations 1997 through the Internet. At the present time work is being carried out on establishing electronic access to the Standards New Zealand website.

The assistance received from Standards New Zealand in making the agreement possible is acknowledged.

Practising Licence Refresher Courses

During the year a discussion paper was released on policy for proposed practicing licence refresher courses and the industry and interested parties were given the opportunity to comment.

In May the Board considered all comments received and agreed to revised criteria for future practicing licence refresher courses for Electricians and Electrical Inspectors. A request has also been made to the Ministry of Economic Development for amendment to the Electricity Regulations 1997 to give the Board the ability to approve and monitor future refresher courses.

Review of Fees and Charges

A review of the fees payable for Board services was completed during the year after consultation was carried out with the industry. It was proposed to amend fees payable to the Board and it was considered that those amendments had the potential to considerably reduce the cost of compliance to practicing licence holders and those people who purchase Certificates of Compliance.

The proposals are at present with the Ministry.

Memorandum of Understanding

The memorandum of understanding with the Electricity Supply Industry Training Organisation that was reported on in the last Annual Report was re-negotiated and a new memorandum developed. The new memorandum will include registration/licensing criteria for Line Mechanics, Electricians and Electrical Service Technicians.

New Policy for Examinations

After consultation with the industry and interested parties the Board introduced revised policies for its examinations. As from the commencement of the 2006 tutorial year the format for all Board examinations will be the same and as follows:

- All examination papers will be presented in the same two part format. The first section will consist of ten 2 mark questions and the second section will be eight 10 mark questions.
- The pass mark for all examination papers will be 60%.

In the electrician level examination category examination subject material has been amended so that examinations in that category will be based on Trans Tasman critical capabilities.

Teaching Guidelines

Comprehensive teaching guidelines for electrician level examinations were developed during the year and these will be released for comment in the near future. The guidelines give detail of material which will be subject to examination and includes the above mentioned Trans Tasman critical capabilities.

Conducting of Examinations

As reported in the last Annual Report the Board has continued its objective to conduct registration examinations and this year a total of three thousand six hundred and eighty three people entered examinations under the Board's jurisdiction. Of the total people who entered the examinations 69% passed.

Full details on examinations are available from the Board's website at www.ewrb.govt.nz

Core Capabilities for Electricians

The previously reported project on the integrating of the Australian and New Zealand Electrical Regulatory Authorities Council (ERAC) developed core capabilities into the New Zealand registration and qualification system has been progressed during the year and is due for completion.

The Electrotechnology Industry Training Organisation's valued work in incorporating the registration aspects into qualifications is acknowledged.

Complaints

The number of complaints the Registrar received against people registered under the Electricity Act 1992 increased to 80 for the year. This is an increase of 31% over the number for the previous year and an increase of 43% over the 2002/2003 figures.

Of the 80 complaints received, Complaints Assessment Committees referred 57 registered people to the Board for complaints hearings and of those 57 people 39 were found guilty of disciplinary offences.

In 2003/2004 25 hearings into complaints against registered electrical workers were held by the Board and this figure more than doubled in 2004/2005 to 57 hearings. However the average time taken for Board hearings reduced from 17.4 weeks to 12.3 weeks. This represents a 30% decrease in time required for hearings.

For the second time within a year the Registrar recommended to the Board that an electrician's registration be suspended before a complaint against the electrician was considered by a Complaints Assessment Committee. The Registrar's actions are an indication of the seriousness of some complaints being received.

Electron Newsletter

Six issues of ELECTRON were issued during the year and the newsletter continues to be well received. It is the Board's intention to continue with the publication as it is considered that ELECTRON gives all people registered under the Electricity Act 1992, Trainees and other interested people the opportunity to keep themselves up to date with developments in the industry.



John Sickels

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Sickels', written over a white background within a rectangular box.

