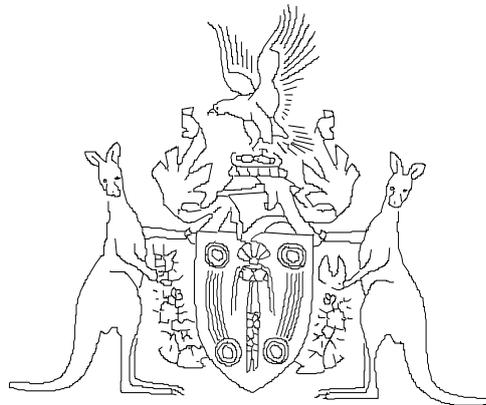


2002/2003

Annual Report

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2003



**NORTHERN TERRITORY
PLUMBERS AND DRAINERS
LICENSING BOARD**

NORTHERN TERRITORY

PLUMBERS AND DRAINERS LICENSING BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2003

INTRODUCTION

The Northern Territory Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Board is a statutory authority established under section 5 of the *Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Act 1983*. It is responsible for the issue of advanced licences, journeyman registration cards and reciprocity certificates.

The Board administers the *Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Act 1983*, and ensures that only qualified persons obtain licences, registration cards and certificates. It is also responsible for the assessment and maintenance of standards of workmanship and consumer protection by investigation of complaints, and where appropriate taking disciplinary action.

The Board fulfils its role by functioning in conjunction with other authorities that, under their respective legislation, require authorised plumbing and drainage works to be carried out by licensed tradesmen.

COMPOSITION OF THE BOARD

The Board is comprised of a Chairman and four members, each appointed by the Minister for a term not exceeding three years. These members are drawn from various representative groups within the Plumbing Industry and provide their services at no cost to Government.

The membership of the Board as at 1 October 2002 was as follows:

Chairman - Mr Kevin Commons-Fidge
Licensed Plumber & Drainer
Commons Plumbing Pty Ltd

Mr Commons served as Chairman until the expiry of his term on 3 April 2003.

Deputy Chairman - Mr Peter McDonald
Licensed Plumber & Drainer
Araluen Plumbing Pty Ltd

Member - Mr Gregory Howard
Lecturer
Department of Plumbing & Gas Fitting
Northern Territory University

Mr Gregory Howard resigned from his position at the NT University and consequently from the Board on 31 January 2003.

Member - Mr Norm Cramp
Power & Water Authority

Mr Norm Cramp resigned from his position on the Board on 2 September 2002.

Member - Vacant
NT Employment & Training Authority

Mr Dennis Sutton of NT Employment & Training Authority (NTETA) was a member for part of the previous year, with his membership ceasing at the time of change to his status within NTETA.

Following the changes to membership terms as detailed above, the following members were appointed to the Board on 25 June 2003.

Chairman - Mr Stephen Say
Lecturer
Department of Plumbing & Gas Fitting
Northern Territory University

Deputy Chairman - Mr Peter McDonald
Licensed Plumber & Drainer
Araluen Plumbing Pty Ltd

