



ELECTRICAL WORKERS  
REGISTRATION BOARD

*Safety • Competency*

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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

Each year the Electrical Workers Registration Board tasks itself with objectives, endeavoring to improve both the services and information to practitioners and the public of New Zealand.

The Board is always mindful of its responsibility to ensure the ongoing competency and safety of all registered electrical workers, and the safety surrounding the use of electricity.

Achievements this year have been:

- Standards on line
- Electricians level teaching guidelines and examinations
- The Board's refresher course
- Energy safety review bill
- Dissemination of information
- Auditing of electrical workers
- Department of Building and Housing



## Standards on Line

After considerable technical difficulties, the Board's objective of having electrical standards available on line was finally achieved and most electrical standards can now be accessed and downloaded from the Board's web-site.

The primary purpose for this Board initiative was to make available standards used in our industry, to reduce the cost of compliance, and provide added value to practitioners for their practice licence fee. It is hoped that this move will also be of considerable financial assistance to our industry trainees.

The Standards are available to all electrical workers who hold a current practicing licence, and to trainees, who can now access this information by using their personal web-site access key code. The key code is provided to practitioners at the time of re-licencing, and in the case of trainees, their access key code can be obtained by telephoning the EWLG on the Board's free phone 0800 66 1000.

## Electricians level teaching guidelines and examinations

During the year, the Board approved the release of the amended electricians teaching guidelines for examinations. This document was compiled by the Electrical Workers Licensing Group for the Board and encompasses Board and industry feedback concerning examination pass rates and trainee competence.

While the Board constantly receives comment about examination pass rates and the difficulty of the various Board cap-stoning examinations, the comments are varied; some industry groups claiming the examinations are too difficult while other sections of the industry comment that the exams are not difficult enough.

The Board's Chief Examiner regularly reports each examination result to the Board via the Registrar.

The Board closely monitors the outcome of each examination round for each of the various licence classes and comments back to the Electrical Workers Licensing Group.

It is rare to see an out of character examination pass result, with the pass rate across the spectrum averaging around 70%. The examination papers are moderated by the industry and the Chief Examiner and the Board reject any attempts to "dumb down" the quality and content of the examination process.

The Board values the excellent working relationship and memorandum of understanding that it has with our industry training body, the Electrotechnology Industry Training Organisation (ETITO). The ETITO continues to ensure excellent levels of competency training and is a major and integral component of our industry.

The Board acknowledges the ongoing commitment of the ETITO Chief Executive, Marilyn Brady, and her team.

## Refresher Courses

This year has finally seen the Board implement its own practicing licence refresher course as a pre-requisite for the issuing of practicing licences. The course, developed by the Board and the Electrical Workers Licensing Group, has been made available to service providers who have registered their interest in presenting the Boards' course.

Feedback from course providers and practitioners has been very positive to date.

The Board has also set up a system of auditing of course providers to enable the quality of presentation to be maintained.

At this stage the course is oriented towards electricians and electrical inspectors; however other licence holders can attend the course to enable them to renew their practicing licence.

The Board intends to produce similar courses for electrical service technicians and line mechanics.

For those practitioners requiring a SiteSafe passport, the Board continues to support the "SiteSafe Electrical Passport" course developed by the Electrical Training Company together with SiteSafe, which has been approved by the Board.

However, to date, less than 13% of all license-holders have

## Energy Safety Review Bill

In August 2005 the Board made a written submission to the Select Committee considering the Energy Safety Review Bill, followed by a verbal submission in February 2006. It appears that most, if not all, of the Board submissions were included in the revisions to the Bill.

One issue that concerned both the Board and its stakeholders was the proposed abolition of registration in favour of licencing only. The Select Committee recommendation for maintaining the status quo clearly illustrated the acceptance of both the Board and industry concerns.

The proposed improvements to the disciplinary process are welcomed, particularly the ability to issue "infringement notices" for lesser disciplinary breaches, such as failing to have a current practice licence.

The Board, together with industry, has had concern for the stress placed on practitioners awaiting a Board hearing for a complaint, especially one of a minor nature.

The further progress of the Bill will be of significant interest to all registered persons.

## Board dissemination of information

ELECTRON newsletter continues to be the Board's primary vehicle for the dissemination of information. This regular publication gives practitioners an insight into Board, Electrical Workers Licensing Group and Energy Safety Service activities, coupled with regular information on the outcomes of the Board disciplinary hearings.

Regular summaries of electrical accidents are reported, which unfortunately still show an unsatisfactory level of accidents involving trainees.

Judging from industry comment, it is apparent that the ELECTRON newsletter is being read and absorbed and that

both the Board and Ministry of Economic Development messages are being heard and noted.

The Frequently Asked Questions and complaints outcomes are favorites, along with interpretations of the regulations and other such material of interest.



## Auditing of electrical workers

The Board continued with its statutory requirement for the ongoing audit of electrical workers.

Along with a substantial telephone audit of those practitioners who did not pick up a practicing licence, contracts were let for independent audits of a large number of electrical workers.