Registrar

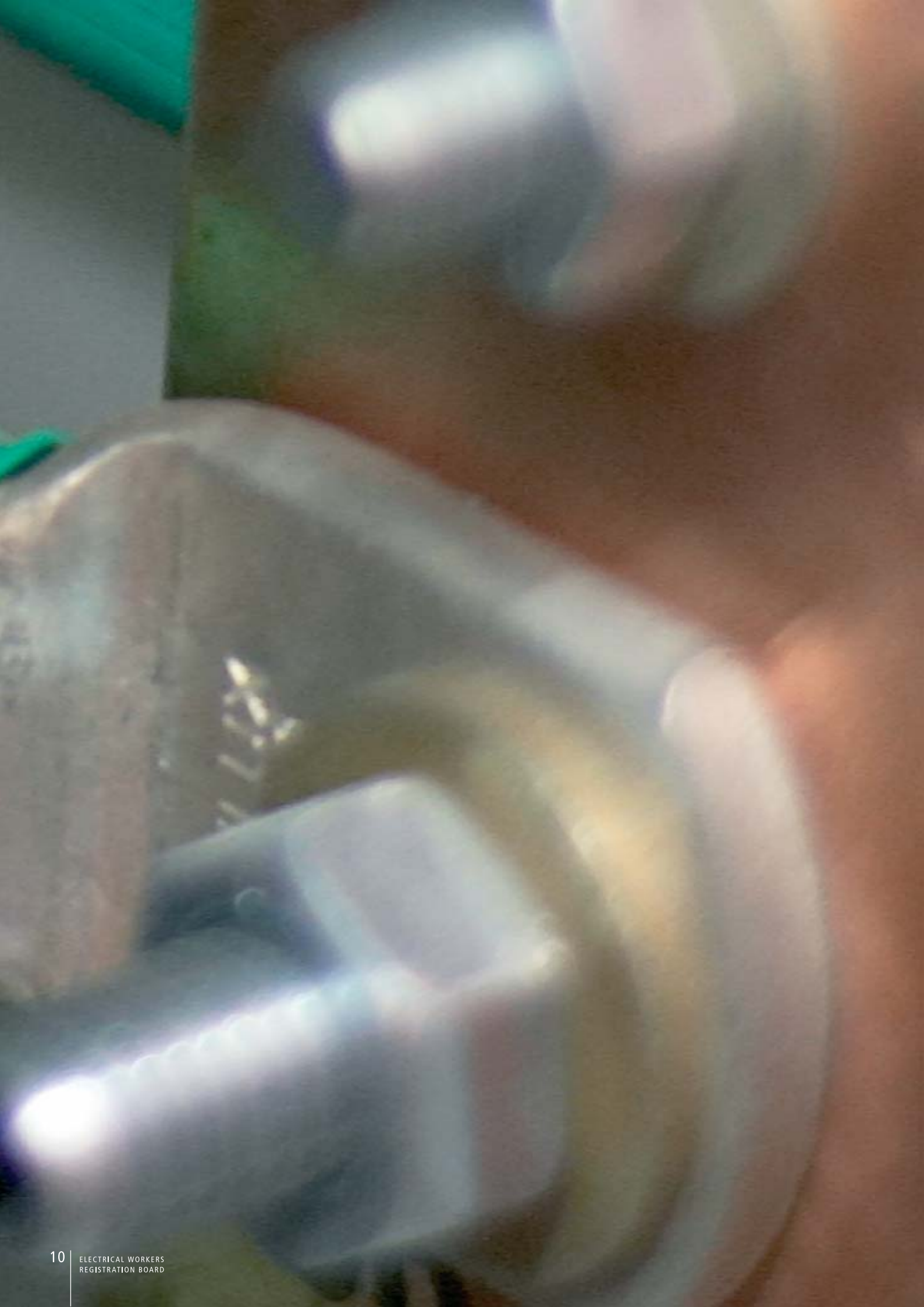
Board Financials

The information contained in these statements forms part of the Ministry of Economic Developments' consolidated statements audited by Audit New Zealand.

	Actual 2003/2004 \$000's	Estimates 2004/2005 \$000's	Actual 2004/2005 \$000's	Estimates 2005/2006 \$000's
INCOME				
Practicing Licences	1,708	1,698	1,646	1,655
Examination and Registration Fees	353	316	400	335
Sale of Publications	22	21	19	20
Certificates of Compliance	1,004	954	1,142	954
Miscellaneous Revenue	33	32	71	49
TOTALS	3,120	3,021	3,278	3,013
EXPENDITURE				
Personnel	415	499	549	488
Operating	1,675	1,926	1,878	1,646
Depreciation	32	31	137	117
Capital charge	9	7	6	25
Support services	629	540	474	701
TOTALS	2,760	3,003	3,044	2,977
ACCUMULATED FUNDS				
Opening balance	530	890	890	1,351
Add surplus (deficit)	360	18	234	36
CLOSING BALANCE	890	980	1,124	1,387

Notes:-

1. Revenue for the year was \$158,000 up on that received for the previous year and that increase can be attributed to an increase in the sales of Certificates of Compliance.
2. The Board collected \$62,517 in fines and costs awarded against registered electrical workers for disciplinary offences. The fines and costs are included in the Miscellaneous Revenue section of the accounts.



