

# FIRE PROTECTION LICENSING NEEDED TO KEEP THE COMMUNITY OF WA SAFE



GOVERNMENT'S D-RIS GETS A D  
FROM INDUSTRY



ASBESTOS – A REAL AND PRESENT DANGER

**STOP SCOTT MORRISON'S  
ANTI-UNION LAWS**



UNION INTEGRITY BILL REFUSES TO DIE

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SUMMER EDITION  
2019/20

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## PLUMBING AND PIPE TRADES EMPLOYEES UNION WESTERN AUSTRALIA BRANCH

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*A message from your President...*

## 2019 A YEAR OF ELECTIONS

**Andy Power** | PPTEU WA President

There has been much analysis of this year's Federal Election, which, if the Murdoch Media outlets are to be believed, resulted in a resounding defeat of epic proportions! That it was an upset there's no doubt, though not quite the "Ruddslide" of 2007. None more surprised than Scott Morrison and the LNP caucus!

The fact that the entire LNP ministerial group were decidedly low key, conceding the field to the accidental Leader to play a decidedly similar tactic as Kevin Rudd did to John Howard in the 07 election. The recipient of this ploy being one of the architects behind the Rudd - Gillard - Rudd roller coaster is perhaps just "a bittersweet irony!"

After the May shock result, we have a returned, but discredited Government who didn't expect to be there and all the lemons they had planted is now theirs to deal with. The overall swings didn't occur and in WA particularly, the electorate was particularly cynical of the Shorten Team and personalities certainly played a role - as is acknowledged by the recently released ALP Review. In financial terms, in WA, the

return of the LNP Federal Government was more of the same - as the LNP had already, just prior to the election, caved in on the GST distribution in some of the pre elections more blatant pork barrelling.

**WA was in the hands of a Labor Government with a healthy margin, Federal Government was the opposite (technically) just how WA constituents like it. After the Federal Government Circus, much of which happened "over-east", WA residents returned to their own lives and issues. Some of these are canvassed else-where in this journal, as well as our website and fb page.**

One issue, of direct importance to members of this union is that the Branch has held an election for the first time in a number of years. Often no-one puts up their hand, let alone challenge for a position. Contested elections are good for any democratic institution, without which organisations can very quickly become cliques or worse.

My predecessor, Gerry Macdonald, who had given 4 years following Seamus and the re-badging of the Branch (2011) had decided not to re-contest for the Presidency, therefore

Brian and elements of the BCOM decided on a ticket and contested all positions declared vacant.

Brian was elected unopposed, whilst the President's position and 6 BCOM positions were contested and an election was called.

*The results are as follows;*

### **President**

Andy Power

### **BCOM**

James Daly  
Laurence Mullins  
Paul Newton  
John Davies  
Thomas Hardie  
Andrew Denison

I sit on the Plumbing Industry Reference Group (PIRG) which advises the Plumbers Licensing Board on Industry specific matters. As many members would be aware, the so-called Gig Economy is having a detrimental effect on plumbing standards. We have always had to contend with the home handyman or DIYer, remember the ads posted on Community Notice Boards? Not surprisingly they've gone digital like everything else. HiPages, Airtasker, Bulletin Board, Realty Gurus and other job leads boards undermine the standards and quality of plumbing works, whilst



# President's Report Continued

eroding community confidence.

Couple that with a Regulator that sees their role as policing Plumbers rather than the Industry and you have a perfect storm scenario. Figures obtained by the Union show that the PLB audits approximately only 2% of new works, no renovations or maintenance audits are undertaken, whilst there are just 11 Inspectors compared to their predecessors, the Water Authority, which had 67 inspectors regulating across the whole of WA.

Since the devolution from the Water Authority of WA (WAWA) 1997 - 2004, the PLB has not prosecuted one non-plumber, in fact they argue that they're constrained from doing so. Since the establishment of the PLB under-resourcing has been a problem. WAWA Inspectors were funded through the Authorities Infra-structure Accounting, which did not allocate those resources to the new Inspectorate. The proposed In-come Streams were woefully inadequate, yet despite this, nothing has been done to rectify the issue. The latest CRIS - Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement Plumbing Review (a regular triennial process that hasn't occurred for 12 years!) has been held up for a plethora of reasons.

Not least, Government disinclination to deal with the problems created by Government Policy. The PIRG Members have been advised that the funding issue is still a problem with the Department housing the PLB, and the PLB's role crosses several Ministries, Agencies and Jurisdictions. To "unpack" that, the Minister of Water doesn't

want to lose those resources that used to fund the WAWA Inspectors, the Premier doesn't want to impose a surcharge or fee onto households Water Bills to fund a well-regulated Plumbing Industry, and the Minister for Local Authorities is concerned about implications to Local and Regional Authorities, many of who have their own Building Inspectors that include Plumbing & Drainage. The Minister for the PLB has a heavy workload as he is also the State Attorney General. Whilst the Health Minister, the Responsible Person in the event of a public health crisis - such as a SARS like cross contamination outbreak - was blithely unaware of any Plumbing Industry "Crisis" until informed by the Union and subsequently, the MPA WA.

The PLB has embarked on a recruitment drive to increase the numbers of Inspectors, but with a continued focus on plumbers licensed with the Board, and numbers way behind what's required, Plumbers will know its situation "no change" with regards to tackling the systematic undermining of Australian Plumbing Standards and tackling the non-regulated persons doing plumbing works.

On the other side of the ledger, Gas Safety has hand-balled their inspection requirements to the Gas Suppliers and inspect the inspectors! Whilst being funded, in part, via Gas Infrastructure. They now sit along-side the Plumbing Inspectors, same Department, same address, same building, go figure!

As we were about to go to press we picked up the DRIS - Decision Regulations Impact Statement released from the DMIRS with regards to the Building & Energies Evaluation of the Plumbing Industry Review pro-cess.

To say that the major stakeholders in the Industry, the Plumbers Union and the Master Plumbers Association are unhappy with the result is putting it mildly.