While many of these physical audits are based on the Certificate of Compliance regime, a group which is generally found to be mostly compliant, the Board is currently considering a method

for the audit of electrical workers who do not subscribe to the self-certifying system.

The consequence of this latter audit could have serious outcomes for those found flaunting the Certificate of Compliance system, which the Board considers to be a fundamental component in the public assurance that prescribed electrical work has been carried out by a competent licenced electrical worker and is electrically safe.

## Department of Building and Housing

2006 is the final year of the Electrical Workers Licensing Group being part of the Ministry of Economic Development and from September 1st it will move to the Department of Building and Housing.

To date, the preparations have gone well for a “seamless” shift to the new Department and the long-term prospects for both the Board and the Electrical Workers Licensing Group look promising.

One of the most gratifying developments of the new Department is the proposed licencing system for builders, which has been modeled on the existing electrical licencing regime.

In recent years our system has become more sophisticated, considerably easing the annual re-licencing process.

Online re-licencing has steadily increased and now totals over 30% of all re-licencing.

The Board looks forward to a continuation of the excellent service it has received from the Electrical Workers Licensing Group during the past years, and trusts that the Board and its 38,000 stake holders, the electrical practitioners, together with the public of New Zealand, will enjoy this level of service in the future.

## Disciplinary Hearings

This year has seen a continuation of the large number of disciplinary hearings by the Board.

In prior reports I have commented on the number of hearings that arise from what are initially commercial complaints. While the Board has no jurisdiction in any commercial matters involving practitioners it is apparent that many complainants attempt to use the disciplinary process as a means of resolving commercial disputes.

During the year there were a number of hearings that involved transpositions by line mechanics, electricians and electrical inspectors.

All transpositions resulted in damage to appliances and some also resulted in electric shock.

All of these transpositions could have been avoided had the practitioners simply tested their work.

The Board takes seriously any incident involving electric shock, especially those incidents involving trainees.

This year has also seen a number of electrical service technicians disciplined for working outside the limits of their registration.

These cases have mostly involved workers in the air conditioning industry and have all been part of domestic installations.

The failure to test, failure to issue a Certificate of Compliance, and failure to have a current Practicing Licence continue to be major disciplinary areas, and are being addressed in the Board's new safety refresher courses now in place.

## Membership of the Board

The Board membership saw considerable change during the year with the loss of three long serving members: Tim Elms, Barrie Mason and Dennis Amiss.

Tim Elms, who often referred to himself as just a “simple sparkie” was far from that, and had a broad background in the industry, having operated his own electrical contracting company in Christchurch for many years before joining the Board.

Lay member Barrie Mason completed his second term on the Board. Barrie brought to the Board many skills gained from his years in management and as a Justice of the Peace.

The death of Dennis Amiss in June was a very sad occasion for the Board. Dennis had recently been appointed for a second term and had given excellent service and representation to the electronic service sector of our industry. His skills and wide industry knowledge will be greatly missed.

New appointments to the Board include registered member Sam Ponga and lay member Bernardine Hannan.

## Board Acknowledgement

As presiding member, I have enjoyed serving all of our stakeholders. I have enjoyed working with the Board and value the wide range of skills and experience that your current Board has to offer.

For me personally it has been an interesting but challenging year,

I hold the view that your Board has both the experience and the capability to enhance the future years of our ever-evolving industry.

I would wish to again express the Board’s appreciation of the continuing excellent support it has received these past years from the Ministry of Economic Development and the Electrical Workers Licensing Group team.

I am confident that the Board will continue to experience the same level of excellent service as the Electrical Workers Licensing Group moves into its new home in the Department of Building and Housing.

The Board again notes its appreciation of the ongoing quality support and service provided by Board Secretary Janine Anderson.

Sam Ponga is a registered electrical inspector, skills assessor and security consultant from New Plymouth, with many years of experience in the electrical contracting area of our industry as well as extensive involvement with the electrical training sector.

Bernardine Hannan is from Auckland and has been a sitting member of the Complaints Assessment Committee since 2003. Bernardine is a Disputes Tribunal referee and does private mediation and facilitation work, mainly in the resource management consultation area. Bernardine was a tutor in criminal law at Auckland University and a staff solicitor with Auckland Crown Solicitors, Meredith Connell.

The other Board members, registered member and Deputy Presiding member Don Pryde, together with registered member Tom Leong and lay member Deborah Rundle, continue to serve the Board well.

Finally the Board acknowledges the paramount efforts of the Registrar, John Sickels, in not only carrying out his usual functions as Registrar and Group Manager, but also in overseeing the seamless shift to the new department.

Murray Willis QSM  
Presiding Member.



Murray Willis QSM

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

Presiding Member

# Registrar's Review

## Strategic Plan

The Board's vision to achieve "Electrical Safety for all New Zealanders through the ongoing competency of electrical workers" continues to be the focus of the Board's operations.

In line with one of the Board's Strategic Goals good progress continues to be made in the setting of competency standards which achieve maximum public and worker safety for least impediment to the industry. The roles played by the Electrotechnology and Electricity Supply Training Organisations in this area is acknowledged.

