



Department of  
Building and Housing  
*Te Tari Kaupapa Whare*

## licensing update

01 April 2008 - Issue No. 7

### Licensing Update No 7

#### Welcome .....

Welcome to the seventh issue of the Department of Building and Housing's *Licensing Update*, keeping you up-to-date on developments in the Licensed Building Practitioners Scheme.

In this issue we cover:

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We also answer the interesting questions you've been asking us over the last couple of months. Please keep them coming.

#### First cards issued

In the past few weeks, licensing ID cards have been sent out to the first Licensed Building Practitioners around the country.

This is a major milestone for the scheme, and to help promote it, a number of practitioners have had the Minister for Building and Construction, Shane Jones, personally hand them their ID cards.

Craig Shorrocks of Auckland was the first to be handed his card by the Minister, while on a building site near the central city.

A few days later, the Minister invited some of the newly licensed building practitioners from the Wellington region to his office in the Beehive to personally hand them their ID cards.



*Pictured: The first group of Wellington practitioners after receiving their ID cards from the Minister for Building and Construction. From left: Richard Te One, David Reid, Alan Attack, Jamie O'Leary, Stephen Simpson, Tony Sarich, Barry Calvert*

### **Next three trade classes consulting soon**

The planning for the next three trade licensing classes has already begun. The working groups for the roofing, brick and block laying, and external plastering classes have met in the last few days to complete their earlier work on draft standards for their classes.

These three classes are due to be introduced towards the end of this year. Within the next few weeks the Department will be sending out the draft standards for consultation and looking at how these standards are to be assessed. Once these have been trialled and finalised, the LBP Rules will be amended and fees set for the new classes.

The consultation document will be sent out in mid-April, with responses due back by 12 May.

## **The Register and how it works**

Now that practitioners have begun to receive their ID cards in the mail, the online [Register](#) of all licensed building practitioners is also available.

This lists the licensing details of each practitioner as well as their contact details and company involvement.

The Register will be promoted to the public as the easiest way to find and identify a licensed building practitioner.

People can search for practitioners using their name, ID number, city or company name.

## **New forms and guides on the website**

Now that the first practitioners are licensed, there are a number of forms and fact sheets about the scheme that have been added to the Department's website, that practitioners need to be aware of.

### **Fact sheets**

There are three new [fact sheets](#) about the scheme which provide more details for practitioners:

#### [What it means to be a licensed building practitioner](#)

This explains your responsibilities once you are licensed, including information on the register, working within your skills and experience and keeping your information up-to-date.

#### [What can I do if my licence application is turned down?](#)

This fact sheet provides information on the appeals process for practitioners who have their application for a licensing class turned down.

#### [What is skills maintenance?](#)

This covers the basics of skills maintenance, and more detail is also included below.

### **Forms**

The following are some of the [forms](#) that have been prepared for practitioners to help them in certain situations. These include (but are not limited to):

#### [Record of skills maintenance](#)

If you require another form to complete your record of skills maintenance.

#### [Application for replacement identification card](#)

If you lose or damage your ID card, you need to apply for a new one.

### [Application for appeal](#)

If your application to be licensed is turned down, you have the right of appeal to the Building Practitioners Board. This form explains more about this process.

### [Application for voluntary suspension](#)

If you are planning on taking a break from the industry, you can suspend your licensing status for up to two years.

## **Skills maintenance – more details explained**

Once you are licensed, you need to show that you are keeping up with changes in the industry, as new building materials and design technologies, and related legislation and codes are introduced or amended. Skills maintenance is about keeping your skills up-to-date and showing that you are keeping on top of your game.

Every licensed practitioner is sent a sheet with optional activities on what they can do to keep up-to-date. This includes things like on-the-job training, attending seminars, taking courses and reading industry publications, among other things. For each hour of activity you are awarded one point with a maximum number of points you can accumulate per activity. This is so you do a range of activities to ensure all the competencies in your class are covered.

After meeting with industry associations and having talked with many practitioners while on the road shows late last year, the Department has collated all the feedback and formulated the following points requirement for the various classes.

<b>Class (es)</b>	<b>Points (hours) over two years</b>
Carpentry	24
Site 1 & Design 1	30
Site 2 & 3 and Design 2 & 3	36

If you are licensed in two classes, you will need to get points at the higher class rate. For example, if you hold Carpentry and Site 1, you will need to accumulate 30 points over the two years.

Some licensed practitioners are concerned they may find it hard to accumulate their points. The idea is that skills maintenance incorporates the things you are doing now to keep up with the play. The only major change is that we are asking you to record them.

You will find that many of the activities overlap, so you may wonder what category of activity to place your points under. This is to make it easier for you to manage your points across all the activities.