The Consultative Regulatory Impact Statement was a long drawn out process that was delayed and hi-jacked on its way through the bureaucracy on its way to the Ministers and the Governments attention.

In that time the Departmental names which housed the Regulator (PLB) have changed as has the State Government. However the individuals and the organisations involved in the Plumbing Industry in this State, that are involved on a daily basis, who have dedicated their lives, careers and, with regards to organisations, the very reason for existing have pushed and lobbied incessantly for the CRIS to progress.

DMIRs have distributed this document outlining the Decision regards to the Regulatory changes, it's 200+ pages regarding the first major overhaul of the Plumbing regulations for quite some time. There are some things in there that are a step in the right direction, but the first take out from this Statement is that the Industry requirement for an Independent Regulator was dismissed and the Union and the MPA were dumped from the PLB for advocating for that position.

**News Update**



*A message from your Secretary...*

## YOU ARE THE UNION AND THE UNION IS YOU

**Brian Bintley** | PPTEU Secretary

Welcome to the Summer 2019-20 edition of the WA PPTEU Journal, the magazine for you the proud members of the Western Australian Branch of the PPTEU. Inside this and future editions members can hear directly from their elected leaders, read about the latest industrial and training developments, and check out what is going on "Around the Traps".

Remember, you are the union and the union is you, and this is your magazine. It is intended to inform members about what has been going on at the union office, in terms of EBA's being negotiated and the policy and regulatory issues we are actively engaged in. The Journal is also intended to be a place for members to be able to share their photos and stories.

I hope you enjoy the Journal and please feel free to e-mail me with any ideas, feedback or

suggestions about how we can make it as valuable as possible to members.

Firstly, I would like to say directly to you, the members of the PPTEU, thank you for your ongoing support. It is more important than ever right now that we remain strong and united. From a national perspective, as members would be all too aware, the Federal Election in May this year did not deliver the result we had all hoped for and anticipated. Now, with an emboldened Coalition Government back in charge for four more years, the construction unions, including ours, are under renewed attack. Members can read all about the latest developments on the national IR front inside this edition of the Journal.

At a state level here in WA, we are fighting battles which have already been fought and won in other states. In late November this year the Government released the Decision Regulatory Impact Statement

Reforms (D-RIS) regarding the Plumbing Regulation in Western Australia.

We were very disappointed with the decisions of the Government about the future of our industry. The Government has failed to address key issues regarding community safety, licensing and registration, the need for more regulatory focus on plumbing, and to bring WA into line with eastern states with respect to Fire Protection licensing.

As a result, the community of Western Australia is being exposed to significant and unnecessary risks from fire. Despite facing the same risks as people living in Melbourne or Brisbane, the residents of Perth have much less protection against a Grenfell type fire. This is because those states have a holistic and well-functioning regulatory framework for Fire Protection which includes licencing and registration of practitioners. In WA we have nothing, and the Government

has again let an opportunity to fix it go by. It is as though the Government is waiting for Perth to have its own Grenfell tragedy before it will act.

That is why a key area of focus for me going forward will be on establishing a comprehensive licencing and registration system for Fire Protection work in WA. As covered in more detail inside this edition, the current situation makes no sense from a risk management perspective, especially in the heightened risk environment created by the cladding issue.

As always, as we move into 2020, we will be channelling our efforts towards making all workplaces safer for our members. One area of ongoing concern from a member and community point of view, is asbestos. Asbestos safety was very much in focus when Perth hosted the Asbestos Eradication Agency of Australia Asbestos Safety Conference in Perth in November this year. The President, Andy Power attended along with 270 other delegates including medical professionals, local and state government leaders, Ministers, unions, regulators and asbestos support groups.

Our members are often at the front line in terms of risk from asbestos disease which still, in 2019, claims over 4000 Australian lives. That's about twice the national road toll, yet we don't see the

media campaigns anywhere like we do for road deaths.

I encourage members to read the story inside which has more details about asbestos safety, as well as a range of other stories, on subjects including – the crisis in the national construction sector; the federal government's new IR laws; and the brand-new state of the art industry training and research centre your union has just opened. Our union has taken charge of its own destiny, and now owns and operates a network of 6 training facilities around the country, with plans to establish one in WA in future.

Over coming months, the union is seeking to actively increase its recruitment of new members. The more we are the stronger we are, and I encourage all members to talk to your non-member colleagues and if they value good rates, and safe workplaces, encourage them to join up.

As we approach the Christmas holiday period, my main message to members is to keep themselves safe. We all know time pressures in the lead up to Christmas can mean workers are urged to take short cuts. Don't be pressured into taking short cuts with your well-being, no deadline is worth it.

Also, we all like to relax and have a good time over the holidays, but we also know that statistically young people,

especially young men, are at increased risk from accident and self-harm at this time. So please look after yourselves and each other, and make sure you all come back to work safe and well in the new year.

**Thanks for the opportunity to talk to you directly and I wish all members and their families a happy, but above all, a safe Christmas and 2020.**

## Mates In Construction

Suicide Prevention in the Construction Industry.

**1300 642 111**

[www.matesinconstruction.org.au](http://www.matesinconstruction.org.au)

## Lifeline

Crisis Support.  
Suicide Prevention.

