

Business licensing reform inquiry

Response ID:10 Data

1.

1. Your contact details

First name

Andrew

Last name

Power

Organisation (if responding on behalf of an organisation)

3. Please indicate who you represent:

Business or occupational licence holder

4. Which business or occupational licence(s) do you hold or are you affected by?

Plumbing Contractors Licence

Gas Fitting Permit

Backflow Prevention

High Risk Licences such as

Confined Space

Forklift Trucks

Manitou/Telescopic Boom

Elevated Work Platform

Excavator

Backhoe

5. How do these business or occupational licences affect you and what suggestions do you have to improve them?

I'm required to have them to work in the plumbing gas fitting and construction industry. These licences are required for any work undertaken in WA (They are transferable interstate) including maintenance, service industry and working with the general public. My high risk permits and licences assist me in the safe and effective execution of my occupation. I'm required to hold these licences/permits if I'm undertaking work where that work could pose a risk, to myself and/or work colleagues or general public..

Failure to comply with any or all of these licences or permits can expose me to serious charges and penalties, under various pieces of legislation.

6. Are there aspects of the business and occupational licensing arrangements that affect you that are working well?

The retention of appropriate licences to undertake certain works is generally well "regulated", although they're in dire need of updating. However the enforcement of the regulations is another matter. Successive governments have opted for a less hands on approach to the enforcement of the regulations. As a consequence have developed a narrower view of some industry regulations than previously existed. As the population has grown and the infrastructure needs have increased, oversight of the regulations have lessened.

Couple with that, immigration and migration of international/interstate plumbers, devolution of regulatory authority, the rise of RTO compared to TAFE's, casualisation and temporary nature of work streams, and there is an obvious need evident for progressive action to modernise the Plumbing Regulations and allow Universal licensing across Australia. However, WA has work to do to bring itself in line with other Australian States or Territories with regard to the Plumbing regulations under which my Plumbers Contractors Licence is regulated.

7. Do you have any other comments?

The thrust of this review is of grave concern to me. I have witnessed previous reviews that have lead directly to the current situation currently presenting in the Plumbing Industry. This is not a circumstance unique to WA. Other Australian States have approached these issues differently. There have been steps in the general direction, yet many issues are being raised in industry that is not being acted upon by the regulatory authority. Although they're all housed now in the one ministry. My licences/permits are regulated by three Acts, resulting in 3, and possibly 4 sectors of the Government that I'm responsible to, and have oversight and enforcement and/or prosecution powers over me. Many of my colleagues/peers report of repetitive bypassing of statute that we're required to comply with. We are also very aware that the methodology of the Regulator hasn't kept pace with technology. An argument could be made that self-certification has gone too far with quite serious consequences.