There has also been considerable progress with Board Strategic Goal relating to the Board focusing on its role as industry

regulator. The processing time for the handling of complaints lodged against registered electrical workers continues to be reduced.

Very good progress has been made on the transition of the Board's operations to the Department of Building and Housing and it is fully anticipated that the transition will be completed by the date of 1 September 2006 which was set by Cabinet. It is also fully anticipated that the transition will be seamless and that when completed will be another step in providing improved and integrated services to the building and housing sector.

## The Board

During the year the Board meet on twenty seven days and held six telephone conference calls. As previously reported a considerable amount of Board time is attributed to the hearing of complaints that have been lodged against registered electrical

workers. Fundamentally all telephone conference calls are used for processing matters the Board is required to address in the complaint hearing process.

## Dissemination of Information

In conjunction with six electricity retailers the Board carried out a publicity programme which resulted in excess of 1.4 million households throughout the country receiving an electrical compliance brochure.

The brochure was designed to continue the Board's message to the public about the need to employ electrical workers who issue either Certificates of Compliance or the voluntary Electrical Safety Certificates for prescribed electrical work carried out.

The publicity programme was considered a success and the support of Contact Energy Limited, Energy On Line Limited, Genesis Energy Limited and Trustpower Limited in delivering

the brochure is acknowledged as is the support received from Mercury Energy Limited and Meridian Energy Limited in carrying the key messages of the brochure in their newsletters.

During the year an on line "bookshop" service was introduced and electrical workers can now use this service to order bookshop items on the internet.

Items available from the "bookshop" are Certificates of Compliance, Electrical Safety Certificates, Certificates of Verification, Warrants of Electrical Fitness, practicing licence refresher training cards and Electrical Codes of Practice.



## Teaching Guidelines

Electrician guidelines for the electrician category of registration were finalised during the year and these have now been issued to all training providers.

Work was commenced on producing draft teaching guidelines for the electrical service technician level "A" and "B" categories of registration.

It is intended to also produce teaching guidelines for line mechanics in the forthcoming year.

## Examinations

The Board conducted a full round of examinations during November 2005 with in excess of one thousand nine hundred candidates attempting the examinations and a pass through rate of 72% being achieved.

Examination rounds were also held during September 2005 and May 2006 with three hundred and eighty seven candidates and two hundred and eighty five candidates attempting the examinations respectively. Pass through rates of 89% and 90% were achieved for the respective examinations.

The Board considered reports on all examinations and the reports were made available to all known training providers and placed on the Board's website.

## Code of Practice for the Supervision of Trainee Electricians

The Board continued to consider electrical accident reports relating to trainees and the Board advised the Ministry of Economic Development that it supported the concept of a Code of Practice for the Supervision of Trainee Electricians.

The Board believes the number of trainees involved in electrical accidents is too high and that a Code of Practice would only enhance the safety of trainees.



**John Sickels**

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	Actual 2004/2005 \$000's	Actual 2005/2006 \$000's	Estimates 2006/2007 \$000's
<b>INCOME</b>				
Practicing Licences	1,708	1,646	1,967	1,975
Examination and Registration Fees	353	400	555	575
Sale of Publications	22	19	26	25
Certificates of Compliance	1,004	1,142	1,290	1,300
Miscellaneous Revenue	33	71	74	70
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3,120</b>	<b>3,278</b>	<b>3,912</b>	<b>3,945</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
Personnel	415	549	439	441
Operating	1,675	1,878	1,990	2,221
Depreciation	32	31	113	-
Capital charge	9	6	20	-
Support services	629	474	680	640
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>2,760</b>	<b>3,044</b>	<b>3,242</b>	<b>3,302</b>
<b>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</b>				
Opening balance	530	890	1,124	1,795
Add surplus (deficit)	360	234	671	643
<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>1,124</b>	<b>1,795</b>	<b>2,438</b>

## Notes:-

1. Revenue for the year was \$634,000 up on that received for the previous year and that increase can be attributed to an increase in the sales of Certificates of Compliance (\$148,000) Practicing Licences (\$321,000) and Registration and Examination Fees (\$155,000).
2. The Board collected \$63,088 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.
3. 2006/07 \$640,000 estimate for support services includes depreciation and capital change.