**13 11 14**

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)

# DIGITAL UNION CARDS

**The PPTEU membership system is transitioning to new digital system.**

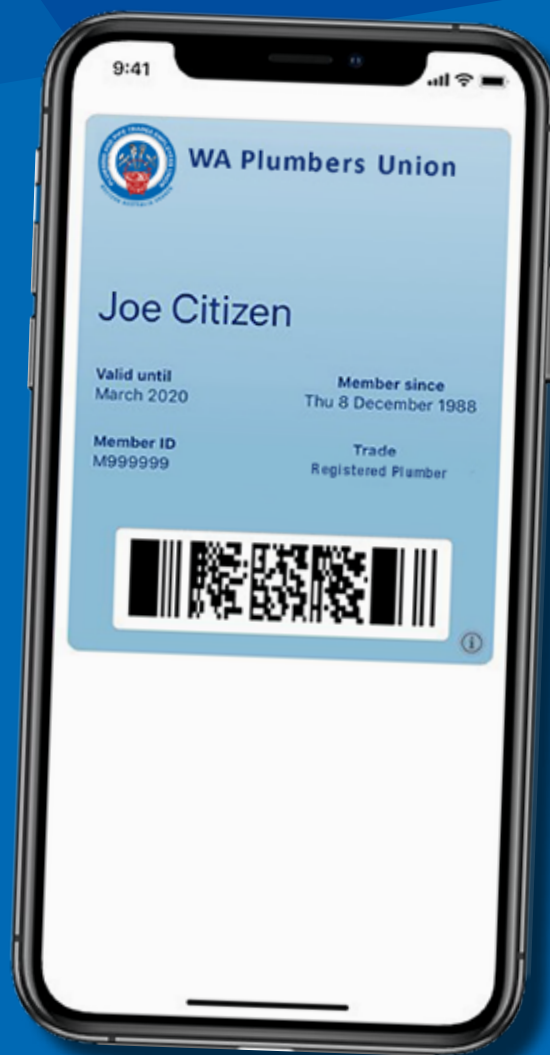
This new system is part of our ongoing effort to streamline the membership experience to provide ease and convenience for our members.

Financial members of the PPTEU are now able to download their digital Membership Card to their smartphone. **The digital card will contain all of the information that is on your plastic membership card.**

Members who want to take advantage of this facility must have a current email address attached to their membership and be able to receive e-mails on their device.

## **The process to transition over to the new system is straightforward.**

- 01** Members simply need to log in to their PPTEU account ([www.ppteu.asn.au](http://www.ppteu.asn.au)) and go through some simple steps to download their digital card.
- 02** Once logged on to the PPTEU website, to download your digital membership cards, simply follow the prompts.
- 03** Remember that your username is your current member number. You will be sent an e-mail to re-set your password. **Remember to write it down!**
- 04** From the member dashboard, click on either ios or android. You will then receive an e-mail of your new e-card, click on the attachment to add to your "wallet" app on your phone. In future you will simply receive an email notifying you to login and download your Digital Card to save to your smartphone.



**Now that you have access to your own account, any information can now be added, altered or viewed at any time.**



# WE'RE FIGHTING F

The WA Government's latest regulatory proposal shows yet again that it doesn't understand our industry, or the risks faced by the Western Australian community.



The WA Government recently released its “decisions” with respect to the rules that will determine the future of our industry in this State. In November this year the Government released the Decision Regulatory Impact Statement Reforms to Plumbing Regulation in Western Australia.

To say we are disappointed with the decisions outlined in the document would be an understatement. It fails to address key issues regarding community safety, licensing and registration, the need for more regulatory focus on plumbing, and to bring WA into line with eastern states with respect to Fire Protection licensing.

The release of the Government's final position on the Plumbing Regulations marks the end of a long and drawn out review and report writing process that has been going for more than 5 years. And what did we end up with at the end of all this time, expense and meetings? Well, not bloody much.

The Government has not listened to key stakeholders and has come out with a set of rules that don't address several key issues we and others raised with them repeatedly over the past few years. The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety, Building and Energy (DMIRSBE) the State Government agency with responsibility for the plumbing and building regulatory framework, has again shown that it doesn't understand our trade, or its role in keeping the community safe.

The whole point of regulation in our industry is community safety, but in the Government's decision about the future of our industry, the core elements of safety, community health, risks to people and property hardly rate a mention. The Government seems much more concerned about reducing costs

to businesses and builders than they are about protecting community safety.

The reason we have licensing, and detailed scopes of works for various license categories, is to reduce risks to the public by allowing only skilled and qualified people to work on plumbing. Risk is associated with every element of plumbing, be it gas installation and the associated carbon monoxide and other gas related poisoning hazards; water borne bacteria and disease outbreaks; scolding risks from not fit for purpose taps or fittings; or lead leaching out of corroding pipes; and more.

Effective and safe plumbing installations, installed by licensed and qualified individuals, are the first line of protection – for households, community facilities, offices, schools, hospitals and so on – against a wide range of potential risks and hazards. The very life blood of our community and our economy, our ability to access abundant, unadulterated water, is plumbing skills and plumbing products dependent.

**The WA Government just doesn't get it, and this latest decision document is evidence of that. It wants to fragment our trade, reduce it to a series of skill sets, which can be calved out of our scopes of works and opened to anyone with a flimsy accreditation.**



# FOR YOUR SAFETY

So what has the Government decided to do? It seems hard to believe but after all these years and consultant's reports and reviews, the Government has made the big decision that the way the regulatory framework is funded needs to be overhauled. But they are not yet sure what the new model should be and need to do some more review work on that one. Yes, that's right, 5 years of thinking and they are telling industry they need more time. And they think our industry needs to be more efficient!

One of the more concerning decisions the Government has made relates to the new governance structure for plumbing regulation. The governance structure is a fancy way of describing the committees and individual people with responsibility for making decisions about the administration, licencing and technical direction of our trade.

One of the areas of concern about this is that the Government is moving the job of technical regulation from the Plumbers Licensing Board (PLB) to the DMIRSEB. We are very concerned that the Department does not appear to have the necessary plumbing industry knowledge or experience within it to adequately perform the role of technical regulator in our increasingly complex and sophisticated sector.

As well as putting our industry in the hands of the non-experts at the Department, it has decided that we, the Plumbers Union, no longer will have a guaranteed seat at the PLB table. According to the Government, the employees who make this industry tick don't need to be a part of decisions which directly affect their future, the future of their trade, or the safety of the community. Instead,

representatives on the PLB will be chosen by their skills and experience, not by the organisation they represent.

We believe this decision is dangerous, is not in the long-term interests of the industry as a whole and will result in a lack of balance on the PLB. We will be putting pressure on the Government to reconsider their decision on the composition of the PLB.