Statistics

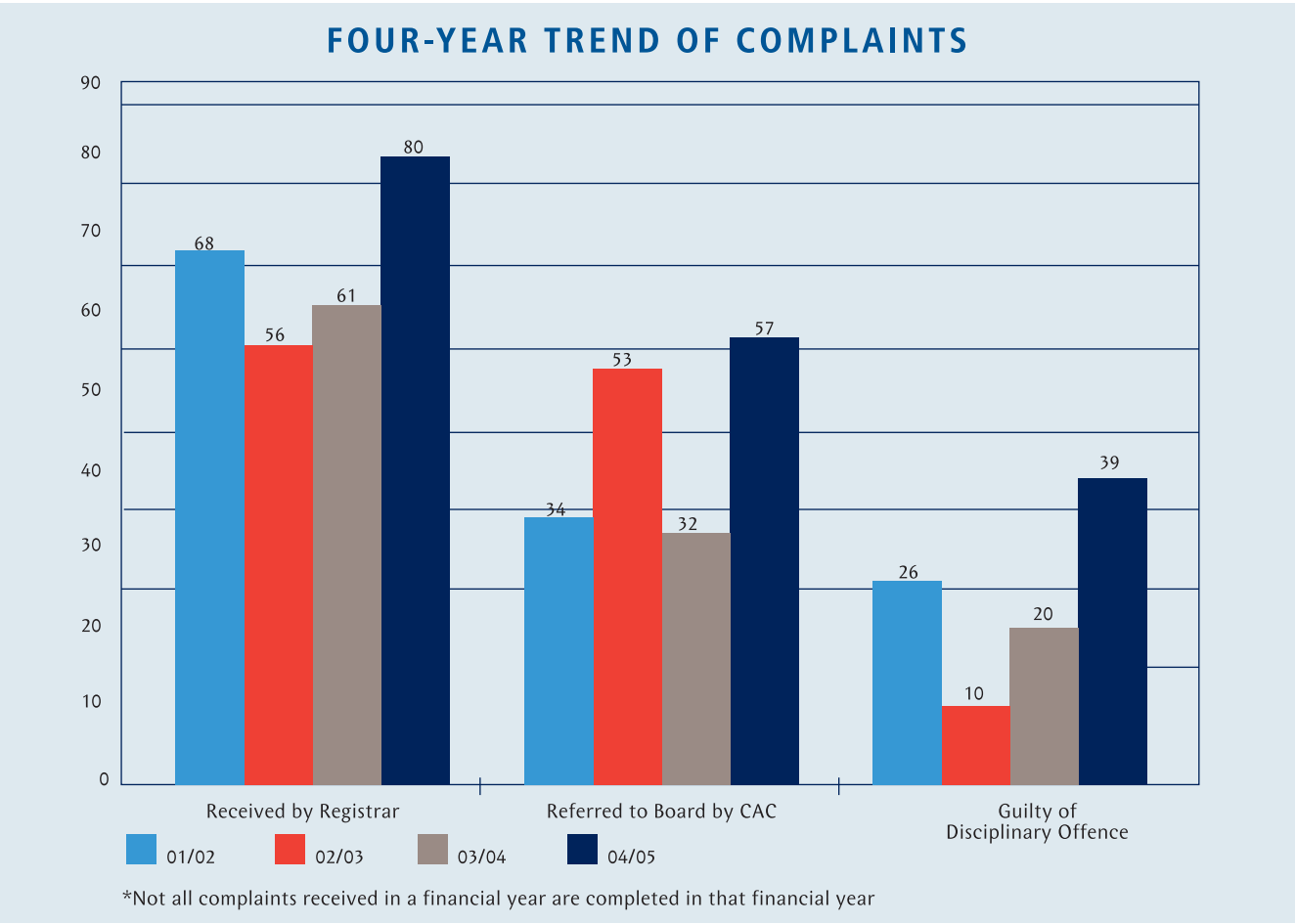
Registrations in all four categories have increased giving a total number of 38,333 people recorded as registered under the provisions of the Electricity Act 1992.

Practising licences have also increased in all four registration categories giving a total of 24,510 licences issued for the year.

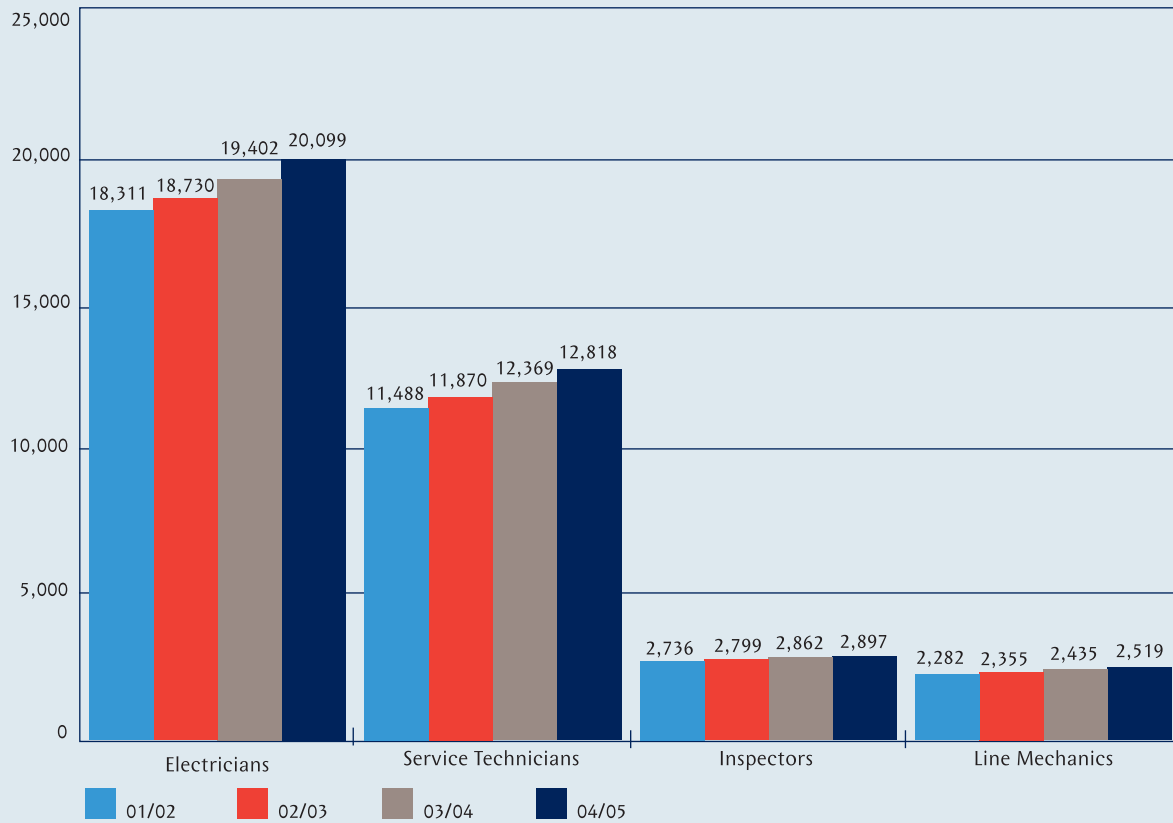
There were a total of 1,265 new full registrations issued during the year and 284 provisional licence registrations. The upturn in the number of provisional licences issued is due to the implementation of the Board’s new criteria for overseas trained electrical workers.