# Statistics

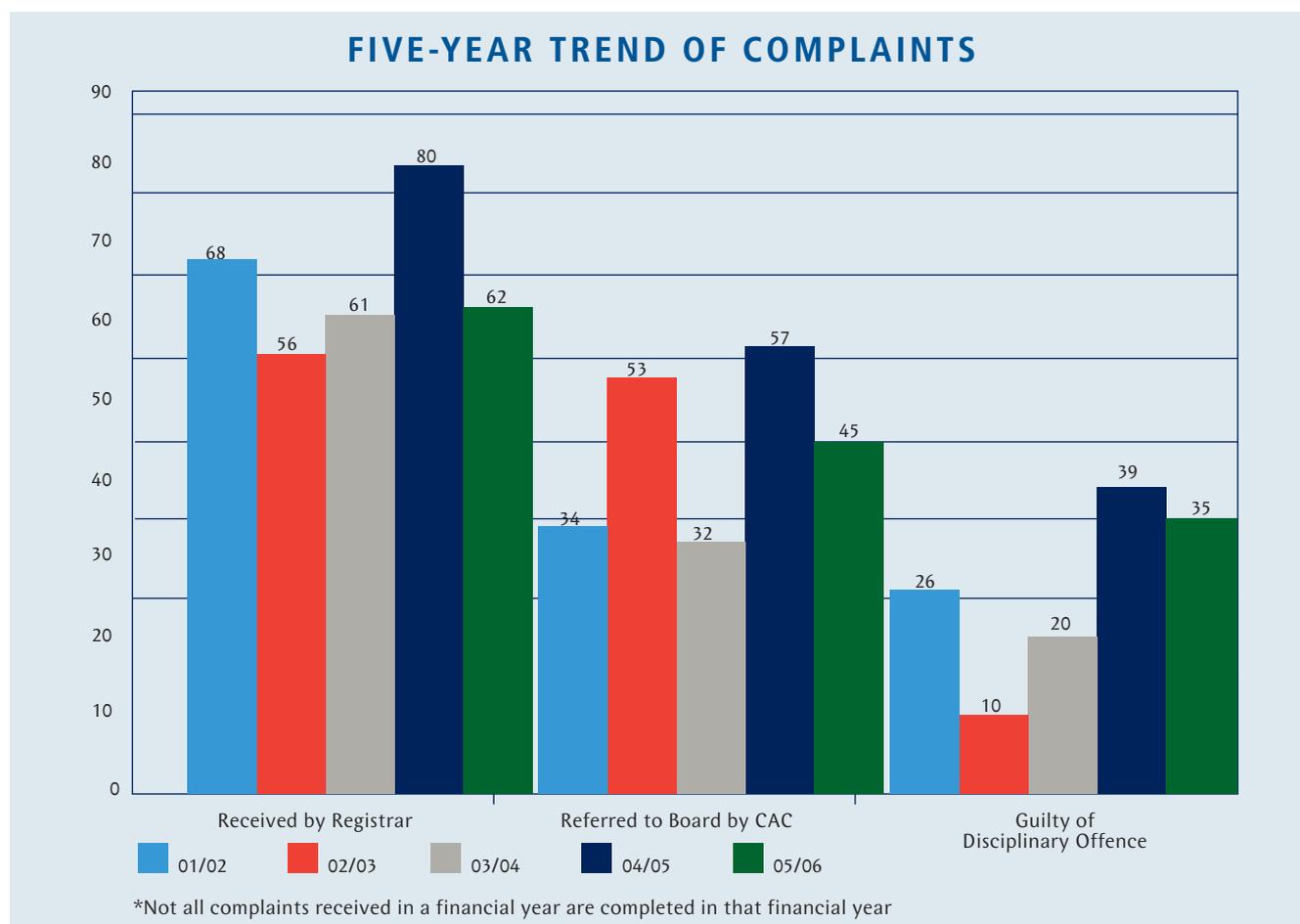
Registrations in all four categories have increased giving a total number of 38,333 people recorded as registered under the provisions of the Electricity Act 1992.