Another decision we will be pressuring the Government to reverse is their decision, or more their non-decision – about Fire Protection licensing. The Government says it has heard all our arguments but has decided to do nothing about Fire Protection licensing in WA. As a result, the community of Western Australia is being exposed to significant and unnecessary risks from fire.

Despite facing the same risks as people living in Melbourne or Brisbane, the residents of Perth have much less protection against a Grenfell type fire. This is because those States have a holistic and well-functioning regulatory framework for Fire Protection which includes licencing and registration of practitioners. In WA we have nothing, and the Government has again let an opportunity to fix it go by. It is as though the Government is waiting for Perth to have its own Grenfell tragedy before it will act.

**The Government also made a range of decisions which effect the scope of works for the various areas of regulated plumbing work, and a range of other minor and/or technical regulatory changes. We will be working though these changes and their impact on our members and communicating information to members over coming weeks and months.**







# **WA NEEDS A FIRE PROTECTION LICENSING SYSTEM, AND IT NEEDS IT NOW**

## **DO WESTERN AUSTRALIAN LIVES MATTER LESS THAN VICTORIAN, OR QUEENSLAND LIVES?**

The community of Western Australia is being exposed to significant and unnecessary risks from fire. Licensing and registration for Fire Protection practitioners is a major part of the solution, but the Government is not listening, leaving residents of WA at risk.

Despite facing the same risks as people living in Melbourne or Brisbane, the residents of Perth have much less protection against a Grenfell type fire than their countrymen from the east. Domestic and public buildings and tower blocks in Victoria and Queensland are much safer than those in WA because those States have a holistic and well-functioning regulatory framework for Fire Protection which includes licencing and registration of practitioners.

This means that in the eastern States, the design, installation and maintenance of Fire Protection systems and their subsequent certification can only be carried out by those with skills, knowledge and understanding of how the overall system works. Here in WA it is effectively an unregulated sector, a high-risk free for all.

**WE ARE CALLING LOUDLY AND STRONGLY FOR THE REGISTRATION AND LICENCING BASED REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR FIRE PROTECTION IN NSW TO INCLUDE INSPECT AND TEST FUNCTIONS AND ARE URGING ALL MEMBERS TO GET BEHIND THIS IMPORTANT CAMPAIGN.**

Are we second class citizens in Western Australia? Why do the good people of Melbourne or Geelong or the Gold Coast or Brisbane have the comfort of knowing their Fire Protection system is going to work when required, but we don't?

# THE GOVERNMENT IS TURNING A BLIND EYE TO THE RISKS

The Government is deliberately failing to take the right steps to make the community safe. A recent state-wide audit found that 14 private West Australian buildings, including hospitals and a school, have been identified as having high-risk cladding, while another 38 also require remediation work.

Members will know all too well the story of the Grenfell Tower disaster in London in 2015. It is an extreme example of where the use of inappropriate materials combined with inadequate fire protection systems can result in catastrophe.

*Picture: Sydney Adventist Hospital's Clark Tower*



## FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS THAT WORK SAVE LIVES

What is less well known is that the Grenfell tragedy followed a near disaster in Melbourne in 2014 when the Lacrosse Tower, which was clad in Grenfell type flammable aluminium cladding, and where the fire spread to 13 stories in 13 minutes.

If it was not for a well-functioning and properly installed and maintained Fire Protection system, the Lacrosse fire would have been a major catastrophe. A further fire broke out in the 41 storey Neo200 apartment building in Spencer Street in Melbourne's CBD in February 2019. Again, it was the effectiveness of the Fire Protection systems which prevented a large-scale tragedy.



*Picture: Lacrosse fire*



# FRAGMENTING THE TRADE IS NOT THE WAY FORWARD

A central plank of our push to establish a robust, risk based regulatory model for WA Fire Protection, is to push back against what seems like a relentless tide of de-regulation and industry and trade fragmentation.

As occurs in many highly cost competitive sectors, especially in a political context in which deregulation itself is considered a desirable end, industry fragmentation or segmentation can occur. We understand that pressure comes on regulators and policy makers to view established systems as a series of component parts which can then be “opened up” to a broader market of competitors, resulting, it is argued, in efficiencies and consumer benefits.

But we know this doesn’t work when applied to plumbing and fire protection systems. It is not appropriate or safe to fragment the series of interconnected systems and installations which comprise complex modern systems into small fragments of “competency”.

To view the Fire Protection qualification as just the aggregation of the individual competencies is to be ignorant of how their interplay actually works, and not an appropriate construct in the Fire Protection context. Fire Protection systems are a series of interlocking components and connections, each dependent on the other for the system to be effective. That is why the Certificate III in Fire Protection qualification obtained under an Australian Apprenticeship Agreement represents the build-up of layered and interconnected components of knowledge, competency and experience that has a value greater than the sum of all its component parts.

To properly service and maintain a contemporary Fire Protection system, a person needs to know how the system works in its entirety. That’s why in Victoria, Queensland and NSW, a license is required to install a Fire Protection system, and a thorough and comprehensive qualification is required to obtain that license. In Victoria and Queensland (but not NSW) a license is also required to inspect, test and maintain those systems.

In WA, a licence is not required to work on installing or servicing Fire Protection systems. Anyone can do it, and that is just dangerous and stupid and makes no sense from a risk management perspective, especially in the heightened risk environment created by the cladding issue.

It is imperative that all aspects of Fire Protection work carried out by competent practitioners with the appropriate qualifications and credentials. The best way to achieve that is to adopt a licensing framework like that in place in Victoria which would ensure all elements of fire protection work (including inspection and testing) are the exclusive domain of licensed persons.

# WAITING FOR PEOPLE TO DIE IS NOW WAY TO LEAD

We cannot sit idly by and wait for people to die before the Government heeds the call to act. The Government's current approach - failing to take necessary measures to prevent foreseeable failures, thereby allowing incidents of failure to accumulate in enough to serve as evidence of a need to make a change - is not a conscionable or appropriate way to govern in a modern democracy.