Certificates of Compliance sales were in excess of 212,000 and this is an increase in excess of 25,000 over the previous year.

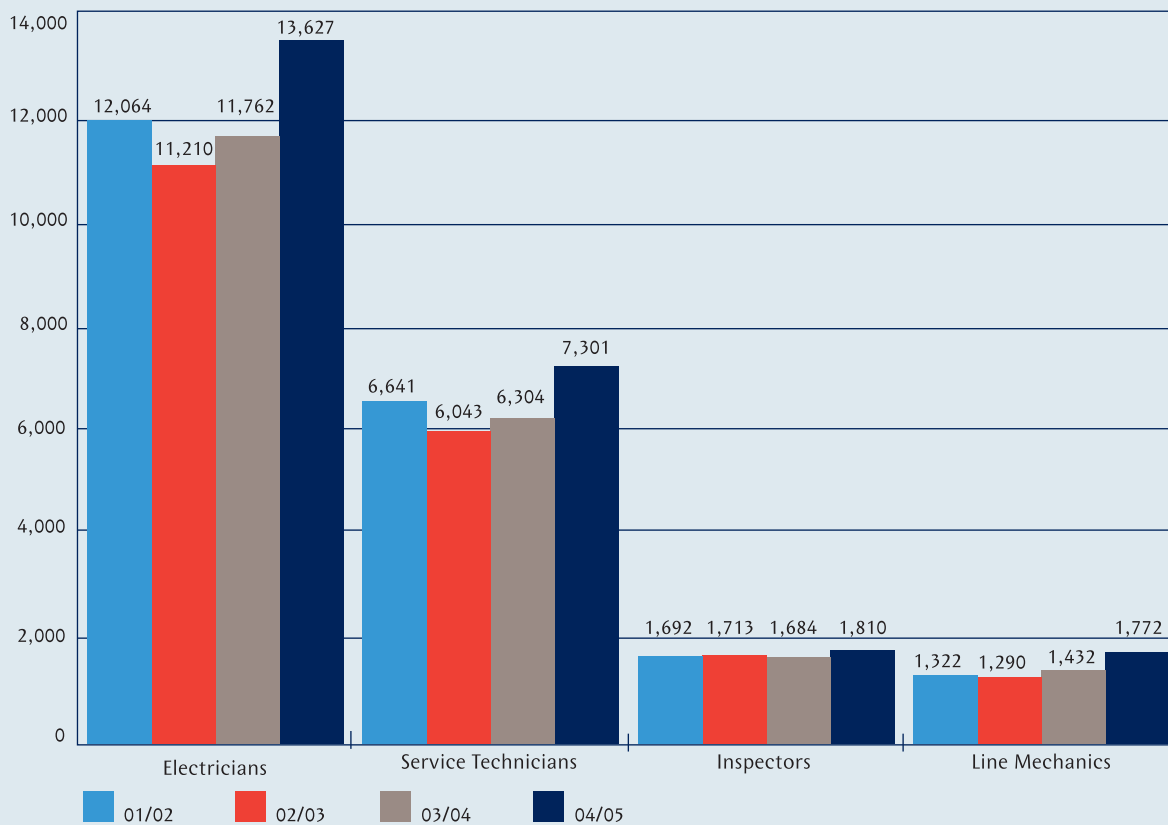
A total of 3,683 people entered Board examinations during the year and of that total 2,551 (69%) were successful with their examinations.