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

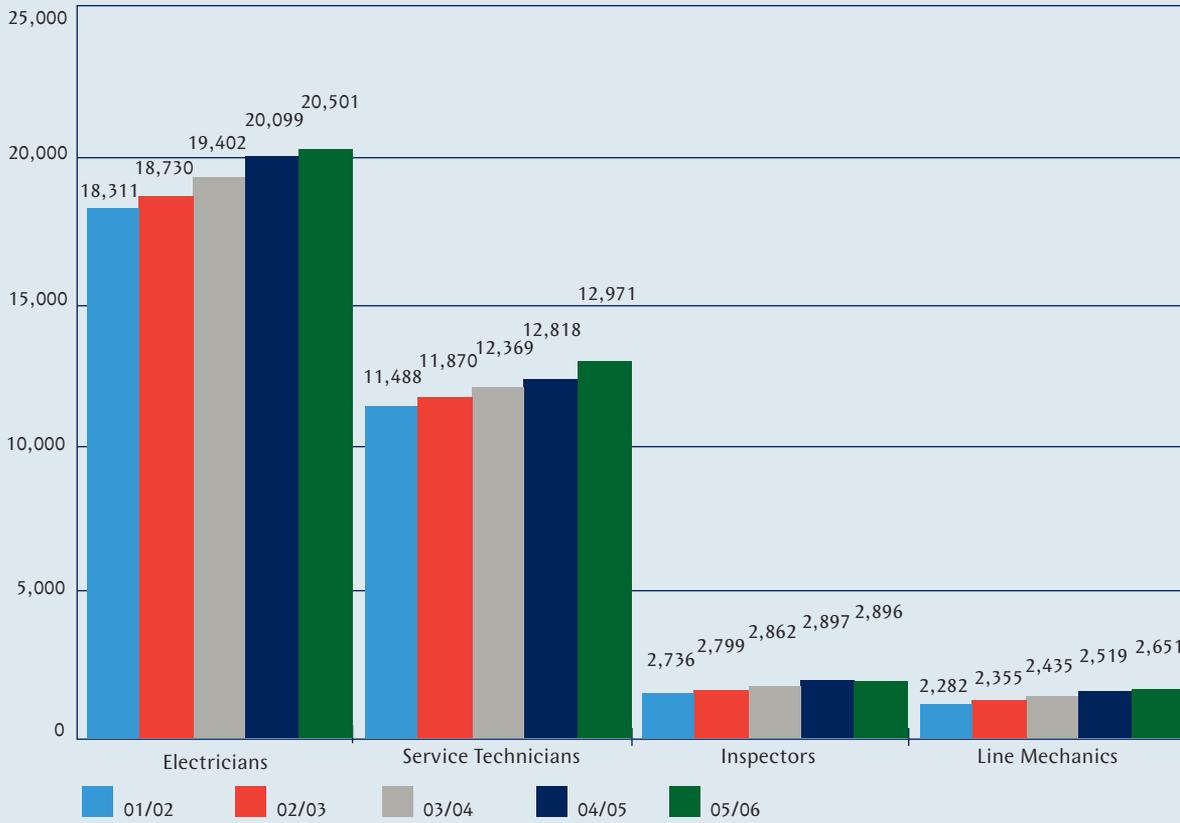
There were a total of 1,265 new full registrations issued during the year and 284 provisional licence registrations. The upturn in the number of provisional licences issued is due to the implementation of the Board's new criteria for overseas trained electrical workers.

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

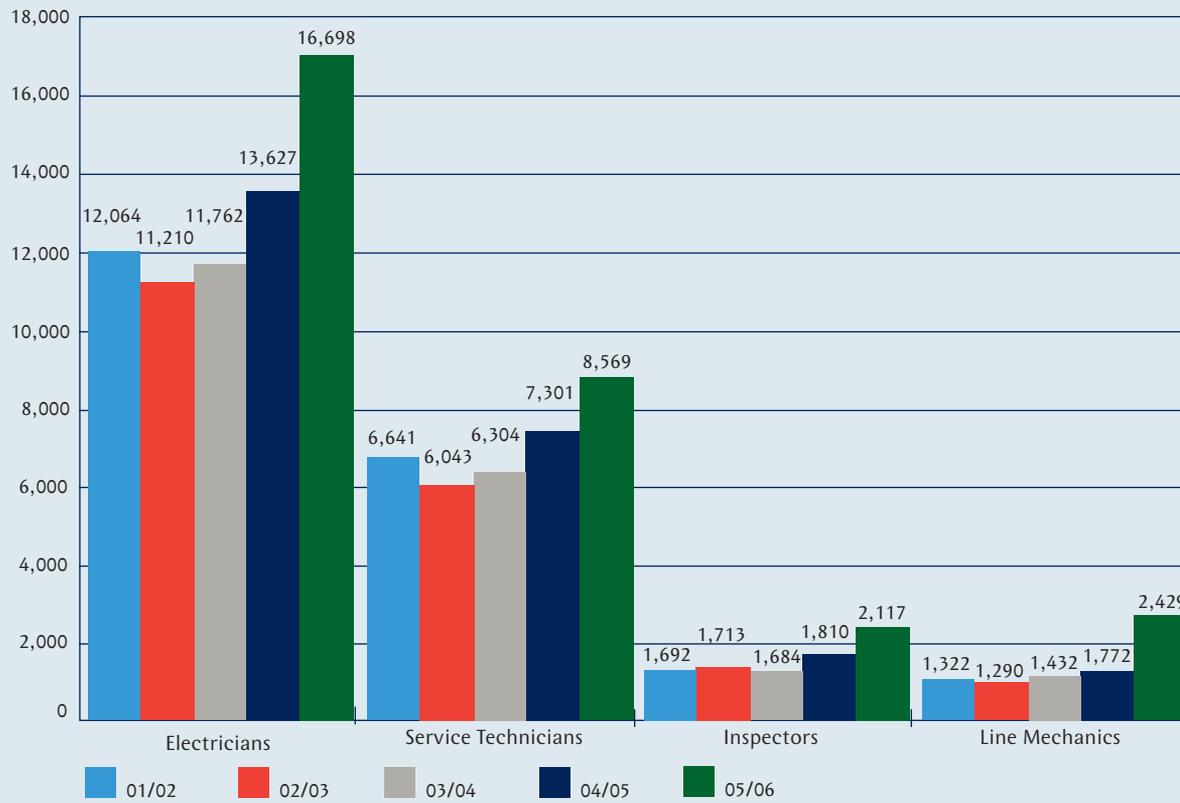
A total of 3,683 people entered Board examinations during the year and of that total 2,551 (69%) were successful with their examinations.