## THE CURRENT SITUATION CANNOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE

The industry experience in other States tells us that licensing and registration works. A robust regulatory framework for Fire Protection will:

- *Better protect the community and property in the event of a building fire;*
- *Reduce the risk of fire deaths, fire injuries and property harm and destruction;*
- *Improve training and safety for fire protection workers;*
- *Improve compliance with building fire safety regulations leading to reduced costs for owners, occupiers, government, emergency services and local government;*
- *Increase community confidence that work is performed by appropriately skilled workers to the prescribed standards; and*
- *Reduce risks for fire fighters responding to fire emergencies.*

The PPTEU Western Australian Branch will be campaigning hard over coming months to do all we can to protect the community by making the Government see, by whatever means we need to, that the current situation cannot be allowed to continue.

**The only way to protect the community is to establish a licensing and registration system for Fire Protection, and to do it now.**



# IS AUSTRALIA'S CONSTRUCTION SECTOR IN CRISIS?

## ***A NEW UNION COMMISSIONED REPORT SAYS IT MOST DEFINITELY IS...***

Increasingly, Australia's construction industry is described in the media as being at "crisis point". From cracking apartment buildings, water leaks, structural defects, combustible cladding, it appears that there is not one part of the sector that isn't failing in some way.

### **The crisis is a national one.**

The economic and human costs of failure are piling up. In the short-term, we are seeing professional insurance fees skyrocket, threatening a downturn in one of the economy's leading sectors. In the medium term there will be the costs of remediation, estimated to be \$6.2 billion and ultimately a loss of confidence and therefore value in the nation's biggest asset class. In the long term, we can expect a long tail legacy of evacuations, remediations and costs for consumers for decades to come.

The scale of the debacle is staggering. Independent research (commissioned by the CFMMEU) conducted by Equity Economics found that nationally:

- The cost of rectifying defects in apartment buildings constructed over the last ten years will amount to \$6.2 billion.
- Over 3,400 residential apartment buildings have combustible cladding.
- 170,000 estimated apartments effected by the combustible cladding crisis
- \$31.7 billion total value of new apartment commencement in 2018-19 14% of the building and construction sector



The report finds that the causes of the various failures have one common underlying thread: the systematic weakening of government as the protector of public interest. Governments have:

- **failed to adequately enforce existing building standards or ensure they keep pace with evolving building practices;**
- **overseen the loss of public sector skills and capability**
- **driven the outsourcing of building approvals resulting in increased conflicts of interest and lack of oversight.**

Equity Economics attributes blame to governments obsessed with deregulation for deregulation's sake. "Red Tape" reduction has become a religion for the conservative side of politics, and now the chickens are coming home to roost. Deregulation has failed. It has failed the community, failed the industry and failed workers and the economy, with wages and growth flatlining.

*"Our economy has become dependent on a house-of-cards of cheap debt, building approvals, immigration and government funded infrastructure projects. This matrix is keeping us out of recession, but ours is an economy built on shaky foundations, underwritten by poor regulation and government oversight."*

**Shaky Foundations – The National Crisis in Construction, Equity Economics, August 2019**

The report describes the Federal Government as being a "bystander" to the crisis, and notes that at a national level the government has no plans to take the necessary steps to address the crisis. The Federal Government bears ultimate responsibility for the National Construction Code and National Standards which are then enforced through State regulatory mechanisms. Yet the failure to enforce these standards goes unchecked by the Federal Government, while citizens and consumers Australia-wide feel the effect of failure.

Instead of addressing the most pressing issue in residential construction, the government is most intent on silencing those that blow the whistle on shoddy construction, giving the private sector the power to use disqualification of a union official as a weapon to silence critics.





# ENSURING INTEGRITY

**In November the Senate failed to pass the Morrison Government's Ensuring Integrity Bill. It was a win for the workers led by the ACTU and a setback for the Government's anti-union agenda. But that's all it is, a set-back, not a defeat – yet. The Government has been quick to say it will try again to get it passed, probably early next year. We will be working with other unions to do what we can to make sure this bad Bill does not become law.**

The legislation the Government is determined to push through the Parliament, would roll back the basic rights of working people instead of tackling near record low wage growth and a struggling economy. They turn a blind eye to millions of dollars lost to workers through wage theft and instead attack workers and our unions.

The new rules the government wants to bring in are in the Fair Work (Registered Organisations) Amendment (Ensuring Integrity) Bill 2019, known as the 'Ensuring Integrity Bill' or 'EI Bill'.

During the election campaign the Morrison Government insisted that it had no plans to reduce workers' rights, despite constant questions from unions and the media. Now, Morrison has drawn from the wish lists of big business, dusting off previously failed legislation to attack working people's freedom to organise.

The rights of workers to organise, and for members to democratically run their unions

is an internationally recognised human right, like a free press. Free unions are essential checks on the powerful in any democracy. Every single worker benefits from the work of unions, attacking unions is another way of attacking every worker's rights.

The Bill will basically transfer control of unions from their members to the government. The Australian Council of Trade Unions is right to describe it as "a rollback of the basic rights of working people which has no equivalent in the western world".

The PPTEU and the wider union movement is already heavily regulated and this EI bill goes further than any other western democracy in interfering in democratic workers organisations.

## What does the EI Bill do?

The EI Bill would give the Government, employers, or any other party with 'sufficient interest' the power to intervene in the



# THE GOVERNMENT'S LATEST ATTACK ON WORKERS AND OUR UNIONS

running and work of unions, and makes it easier to disqualify people from union leadership, block union mergers, and deregister unions.

The EI Bill would provide for automatic disqualification of a union officer for any offence under a law of the Commonwealth, a State or Territory, or another country, punishable upon conviction by imprisonment for a period of five years or more.

It would allow the Registered Organisations Commissioner, the Minister, or a 'person of sufficient interest' to apply to the Federal Court for a wide range of orders including disqualification of an officer, deregistration of a union, alteration of a union's eligibility rules, restriction of the use of funds or property of a union and more.

It would also allow a Federal Court to disqualify a person from holding office in a union on a wide range of grounds, including that a person is not a 'fit and proper person' —including, for example, if they had

twice been caught driving while their licence is suspended.

