

ELECTRON

EMPOWERING TODAY'S ELECTRICAL WORKERS

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EDITORS NOTE: *Registrar John Sickel's officially retired on 19 August. Prior to his retirement, John wrote the following message that we would like to share with you.*

Welcome to this, the 84th issue of ELECTRON newsletter and my last as Registrar. It seems like only yesterday when the first issue of the newsletter was published in February 2002.

The Board, at that time, introduced the newsletter as part of its information dissemination strategy to ensure that the electrical industry was kept up to date with changes that were occurring in the industry. I trust the objective has been achieved.

This issue of ELECTRON contains details on the Board's new policy for the granting of alternative registrations to people who are having difficulty passing registration examinations. I would encourage all people who are having such difficulties, and employers, to take advantage of the Board's new policy.

This issue also contains information on Richard Stubbings who will take over the Registrar role for the next 12 months. Many people will remember Richard as a manager in the former Electrical Workers Licensing Group. I wish Richard every success in his new role.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those in the industry who have supported me in the Registrar role. It has been a pleasure working with the industry and I wish you all the very best for the future.



JOHN SICKELS – REGISTRAR

Would you like to receive ELECTRON electronically?

A large number of people now receive ELECTRON electronically. If you would like to receive the newsletter by electronic means please contact the Board on 0800 66 1000 to arrange.

Availability of documents

A reminder to readers that agendas for Board meetings are posted on the Board's website at www.ewrb.govt.nz one week prior to any meeting.

In addition, meeting agendas and minutes are available from the Registrar on request. Discussion papers and complaint hearing decisions that are not subject to Board Publication Orders are also available from the Registrar on request.

If you have any enquiries or comments on this newsletter please phone 0800 66 1000 or email info@ewrb.govt.nz

Essential capabilities for registration

In 2002 the Board introduced Trans-Tasman developed and recognised training capabilities into the requirements for electrician competency based registration. The capabilities are considered to have served their purpose well and in 2010 the Board decided that the capabilities would form an integral part of the Board's new registration classes.

A key aspect of the Board's approach is the opportunity for people to progress through the capabilities without the need to undertake a complete retraining exercise when a person wishes to obtain a different class of registration.

The capabilities were recently reviewed with the assistance of representatives from the Board, Australian State electrical regulators and Industry Training Organisations, Unions and

Employer Groups in both New Zealand and Australia.

The review has resulted in there being 55 core capabilities for the electrician class of registration and of that number 31 are critical. The 31 critical capabilities are included in the subject matter which is examinable in the Board's examinations.

The Board has completed an exercise to show where the capabilities are expected to be included in competency based training programmes for all its registration classes with the exception of electrical inspector, line mechanic and cable joiner. The reasons for the exemptions are that the electrical inspector class of registration is "time" based while line mechanic and cable joiner classes are based on electricity supply industry qualifications.

Full details on the essential capabilities for electrical registration are available for viewing on the Board's website at www.ewrb.govt.nz

Granting alternative classes of registration

From time to time the Board receives applications for Limited Certificates from trainees who have been unable, after several attempts, to pass examinations for the class of electrical registration to which they are aspiring. In the majority of such cases trainees provide excellent supporting work references from employers. The Board has considered the question of trainees being unable to pass all of their examinations and, in order to encourage such people to stay in the industry, the Board has introduced a new "Discretion to grant alternative class of registration" policy.

In summary, the new policy provides for people who have applied for a second or subsequent Limited Certificate to be offered registration in an alternative class of registration as follows;

REGISTRATION CLASS TO WHICH TRAINEE IS ASPIRING	ALTERNATIVE CLASS	REQUIREMENTS FOR ALTERNATIVE CLASS
Electrician	Electrical installer	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Achieve at least 35 marks in an electrician level theoretical examination;2. Pass the electrician level regulations examination;3. Pass the electrician level practical assessment; and4. Have completed, to the satisfaction of the Board, either four years practical experience in the work of an electrician or an electrician competency based training programme which is satisfactory to the Board.
Electrician	Electrical service technician	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pass the electrician level regulations examination;2. Pass the electrician level practical assessment; and3. Have completed, to the satisfaction of the Board, either four years practical training experience in the work of an electrician or an electrician competency based training programme which is satisfactory to the Board.
Electrical installer	Electrical service technician	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pass the electrician level regulations examination;2. Pass the electrician level practical assessment; and3. Have completed two years practical training experience in the work of an electrical installer which is satisfactory to the Board.