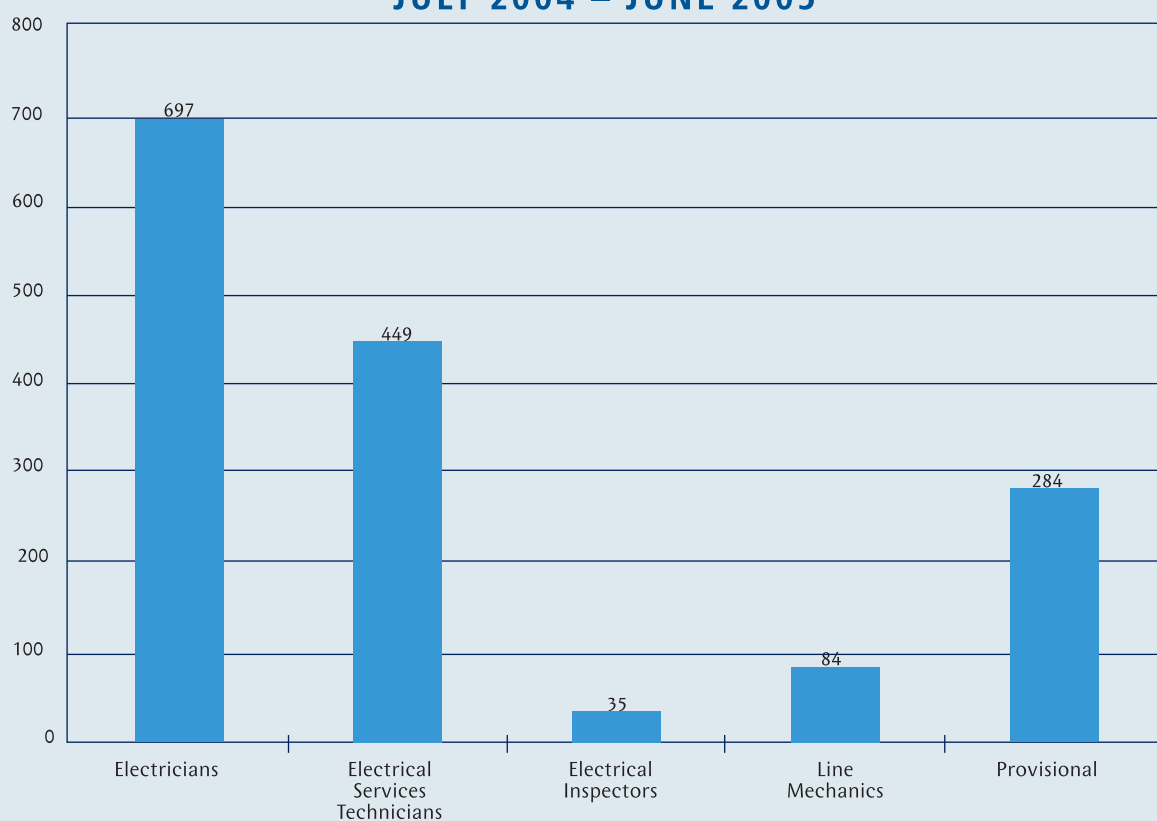
FOUR-YEAR TREND OF REGISTRATIONS



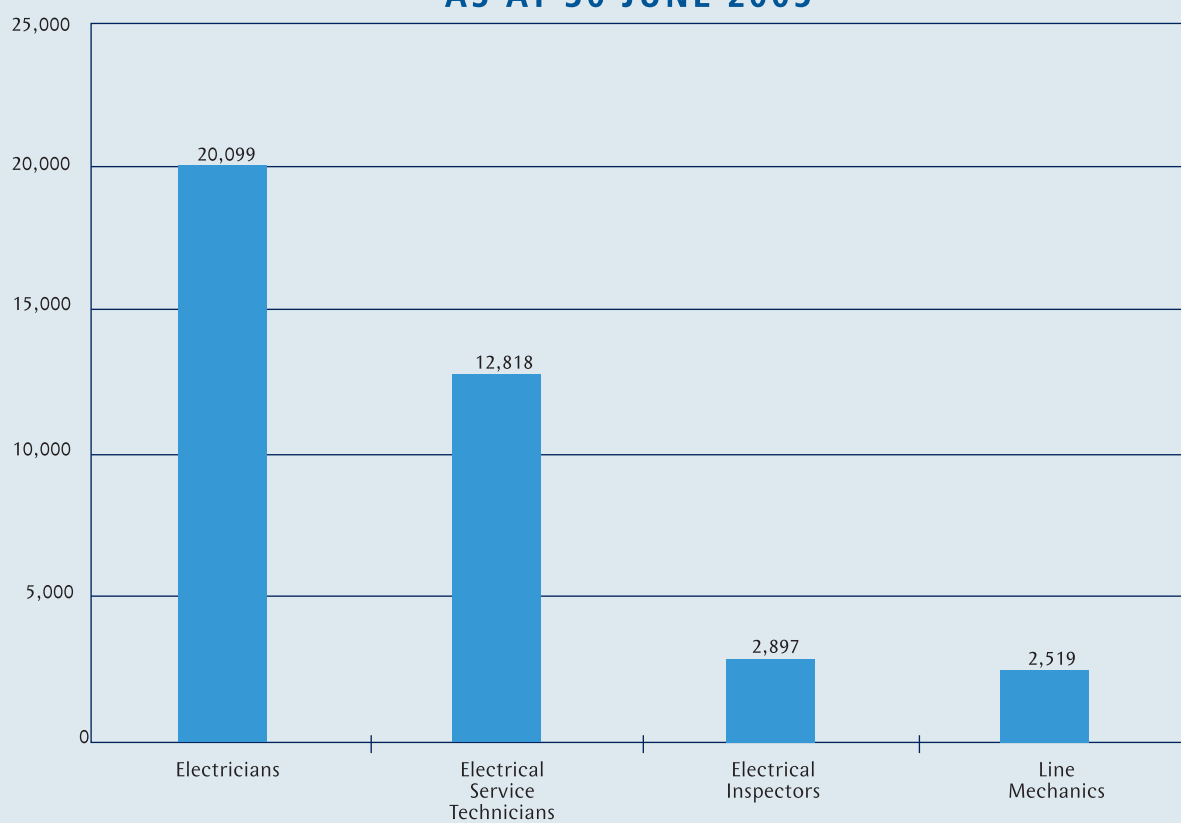
FOUR-YEAR TREND OF PRACTISING LICENCES ISSUED