The Federal Court would also be able to deregister a union, disqualify officers, alter the eligibility rules, suspend the rights and privileges or restrict the use of funds or property of a union or part of the union on a wide range of grounds, including findings against the union, officers or members such as filing union paperwork late with the Government authority.

Despite the numerous scandals in banking, aged care and corporations that has seen money stolen, elderly people without enough food, wage theft, fraud, assistance given to terrorists and people dying, no one in any of those scandals has been barred from holding office nor has a single organisation been deregistered.





**These laws are bad laws. Undemocratic, unfair and unjust. They will only harm working people, further stifle wage growth the economy needs and make workplaces less safe.** We will be doing all we can as a union and a movement to fight back against these unjust laws and stand up for the basic rights of our members.

**IT MUST BE STOPPED.**

# STOP SCOTT MORRISON'S ANTI-UNION LAWS



GOVT & EMPLOYERS CAN INTERFERE  
IN THE RUNNING OF UNIONS



GOVT CAN SHUT DOWN UNIONS  
AND SACK UNION LEADERS



MAKE IT HARDER FOR UNIONS TO  
DO THEIR JOB OF STANDING UP  
FOR WORKERS



STOP UNIONS MERGING  
TOGETHER

Australian Unions

This was prepared in conjunction with Maurice Blackburn Lawyers and the ACTU.



# NEED LEGAL HELP?

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The **Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union (PPTEU)** and Maurice Blackburn have a proud history of fighting for fair outcomes for union members.

Maurice Blackburn's expert lawyers can assist members in:

- **Superannuation & Insurance Claims**
- **Asbestos Diseases**
- **Road Accident Injuries**
- **Medical Negligence**
- **Public Liability**
- **Faulty Products**
- **Comcare**
- **Will Disputes**

As a member of the **PPTEU** you and your family are entitled to:

- **Free telephone advice**
- **Free first consultation**
- **No win, No fee\***
- **Free standard Will (for you and your spouse)**

If you have suffered a loss, an injury or are facing an unfair situation, you and your family shouldn't have to suffer. Contact **Maurice Blackburn** today **1800 810 812** or visit their website **[www.mauriceblackburn.com.au](http://www.mauriceblackburn.com.au)** for more information.



**Maurice  
Blackburn**  
Lawyers  
Since 1919





## AROUND THE TRAPS IN WA



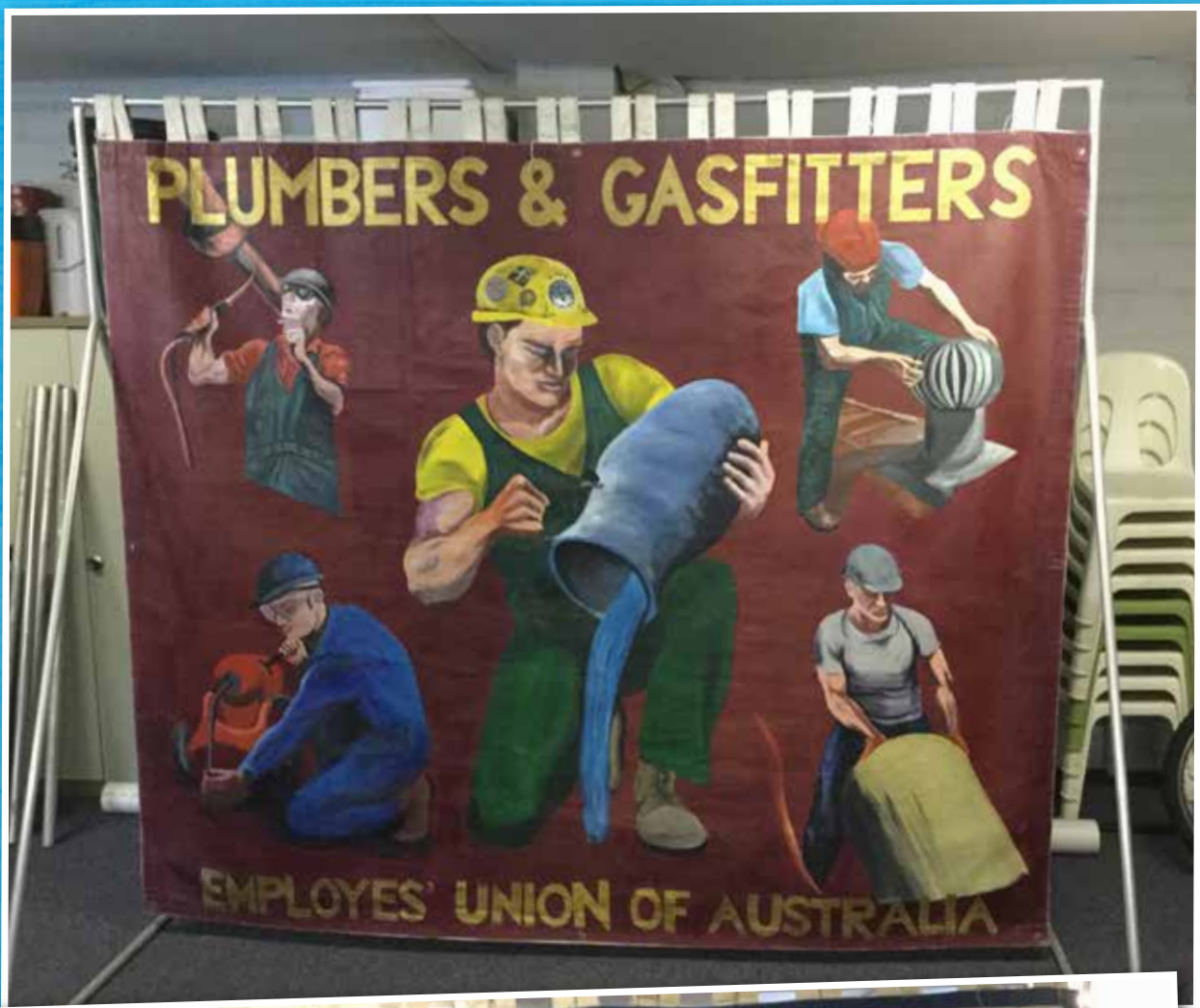
# AROUND





# ND THE TRAPS





AROUND









If you thought asbestos was yesterday's problem, you would be wrong. More than 4000 Australia's die every year from asbestos related disease – Twice the average national road toll.