New requirement in relation to fit and proper person

Last year the Board introduced rules which required applicants for registration and licensing to attest that they were a fit and proper person.

The Board has carried out a review of the rules and has introduced a new requirement as follows;

"The Board may, in order to assist it in determining whether or not a person is a fit and proper person to be registered and or to hold a practising licence, obtain a criminal record and may require

the applicant to consent to the Board obtaining the same. The Board may take any refusal to consent to the Board obtaining a criminal record into account in determining whether or not an applicant is a fit and proper person."

The new requirement will come into effect on 1 September 2016.

The Fit and Proper Person Rules are available for viewing on the Board's website at www.ewrb.govt.nz

Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016

The following article has been provided by WorkSafe New Zealand.

The Health and Safety at Work (Asbestos) Regulations 2016 came into force on 4 April 2016.

The new regulations help to protect workers from asbestos exposure – which is good news for the construction industry as construction workers currently make up three-quarters of those with asbestos-related diseases.

The new regulations introduce a number of changes, including the introduction of a new asbestos removal licensing system.

Handy hints sheets relating to the new regulations have been developed and these are designed for busy tradespeople who need easy practical ways of keeping themselves safe from asbestos containing material at work. You can also find these on the WorkSafe website, www.business.govt.nz/worksafe/asbestos

Key points about the new asbestos regulations:

- Most asbestos removal will require an asbestos removal licence from 4 April 2016.
- This may include some currently unlicensed asbestos removal (often carried out by builders, plumbers, roofers and other tradespeople).
- Specifically, a license will be required to:
- remove any amount of friable (non-bonded) asbestos or asbestos-containing material or
- more than 10 square metres (over the course of a job) of non-friable (bonded) asbestos or asbestos-containing material.
- If a business thinks they may need one of the new removal licences they should register through the WorkSafe website to ensure they receive the latest information. See 'Asbestos' on the WorkSafe website.
- The new licences will have training requirements of a higher standard than currently stipulated in existing regulations.
- There are transition periods to enable businesses to apply for and gain a new licence.
- The new licensing scheme will replace the current Certificate of Competence, but transition arrangements mean holders of this certificate can continue working after 4 April 2016 (criteria apply).

Board Presiding and Deputy Presiding Members

At the Board's July 2016 meeting Neil McLeod stepped down as Presiding Member of the Board.

Following Neil's decision, the Board elected Shane Dolan and Mel Orange to the positions of Presiding and Deputy Presiding Members respectively.



Details of all Board Members are available for viewing on the Board's website at www.ewrb.govt.nz

Registrar John Sickels retires

After 27 years as Registrar of Electrical Workers, John Sickels hung up his hat and retired on 19 August.

John had a long career in the electrical industry. After working in Dunedin he started government service at the Southland Electric Power Supply/ NZ Electricity Department in the early 1970's, and later the NZED brought him to Wellington, where he started working with the Board. He spent a few years in the Regulation section. John was then appointed to the Registrar position in 1989 and he never looked back.

Ever the humble man, though, John shrugged off the outstanding length of time he served in the role.

"I always enjoyed the job and working with the industry was really, really good," he said.

"The opportunities with the Ministry were amazing as well. My wife often joked... 'you must have a real short CV' but really, I'm one of those people whose job was their hobby."

John saw a lot of change over the years, both in the industry and in the government agencies he worked for. There are a few significant achievements that stand out for him, though.

"Online licensing has been huge," he said. "It was a Ministry of Economic Development initiative way back, and the first year it was brought in very, very few electrical workers used it. Now the vast majority of electrical workers renew online, and the system has significantly improved."