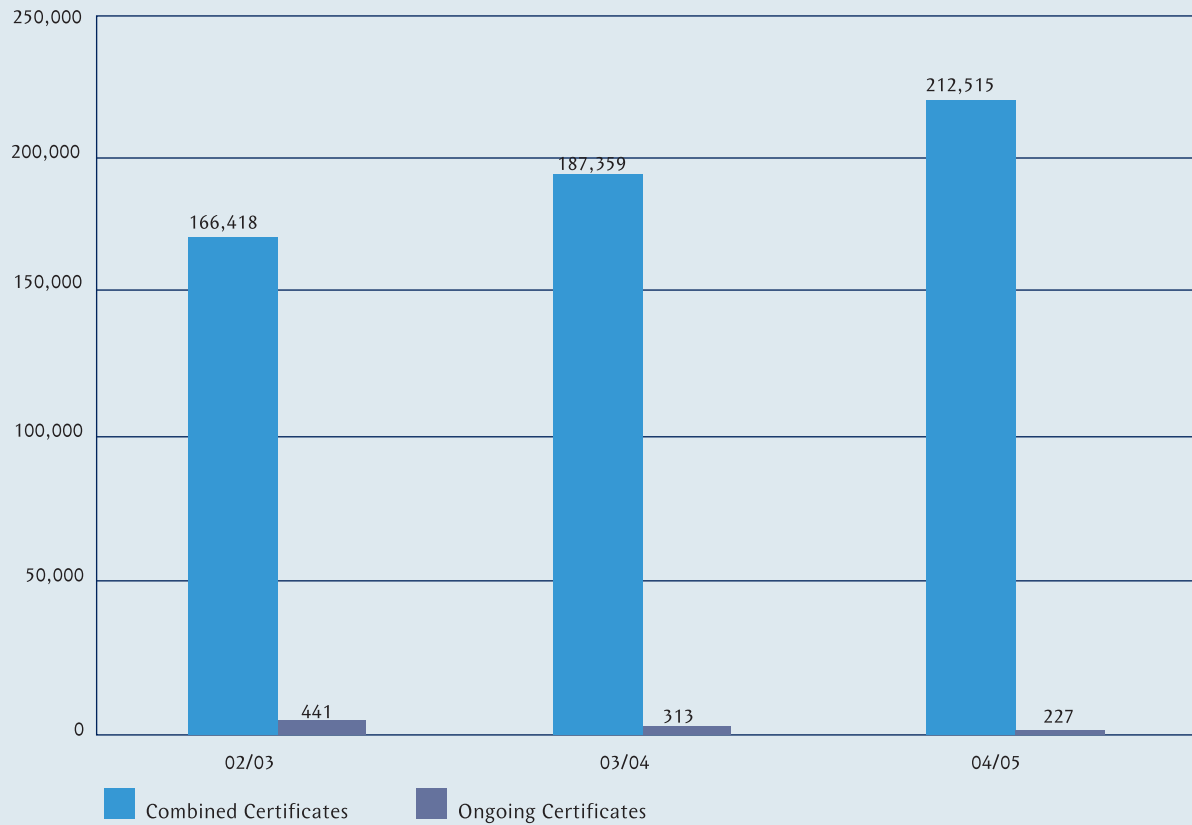
NUMBER OF NEW REGISTRATIONS JULY 2004 – JUNE 2005