On average 6300 tons of Asbestos is Dumped illegally ever year yet the fines are less than it costs for the removal to be undertaken and disposed of legally. If all the asbestos magically disappeared overnight Australians will still be dying from asbestos related disease for the next 30 years.

### **Asbestos is a real and present risk for our members and the entire community.**

The PPTEU is doing all it can to keep the issue on the agenda, and to understand the latest developments in terms of removing asbestos from the built environment and reducing the risks to the WA community.

On November 11-13 the Asbestos Eradication Agency of Australia hosted the Asbestos Safety Conference in Perth WA. Approximately 270 delegates attended to listen to International

Keynote speakers, medical professionals, local, state and federal government representatives, Ministers, unions, regulators, policy makers and asbestos support groups.

The PPTEU is represented on the Asbestos Management and removal Committee (formerly the Building, Construction and Demolition sectors Committee) that acts as an advisory committee to the Asbestos and Eradication Agency.

The conference was very informative and offered great opportunity to network with others who have the common goal of an asbestos free Australia and WA Branch President Andrew Power and Past Secretary Bob Bryant were highly engaged participants.

An integral part of the conference was the launch of Phase 2 of the National Strategic Plan for Asbestos Awareness and Management 2019-2023.

*"Under our 2014-2018 National Strategic plan all governments worked together researching, increasing Awareness and developing and disseminating about Asbestos".*

Australia made significant progress under this plan, but there is still a long way to go to deal effectively with the remaining asbestos legacy. NSP phase 2 builds on the previous plans



# ASBESTOS

## A REAL AND PRESENT DANGER

progress, it compliments and enhances existing asbestos policies and actions at all levels of government.

### **Four National priorities have been set.**

1. Improve Asbestos awareness to influence behavioural change.
2. Identification and effective legacy management.
3. Safe prioritised removal and effective waste management.
4. International collaboration and leadership.

For further information on the national strategic plan visit the ASEA website [www.asbestossafety.gov.au](http://www.asbestossafety.gov.au)



*Picture: Desmond Bowers, a proud union member and a great campaigner for Asbestos disease*

**Members understand if you don't know if it is or isn't Asbestos all legislation nationally states it must be treated as asbestos.**

**Always ask to see the buildings Hazardous register prior to refurb or maintenance work.**

**Don't let a 5-minute job give you and your loves ones a life sentence.**

**Register any exposure or potential exposure contact your union office In your state for details of exposure register arrangements or alternatively you can register your exposure on the Agency web site [www.asbestossaftey.gov.au](http://www.asbestossaftey.gov.au)**

# BOB HAWKE

9 December 1929 - 16 May 2019

23rd Prime Minister of Australia 1983 - 1991

## ***A GIANT OF AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRIAL HISTORY***



Even if Bob Hawke had never become Prime Minister, he would still be remembered as a legend. As President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), Hawke changed Australian industrial relations forever. But it is as Prime Minister of Australia (1983-1991) that he made his greatest mark and become arguably the most significant figure in Australian political and industrial history in the past 50 years.

Robert James Lee Hawke was born in Bordertown, South Australia, on December 9 1929, the younger of two sons of Clem Hawke, a Congregationalist minister, and his wife Ellie. The family moved to South Australia's Yorke Peninsula in 1935. The Hawkes packed up and moved again in 1939, this time to Perth. Hawke was educated at the selective Perth Modern School and, from 1947, the University of Western Australia, where he completed degrees in arts and law.

Awarded the Rhodes Scholarship in 1952, Hawke travelled to Oxford, where he completed a Bachelor of Letters thesis on Australian wage determination, learned to fly, and broke a world beer-drinking record.

Bob married childhood sweetheart Hazel in Perth in 1956 and moved to Canberra, where Hawke had a scholarship to research a doctorate in law at the Australian National University. In 1958, the offer of a position as ACTU research officer



led him to abandon his studies and the Hawkes – including Susan, the first of their three children – moved to Melbourne.

In 1969, Hawke was elected ACTU president, receiving the left's support in what turned out to be a closely fought contest. During the 1970s, he became a towering figure in national political and industrial life.

After a decade serving as ACTU President Hawke announced his intention to enter politics, and was subsequently elected to the House of Representatives as the Labor MP for Wills in Victoria. Three years later, he led Labor to a landslide victory at the 1983 election and was sworn in as Australia's 23rd prime minister. He went on to lead Labor to victory three more times, in 1984, 1987 and 1990, making him the most electorally successful Labor Leader in history.

The Hawke Government did some nation changing things. It created Medicare and brokered the Prices and Incomes Accord, a pact that drove up productivity, wages and worker superannuation. He established APEC, floated the Australian dollar, deregulated the financial sector, introduced the Family Assistance Scheme, initiated superannuation pension schemes for all workers and oversaw passage of the Australia Act that removed all remaining jurisdiction by the United Kingdom from Australia.

During his time as prime minister, Hawke recorded the highest popularity rating ever measured by an Australian opinion poll, reaching 75% approval in 1984. In June 1991, Treasurer Paul Keating unsuccessfully challenged for the leadership, believing that Hawke had reneged on the Kirribilli Agreement. Keating mounted a second challenge six months later, this time narrowly succeeding.

Hawke subsequently retired from Parliament, pursuing both a business career and a number of charitable causes, until his passing earlier this year aged 89.

From the point of view of the PPTU Bob Hawke was a true hero. He was the greatest post-war Prime Minister we've had. Together with Paul Keating, Hawke drove policies which opened up the economy (floating the dollar) forged an unprecedented partnership with unions, created Medicare, ensured record numbers of Australians got to finish secondary school and go to university, and gave all Australian workers compulsory superannuation. He fought hard for the environment (Franklin Dam) had zero-tolerance for racism and extremism.