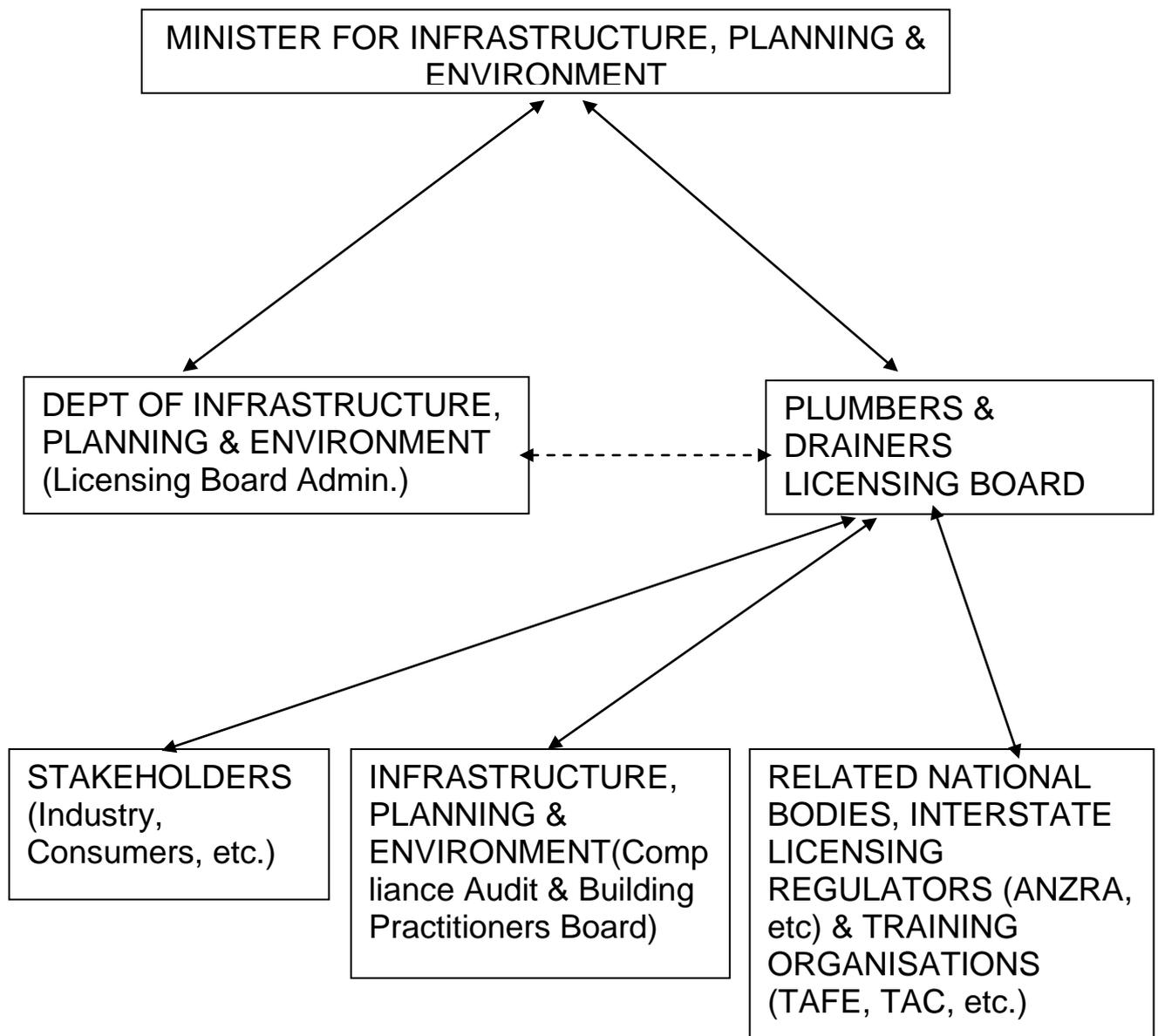
Members - Mr Gary Neilsen
Licensed Plumber & Drainer
Gary Neilsen Plumbing Pty Ltd

- Ms Wendi Masters
Dept of Employment Education & Training
Formerly NT Employment and Training Authority

- Mr John Pudney
Power & Water Corporation

The administrative support for the Board was provided by the Department of Employment, Education and Training during the previous year. On 1 January 2003 Administrative Orders transferring this responsibility to the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment was passed. The Board and its supporting staff relocated to Cavenagh House, 38 Cavenagh Street during early February 2003 in line with these orders.

The diagram below shows the Board's context and the environment in which it operates.



MEETINGS OF THE BOARD

Meetings are held at quarterly intervals or as required to attend to business at hand. During the period covered by this report, four meetings were held to deal with applications for advanced licences, journeyman registration cards and reciprocity certificates.