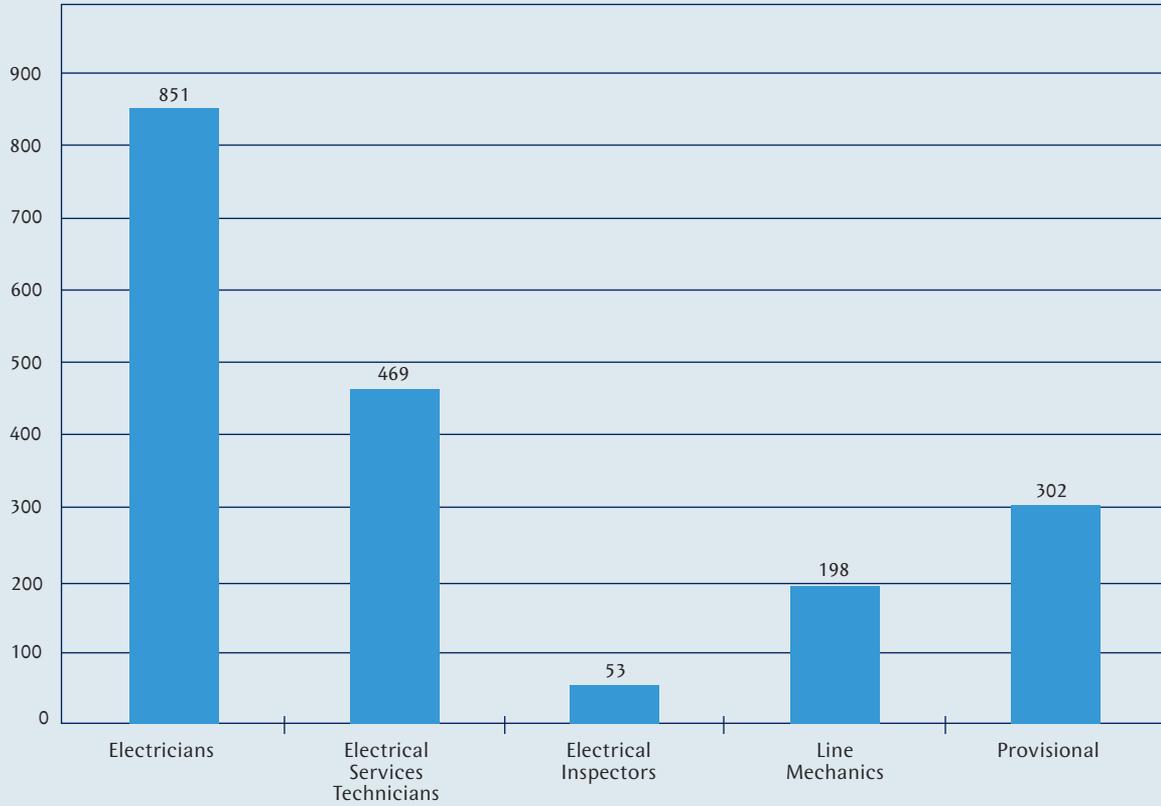
### FIVE-YEAR TREND OF REGISTRATIONS



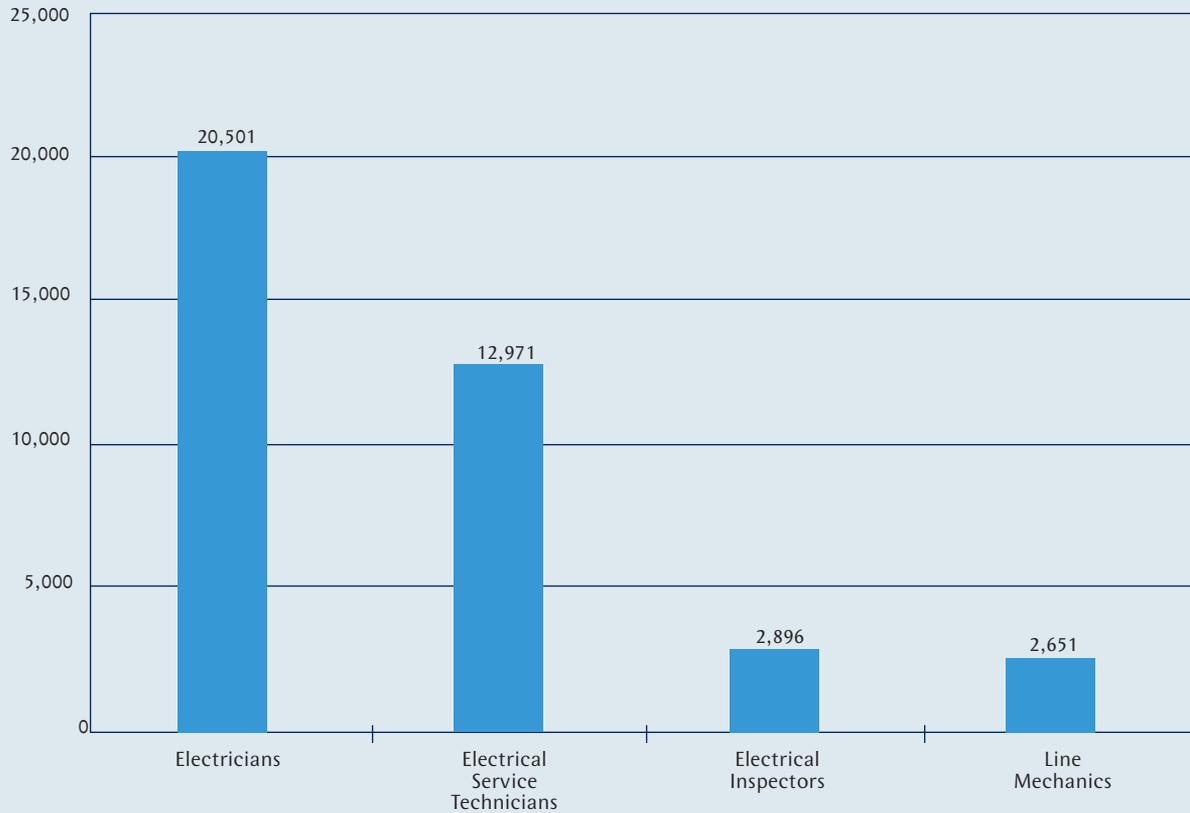
### FIVE-YEAR TREND OF PRACTISING LICENCES ISSUED