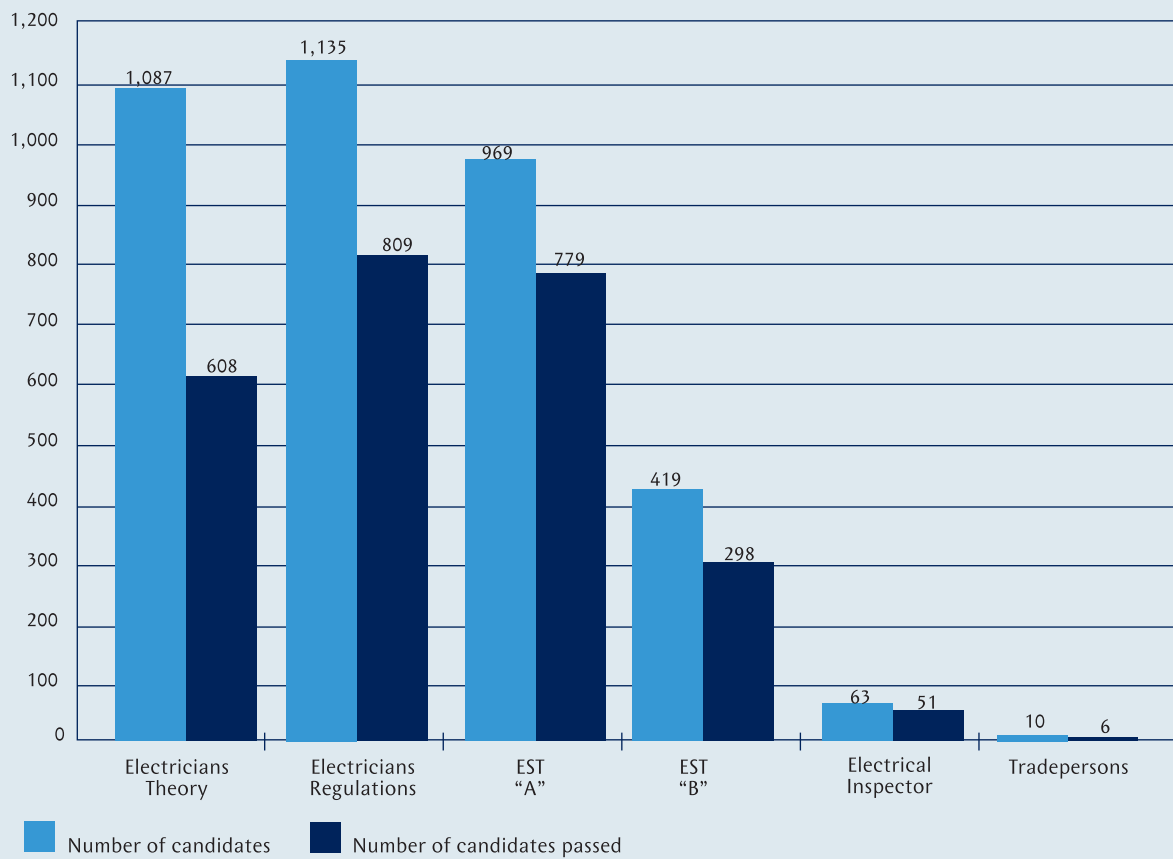
NUMBER OF REGISTRATIONS IN EACH CATEGORY AS AT 30 JUNE 2005



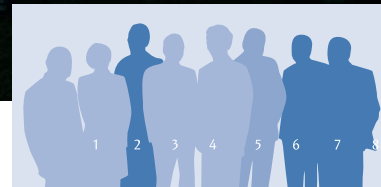
CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE SALES THREE YEAR TREND



EXAMINATIONS



Board Members



Tom Leong 1
Deborah Rundle 2
Don Pryde 3
Dennis Amiss 4
Barrie Mason 5
Murray Willis 6
John Sickels 7
Tim Elms 8



DENNIS AMISS

Registered Member,
Auckland

Dennis is a registered Electrician who originally gained broad experience in the industry with the former Auckland Harbour Board. Subsequently he has been involved with the appliance industry. He is Executive Director of the Appliance and Electronic Industry Association, working extensively with Government, its agencies and the Electrotechnology Training Organisation on behalf of the servicing sector of industry.

CONTACT DETAILS

PO Box 3481, Auckland 1015. Telephone: 09 577 3031. Facsimile: 09 577 3032. Email: d.amiss@clear.net.nz



TIM ELMS

Registered Member,
Canterbury

Tim has wide experience in electrical contracting as well as a long record of contributions to the Electrical Contractors Association of New Zealand, the Electrical Training Company and the Electrotechnology Industry Training Organisation. He was a founding partner in a major South Island electrical contracting company and maintains a keen interest in training and apprentices.

CONTACT DETAILS

22 Allandale Road, Hawarden, North Canterbury. Telephone: 03 314 2166. Mobile: 027 622 0206.



TOM LEONG

Registered Member,
Auckland

Tom is a Chartered Professional Engineer and a registered Electrical Inspector with many years experience in the electrical supply industry. He has extensive knowledge of electrical legislation and electrical industry training. Tom has worked with Standards New Zealand, the Electricity Supply Engineers Association and the National Safety Association to advance safe and competent electrical work in New Zealand.

CONTACT DETAILS

8 Williams Avenue, Pakuranga, Auckland 1706. Telephone: 09 570 5475. Mobile: 027 246 0415.
Facsimile: 09 570 6475



BARRIE MASON

Lay Member, Auckland

Barrie is a business consultant and company director with a background in management, marketing and communications. Barrie is a Court-experienced Justice of the Peace, a board member of the Museum of Transport and Technology (MOTAT) and a Celebrant for weddings, civil unions and funerals.

CONTACT DETAILS

33 Sylvan Park Avenue, Milford, Auckland 9. Telephone: 09 489 6288.



DON PRYDE

Registered Member,
Dunedin

Don's career is in the electrical supply sector of the industry and he has served on the Electrical Apprenticeship Committee. He has been a member of the New Zealand Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union's National Council and has recently been elected the Union's National President.