The Board maintains an open door policy. Any plumber, plumbing contractor or other interested party who wishes to clarify or discuss any matter relating to the Act or the Board's administration of it, is invited to do so.

LICENSING AND REGISTRATION OF APPLICANTS

Under the Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Act, the Board is responsible for issuing licences, registration cards and reciprocity certificates to qualified persons within the plumbing and draining industry.

Licences are issued to persons who satisfy the appropriate examination and practical experience qualifications as set out in the Act and determined by the Board.

A licence enables the holder to contract in his own rights and to perform and control the carrying out of authorised work which by legislation can only be carried out lawfully by holders of the appropriate licence or under their control or supervision.

The main difference between licenses and journeyman registration cardholders is that the latter are not permitted to contract or sub-contract work unsupervised. Journeyman registration cardholders may perform authorised work only as employees, contractors or sub-contractors, under the control and supervision of a licensee.

AUSTRALIA-NEW ZEALAND RECIPROCITY ASSOCIATION (ANZRA)

The Association is made up of representatives of all licensing authorities involved in plumbing, draining and gas fitting throughout Australia and New Zealand.

The Northern Territory Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Board is a signatory to the ANZRA Agreement on licensing and registration of plumbers and drainers. Other signatories are the licensing authorities of the six Australian states, the Australian Capital Territory and New Zealand.

The Association has a regular Conference, usually every two years and Executive Committee meetings every year.

The Objectives of the ANZRA Agreement are to:-

- (i) facilitate the recognition of certificates issued by the members as being acceptable certification of the level of competency of persons in one or more categories of work, thus enabling mobility within the plumbing and draining industry;
- (ii) encourage the adoption of uniformly high standards of qualifications and practices within the industry;
- (iii) exchange information on the relevant functions, practices, standards and legislation in each State and Territory; and
- (iv) investigate and assess the examination requirements for migrants.

ANZRA encourages a high standard of competence. To this end, its Biennial Conferences provide a forum for the exchange of information on the standards and practices of various sectors of the plumbing industry. Queensland hosted the 22nd Biennial Conference in November 2002. The conference was attended by the Chairman, Mr. Kevin Commons-Fidge and Mr Gregory Howard.

NATIONAL PLUMBING REGULATORS FORUM (NPRF)

The need for a national forum to deal with plumbing regulatory issues was highlighted in the 2000 review of the Australian Building Codes Board by Professor Laver. This report recommended the establishment of a Forum within existing resources, and with one of the main objectives being the development of a Plumbing Code of Australia, which would complement the National Building Code and other relevant Codes or Standards.

The Forum is made up of representatives of all regulatory authorities involved in plumbing, draining and gas fitting throughout Australia and New Zealand. The Northern Territory Plumbers and Drainers Licensing Board has the additional avenue for input as a member of ANZRA and has provided comment on the draft Plumbing Code of Australia.

RECIPROCITY CERTIFICATES

ANZRA Reciprocity Certificates may be issued at either Independent Status or Journeyman Status to qualified persons.

Reciprocity Certificates are accepted and recognised throughout Australia and New Zealand as confirmation that the person has passed the required theory and practical examinations and has not less than the prescribed period of supervised trade experience as set out in the ANZRA Agreement. Reciprocity Certificates have made an important contribution to uniformity of standards and qualifications.

The Board has issued several Reciprocity Certificates during the period covered by this report.