"The EWRB was also the first to negotiate with Standards NZ to make Standards available for free online for all electrical workers, making it much easier to access them," said John.

"And from an industry point of view, since 1990 there's been some huge changes, and the industry has done well in working hard to make the changes work. In areas such as competency based training and self-certification the changes have been incredible to see and is a real credit to the industry."

And after so many years in the industry, what are his plans now?

"I think I'll just relax for a while," he said. "Keep watching the footy, continue my involvement with junior rugby, travel with my wife and just see what transpires."

Richard Stublings steps into Registrar role

With the former Registrar of Electrical Workers, John Sickels, now retired, Richard Stublings has been seconded to the Registrar role for the next 12 months.

Richard joins the scheme from the Corporate, Governance and Information Group at MBIE, where he has been responsible for board appointments for other occupational licencing schemes, as well as monitoring the performance of these boards.

"The work I've been doing in my previous role has allowed me

to get to know many of the Board members of the Electrical Workers Board and other occupational licensing schemes, such as the Plumbers, Gasfitters & Drainlayers Board, and the NZ Registered Architects Board," Richard says.

"Having this working knowledge of other schemes will hopefully help me while I'm undertaking the Registrar role."

Richard also has a strong knowledge of the electrical workers scheme, as he worked as a manager for the Licensing Group from 2006-2012, where he filled in as Registrar from time to time when John Sickels was away.

Prior to that, Richard spent over 20 years working with different Government regulators, including Births, Marriages and Deaths; the Intellectual Property Office of New Zealand; and Gaming & Censorship.

Richard said he's looking forward to the challenges offered by the Registrar role.

"I really enjoy operational regulatory work," he says.

"Being able to work in an area I enjoy, and having the opportunity to renew some of the old relationships I had will be great."

Audit update

The Electrical Workers Registration Board (EWRB) sought a national supplier to initiate the design and implementation of a pilot electrical workers audit programme. The expected outcome being an appropriate and effective audit programme that met the requirements set out in the EWRB Audit Framework which has been established to increase the safety , competency and compliance of Electrical Workers and the prescribed electrical work (PEW) they carry out. The audit pilot programme was a continuation of the work done earlier by the Electrical Worker Registration Board ("the Board") as part of its overall strategic plan.

Two Providers, Delta Utility Services ("Delta") and Telarc SAI Ltd ("Telarc") were engaged to complete audits in the Dunedin and Auckland regions respectively. At the end of the trial period 229 audits had been completed between the two Providers.

Generally, once the Auditor and Auditee got together, the process was conducted in a positive manner. The term 'Audit' can unfortunately attract negative connotations and as a result it created unnecessary scepticism and apprehension from Electrical Workers with some declining to be part of the pilot audit programme. For the majority who took part, any feeling of unease was quashed once the Auditors got to site and began conducting the audit. Once the relationship was established, the majority of the audits were completed in a mutually cooperative environment.

Overall, a brief review of the results showed a high level of competence and either a good or strong understanding of Regulations and Standards. The majority of Electrical Workers also had a good handle of the documentation they needed to complete while doing their work. The ability to test was good

and most understood how to test and why they tested. There were some aspects that will need to be addressed including the quality and readability of COCs and ESCs as the standard of these documents varied quite markedly. Whilst some CoC's were computer generated and contained all of the required information, others were extremely hard to read and contained a very limited amount of the required information. The description of the works undertaken was also sometimes very vague and could be improved on. Noticeably, other than for the Auditees in the High Voltage or distribution industry, there was a significantly small amount of other training and upskilling taking place. A high number of Auditee's commented that there was no training available.

Overall, the results have provided a good source of information and will assist in informing how the future audit programme can be shaped. They will also help the EWRB with the current development of the Workers Toolbox and the redesign of the Competency Training Programme.

The EWRB passes it thanks onto Telarc and Delta for the invaluable contribution they both made to the development of the pilot audit programme. Thanks are also passed onto those Electrical Workers who took time to be part of the pilot.

Ongoing work is now being done to roll out the audit programme and you will be kept informed through Electron as the work progresses with more detail to be released.