CONTACT DETAILS

Telephone: 0274 341 595



DEBORAH RUNDLE

Lay Member, Auckland

Deborah is a Disputes Tribunal Referee, Chairperson of the Discipline and Complaints Committee of the Corporation of Insurance Brokers of New Zealand and a member of the Insurance and Savings Ombudsman Commission. Deborah has considerable experience in dispute resolution, group facilitation, conflict management and consumer issues.



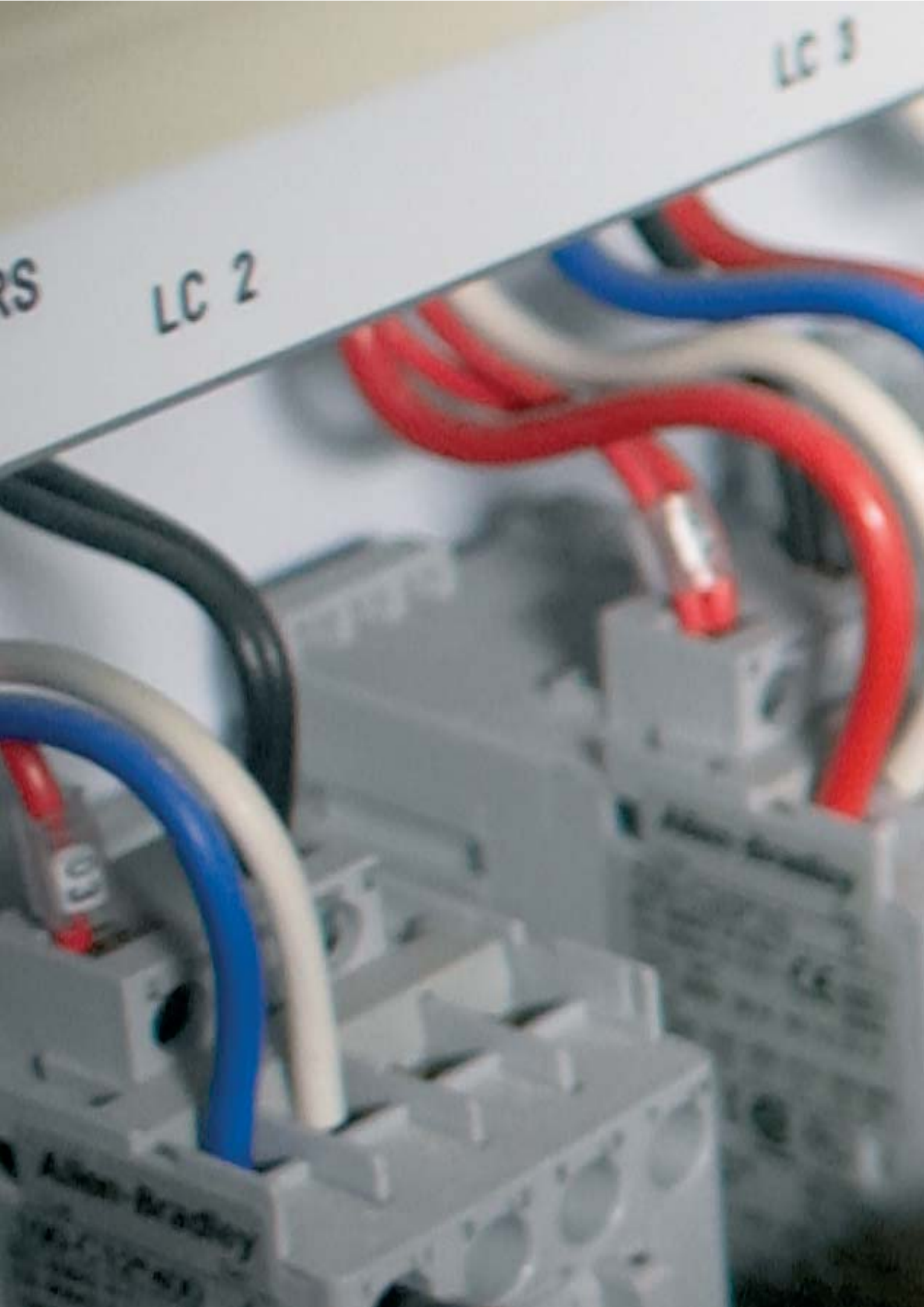
MURRAY WILLIS QSM

Registered and Presiding
Member, Auckland

Murray has many years experience in the electronics and electrical industry. He was trained in New Zealand and overseas, and has held management, board and committee positions in a number of multi-national organisations. Currently Murray is self-employed, specialising in the design and construction of renewable electrical energy generation and telecommunication systems, while operating his own electrical contracting and telecommunications companies.

CONTACT DETAILS

21 Harpoon Hill, R.D.1, Great Barrier Island. Telephone: 09 429 0337. Email: earthenenergy@xtra.co.nz



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ELECTRICAL WORKERS
REGISTRATION BOARD

Safety • Competency

REGISTRAR: JOHN SICKELS

86-90 Lambton Quay, PO Box 10-156, Wellington 6036

Telephone: 04 978 3118 Facsimilie: 04 978 3125, Freephone: 0800 66 1000

Website: www.ewrb.govt.nz Email: info@ewr.med.nz