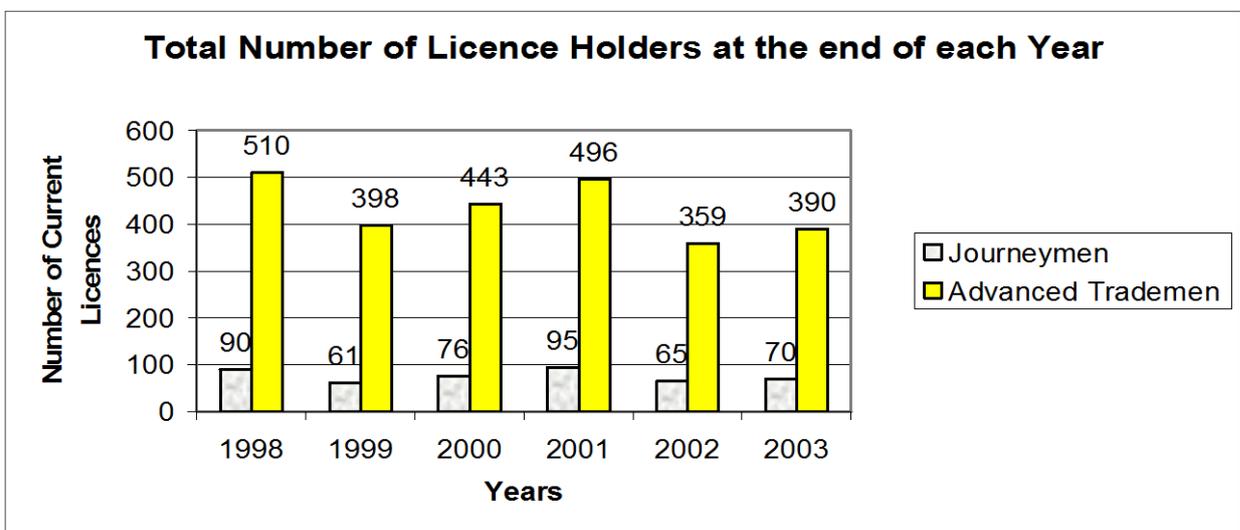
STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Advanced Tradesman Licences and Journeyman Registrations are issued in the categories of Plumbing, Draining and Plumbing & Draining. They are issued to persons who have completed training in the Plumbing, Draining and Gas fitting trade or who hold licences from other States/Territories and are eligible to be issued with the equivalent licence under mutual recognition.

As at 30 September 2003, the number of licences and journeyman registrations was as follows: -

	New Plumbers	New Drainers	New Plumbers and Drainers	Total New	Renewed Plumbers	Renewed Drainers	Renewed Plumbers and Drainers	Total Renewed	Total as at 30/9/2003
Journeymen Registrations	0	0	6	6	0	0	1	1	7
Advanced Tradesmen Licences	0	0	29	29	0	1	6	7	36

	Current Licences As at 1/10/2002	New Licences Issued	Renewed during the Year	Current Licences As at 30/9/2003
Journeymen Registrations	65	6	1	70
Advanced Tradesmen Licences	359	29	7	390



NATIONAL RESTRICTED ELECTRICAL LICENSING

The Electrical Workers and Contractors Licensing Board through the Electrical Regulatory Authorities Council have in recent years implemented National Restricted Electrical Licensing (NREL).

A restricted licence authorises the holder to carry out electrical work (including testing) associated with or for the purposes of the holder's trade or calling, subject to such restrictions or conditions as are specified in the licence.

Since its introduction, fourteen restricted electrical licences have been issued to Plumbers and Drainers licensed with this Board. Several other licensed Plumbers and Drainers are currently undertaking training through Training Solutions in Darwin and Centralian College in Alice Springs with a view to obtaining restricted electrical licences.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Environment administers the Boards budget and finances, which are included with those of the Electrical Licensing Board. The financial statement forms a part of the Department's report.

LEGISLATION REVIEW

The Board has been involved in developing the changes required by the National Competition Policy review. The implementation of this reviewed Act is imminent. Information was forwarded to all currently licensed plumbers informing of the resulting changes. A public meeting was also held in Darwin to which all local plumbers were invited. The Board looks forward to participating in the general review of the Act over the next twelve months.

Special thanks to all Board members for their voluntary contribution to the smooth operation of the Board.