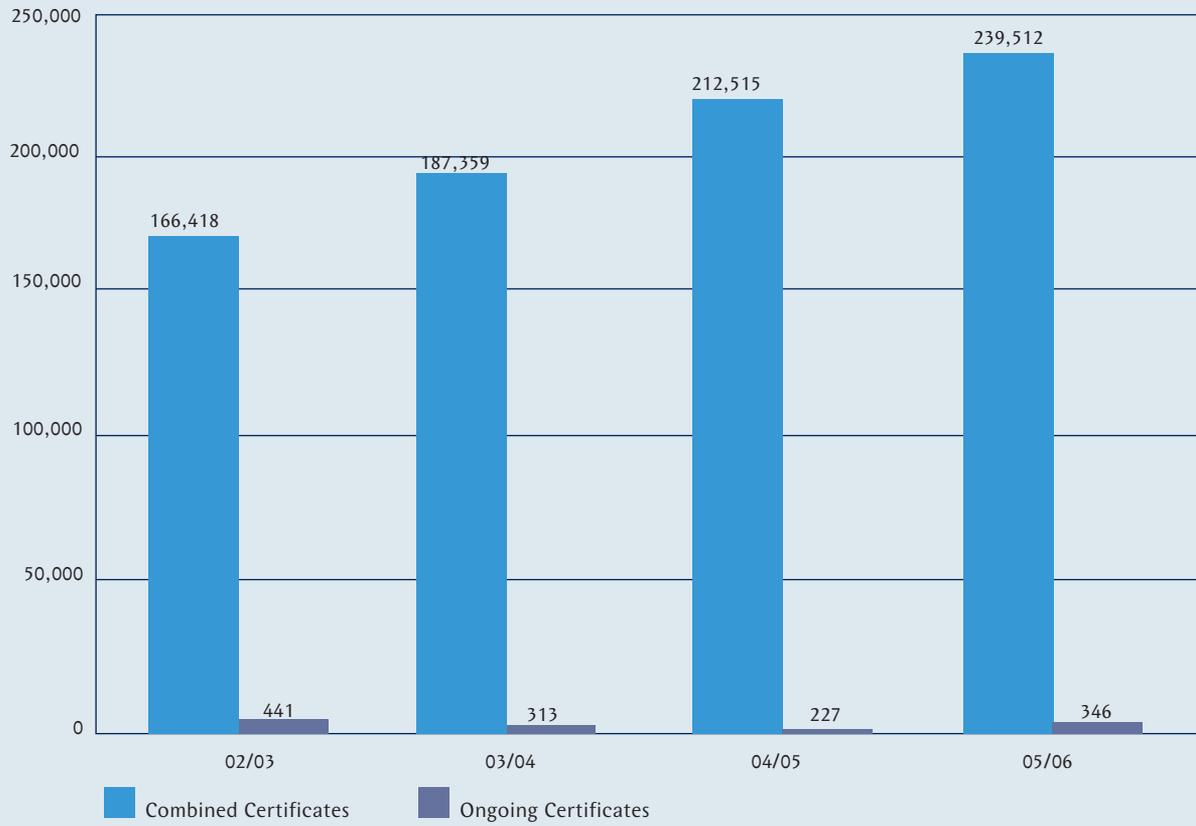
### NUMBER OF NEW REGISTRATIONS JULY 2005 – JUNE 2006