For example:

*On the job training or mentoring*

- For staff you are responsible for (especially if they are not an apprentice). The formal arrangement may be discussion around the staff member's performance appraisal or may be on the job instruction and monitoring. Both these situations could be claimed in either of the above activity categories. If you are supervising an apprentice, there is an activity category especially for this.

*Seminars / workshops / courses, on the job training, industry-based education and information events / trade events*

- Points for any industry related workshop relevant to your licence class can be claimed against the above activities.

## **The application process – first feedback to applicants**

Now that we have started to receive good numbers of applications, there are a number of small issues that our processing team have started to see on a regular basis.

Firstly, when you do apply, make sure that you fill out all the forms and questions. In a number of cases, the processing team have had to ask for additional information from applicants. This slows down the whole process of assessing the applications.

One of the key mistakes that people are making is not getting their photos and qualifications verified. As the licensing cards are photo ID, we need verification that the person in the picture is actually you.

There are also issues that have cropped up with referees. You need to be aware that your referees must be matched to the project records you talk about in your application. Referees are asked specific questions about each project, and therefore you need to think carefully about who these referees can be.

There have also already been a number of people who have forgotten to sign their application forms. This means we have to send everything back to you.

Generally most applications are coming in well filled-out and with enough details so that the assessors can get to work on them straight away. This is encouraging and we'd love to see that trend continue.

## **Questions and answers**

The following are a selection of the questions that practitioners have been raising with the Department. If you have questions about the scheme that you would like answered, you can contact us on 0800 60 60 50 or [info@dbh.govt.nz](mailto:info@dbh.govt.nz)

**I work for myself building houses. I do all the work including design and roofing, and the**

**only sub-trades I work with are sparkies and plumbers. Can I use them both as referees, even though they can't comment on all of the work I do?**

Both electricians and plumbers can be referees for you. However, in some cases, you may need to also select another industry professional who can talk about the work you have been involved in. The important thing is that you have a different referee for each project you choose.

Remember, if you are having trouble identifying appropriate referees, you still have until November 2010 to work on projects that you can use to apply.

**When I fill in my application forms, why do I need to have referees who comment about the projects I have chosen? Why can't I just have referees who talk about my work in general?**

The idea behind choosing two or three projects is to show the type of work you have been doing. We need you to match your referees to this work so that they can talk about the same projects.

It is important therefore not to just send in letters from referees stating they have worked with you, but to get them to fill out the forms about the projects you have chosen. If you don't do this, we will have to return the forms to you and your application will go on hold while you complete the information.

**I am planning on applying for the Carpentry and Site 2 classes. So do I really have to fill in both sets of forms completely – it seems that there is a lot of similar information in them?**

Yes. You have to fill in all the sections of both the Carpentry and Site 2 forms. This is because each look at different aspects of your work.

The Site 2 class focuses more on the whole of building site, and how you brought all the sub-trades and elements together, therefore a lot of the questions deal with these sort of issues, which the carpentry forms do not cover.

**I would be grateful if you could shed some light on a liability question. As an LBP working for a building company on a salary paid as a site manager would I be liable for the work that I put my number to? Or am I using my number on behalf of the building company which would be the principal contractor? In this case would the building company be liable for all work that I undertook while working for them?**

Your liability will be the same when you are licensed as it is now, licensing makes no difference. The building company that you work for will have either a written or verbal contract with the client, which sets the ground rules for running the project and sorting out issues that arise. You should take a minute to talk to your employers about this as it is worthwhile understanding how this works.

The licensing scheme is currently voluntary and the Building Act has recently been amended so that you will not be signing off any work as an LBP once restricted building work is introduced (late 2010), although a record will be kept of the LBPs who worked on a job. At the moment licensing, for you, is a quality mark, a government supported recognition of your competence, and a marketing advantage for you and your employer.

**If the company director is licensed and takes responsibility for all the work completed, is there a need for anyone else in the company to be licensed?**

The licensed building practitioner scheme was established to increase consumer confidence through giving formal recognition to people in the building sector who are assessed as competent. Remember that a licensed practitioner is accountable to the Board for their work, and each case will be different.

Currently licensing is voluntary, so there is a choice about whether people are licensed or not. Restricted building work is not due to be introduced until late 2010. At that point certain building work (yet to be defined) will only be able to be carried out or supervised by a licensed building practitioner.

For straightforward building projects it might be possible for a company director to be licensed for all the necessary classes of work in a project. However, they would have to ask themselves if they are confident being accountable to the Building Practitioners Board for all of the work that has been completed. They would have to be certain that they have worked within the scope of their classes and within their own level of competency.

In a large company or for a large project it seems unlikely that one person would be licensed in all the classes necessary to cover all of the restricted building work elements.

The number of licensed practitioners that are required at each level of the building process will vary from case to case, but a company will need enough licensed practitioners at each level of the building process so that it can be satisfied that the practitioners involved are acting within their level of competence. This will also provide a marketing opportunity for the business.

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