It is hard to imagine what Australia would be like today if there had been no Bob Hawke. The Australian people loved Bob because they knew Bob loved them, this was true to the very end.

With his passing, the labour movement saluted one of its greatest sons:

***“the Australian Labor Party gives thanks for the life of our longest-serving Prime Minister and Australians everywhere remember and honour a man who gave so much to the country and people he cared for so deeply.”***

Bob is survived by his second wife, Blanche d'Alpuget, his children by his first marriage, Susan, Stephen and Rosslyn, six grandchildren, as well as great-grandchildren.

We honour Bob Hawke and pass on our sympathies to his family. We will remember him. In solidarity, forever. May he rest in peace.

## MICHAEL MURPHY



On Friday 29 November the PPTEU lost one of our own in a tragic incident on a worksite in Sydney's Darling Harbour. Michael Murphy, a proud member of our great union, was killed when a high-pressure pipe he was working on exploded. The explosion caused Michael to sustain catastrophic head injuries. He was rushed to St Vincent's Hospital where he tragically passed away.

Known as "Murf", New Zealand born Michael was a Sprinkler Fitter, and well known to many members in Perth. Murf worked in Perth and was a member of the WA Branch of the PPTEU for many years before moving east. Michael worked for National Fire Solutions and Firesafe and was a great worker, and an active and passionate union member. To Michael's wife, family, friends and workmates we offer our sincere and most heartfelt condolences.

The former Aucklanders enjoyed simple pleasures, such as a drink, eating his favourite foods and the All Blacks - Murphy's Facebook page is littered with photos of him in All Black gear.

When his life was tragically cut short, Michael was working on the site of the old IMAX theatre in Sydney known as The Ribbon project being built by Grocon. More information about exactly what occurred and why will come to light over coming weeks and months. NSW police advised they would prepare a report for the Coroner, and Safework NSW will investigate.

The tragedy has shocked, saddened and angered a great many people within the WA and broader Australian Fire Protection industry and construction sector. It is an unwelcome reminder that no worker should wave goodbye to their family in the morning for a day's work and not come home. It just shouldn't happen, but tragically, it does. And it happened to one of our own - to Michael Murphy.

Vale Michael.

## ALEX DODD



In October this year, the union and the fire protection industry in WA lost one of its great characters.

Alexander Dodd passed away in October after decades of dedicated service to our great union. Always well loved on the job site, Alex was an old fashioned staunch unionist. He was passionate about workers' rights and safety. Alex looked and sounded like Billy Connolly and had the wit to match, always ready with a joke to keep his mates laughing.

Alex worked in several roles with the union over the years, including as a great Shop Steward and as a member of the BCOM for years in the late 80's and early 90's. Thanks for all your service Alex and our deepest sympathies go to your family and friends.



# WA PPTEU PLUMBERS WAGE RATES



## ARE YOU GETTING PAID RIGHT?

**Our members are currently working under several EBA's & Awards.**

If you are unsure what you should be getting paid, and whether you are getting paid correctly, please contact us at the PPTEU for advice on **(08) 9440 3522**





# 2020 CALENDAR

[www.ppteu.asn.au](http://www.ppteu.asn.au)

## JANUARY

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## FEBRUARY

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## MARCH

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## JULY

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## AUGUST

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## SEPTEMBER

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## OCTOBER

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## NOVEMBER

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## DECEMBER

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Public Holiday Annual Leave RDO School Holidays World Plumbing Day Return to work on TBA 2021

**WA SCHOOL TERM DATES**  
 TERM 1: 3 February 2020 - 9 April 2020  
 TERM 2: 28 April 2020 - 3 July 2020  
 TERM 3: 20 July 2020 - 25 September 2020  
 TERM 4: 12 October 2020 - 17 December 2020

**PUBLIC HOLIDAY DATES**  
 New Year's Day: Wednesday 1 January  
 Australia Day Holiday: Monday 27 January  
 Labour Day: Monday 2 March  
 Good Friday: Friday 10 April  
 Easter Saturday: Saturday 11 April  
 Easter Sunday: Sunday 12 April  
 Easter Monday: Monday 13 April  
 Anzac Day Holiday: Monday 27 April  
 Western Australia Day: Monday 1 June  
 Queen's Birthday: Monday 28 September  
 Christmas Day: Friday 25 December  
 Boxing Day Holiday: Monday 28 December

**\* Please note:**  
 Monday 27 January Public Holiday in lieu of Australia Day on Sunday 26 January.  
 Monday 27 April Public Holiday in lieu of Anzac Day on Saturday 25 April.  
 Monday 28 December Public Holiday in lieu of Boxing Day on Saturday 26 December.



# Meme while around the social media traps....



Scumo was a 'big hit' at the G7







# You need the cover that's right for you.



## Does your Death and TPD insurance cover you at work?

Many Cbus members work in a physically demanding, hazardous industry<sup>1</sup>. If you work in a hazardous occupation, Cbus may be the only option or one of few options to obtain insurance cover<sup>2</sup>. Other super funds may restrict or exclude automatic insurance cover for one or more of the following occupations: concreter, bricklayer, plasterer, labourer, plumber, painter, rigger, welder, scaffolder, or dogman<sup>2</sup>.

## We're here to help.



Speak with your Coordinator



Call **1300 361 784**  
Mon to Fri from 8am to 8pm AEDT/AEST

1. Cbus Annual Integrated Report 2018. 2. Rice Warner report for Cbus, Review of Insurance Offer, 16 May 2018.

This information is about Cbus. It doesn't take into account your specific needs, so you should look at your own financial position, objectives and requirements before making any financial decisions. Read the relevant Cbus Product Disclosure Statement and related documents to decide whether Cbus is right for you. Contact us on **1300 361 784** or visit [www.cbussuper.com.au](http://www.cbussuper.com.au) for a copy. Cbus' Trustee: United Super Pty Ltd ABN 46 006 261 623 AFSL 233792 Cbus ABN 75 493 363 262.