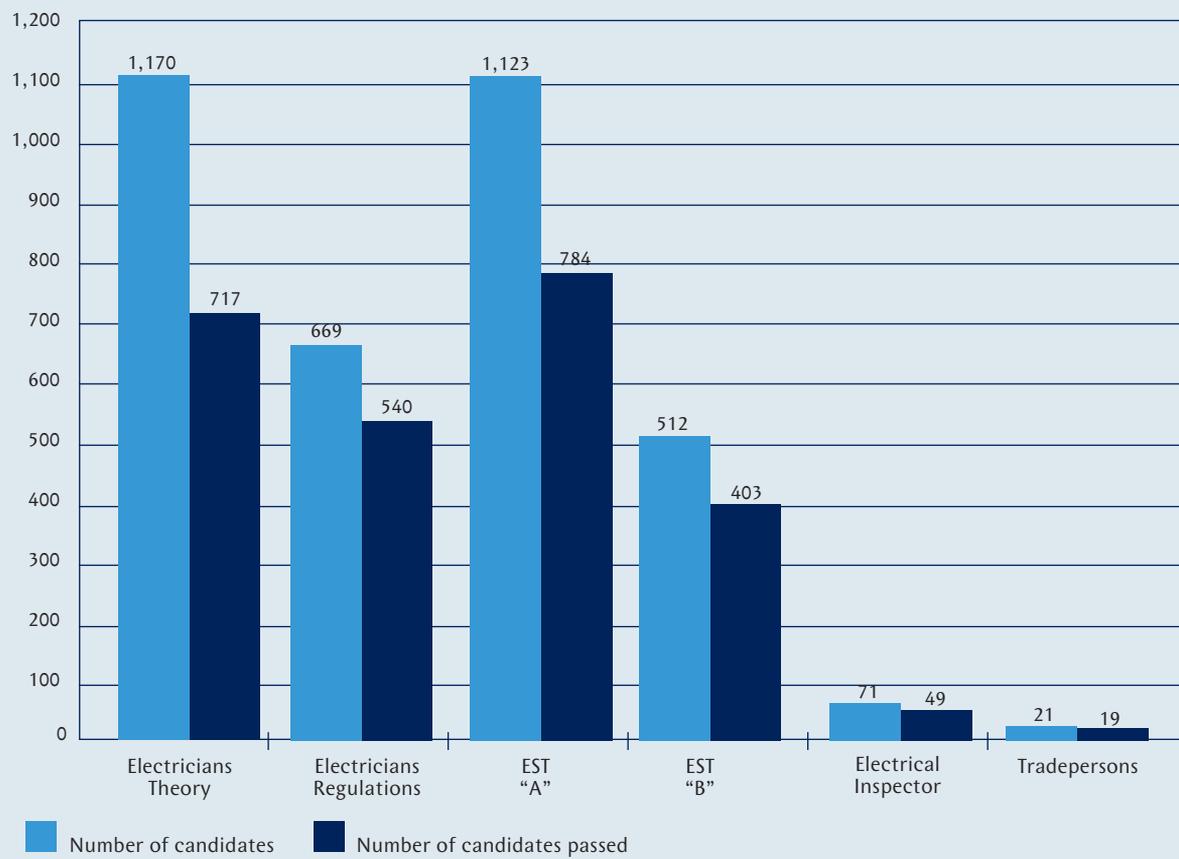
### NUMBER OF REGISTRATIONS IN EACH CATEGORY AS AT 30 JUNE 2006



## CERTIFICATES OF COMPLIANCE SALES THREE YEAR TREND



## EXAMINATIONS





- John Sickels 1
- Tom Leong 2
- Bernardine Hannan 3
- Murray Willis 4
- Dennis Amiss 5
- Sam Ponga 6
- Don Pryde 7
- Deborah Rundle 8

# Board Members



**DENNIS AMISS**  
Registered Member,  
Auckland

It was with regret that the Board recorded Dennis' passing on 16 June 2006. Dennis had been actively involved in the industry over many years and was particularly interested in the electrical servicing sector of the industry.



**SAM PONGA**  
Registered Member,  
New Plymouth

Sam is a registered Electrical Inspector, Skills Assessor and Security Consultant from New Plymouth. Sam has worked as an electrical contractor, electrical maintenance supervisor, control systems planner and technician, acting electrical maintenance supervisor and electrical fitter, an electrician and an electrical apprentice in Taranaki.



**TOM LEONG**

Registered Member,  
Auckland

Tom is a Chartered professional engineer of NZ and UK and a registered Electrical Inspector with many years experience in the electrical supply industry. He has extensive knowledge of electrical legislation and industry training. Tom has worked with Standards New Zealand and the Electricity Engineers 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



**BERNARDINE HANNAN**

Lay Member, Auckland

Bernardine is from Auckland and has been a sitting member of the Complaints Assessment Committee since 2003. Bernardine is a Disputes Tribunal Referee and does private mediation and facilitation work, mainly in the resource management consultation area. Bernardine was a tutor in criminal law at Auckland University and a staff solicitor with Auckland Crown Solicitors, Meredith Connell.



**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**

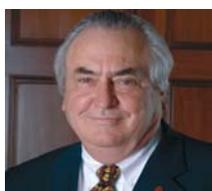
Telephone: 0274 341 595



**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**

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