

AMCAVIEWS

May 2009

NATIONAL OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING SYSTEM

At its recent meeting the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) signed an intergovernmental agreement on this issue. The signatories are all states and the commonwealth. The agreement will institute a national licensing system for seven occupational areas - two of which are of keen interest to AMCA.

They are:

- Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Mechanics; and
- Plumbers and Gas Fitters

The objective of the national system is to ensure that licensing arrangements are effective and proportional to that required for consumer protection, worker and public health and safety while ensuring economic efficiency and equity of access.

The system will be required to conform to COAG's principles of best practice in regulation. Specifically, the licensing arrangements will only include those requirements needed

to address identified consumer protection risks arising from market failure or public and worker health and safety risks without imposing unnecessary costs on consumers and businesses or substantially lessening competition.

Legislation will be passed in Victoria giving effect to the decision and all other states will introduce legislation in their jurisdiction that will adopt the Victorian laws.

The overall system will be under control of a Ministerial Council. A network of advisory committees will be established to give policy advice and direction.

These committees will have wide representation that includes business, regulators, unions and state governments.

INDUSTRY AWARDS

ARBS Exhibitions will be conferring a range of awards to individuals and companies at the exhibition scheduled for 12-14 April 2010 in Sydney. The awards that will be conferred are –

- Young Achiever
- HVAC Product
- Refrigeration Product
- HVAC Project Excellence – 2 awards (below \$1million - above \$1million)
- Refrigeration Project – 2 awards (below \$500,000 - above \$500,000)
- ESD Product Leadership
- ESD Project Leadership
- Industry Educator of the year

Full details of the awards and selection criteria will be released shortly. To gain access to the details of the awards and other aspects of the 2010 exhibition visit the ARBS website, www.arbs.com.au

COAG COMPACT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

With an expected rise in unemployment especially with young people all State Governments and the Commonwealth have agreed at COAG to introduce a compact for young people that includes:

- Age 15 -19 years to have an entitlement to an educational training place for any government subsidised qualification subject to admission requirements and course availability; and
- Age 20 24 years to have an entitlement to an educational training place for any government subsidised qualification which would result in the individual obtaining a higher qualification.

Annual National Conference -- Broome

Bookings are now open for the national conference to be held from **29 September - 2 October**. Contact Vera Ellett at Destination Events on (03) 9544-9600 to secure your place.



My Say: Guy Waters



Who?
Me?

It's amazing what effect the media has on the world.

The spectre of Swine flu has driven authorities in Egypt to destroy 400,000 pigs even though they know there is no proven infection of man from animal.

Governments stockpiling flu vaccine, companies manufacturing more to cope with the outbreak.

The bottom line so far has been that more people in the world die from normal strains of flu each year than have been infected with this new flu variant.

Yet the tabloids want us to know there has been 80 suspected cases of Swine flu in Australia. They neglect to add that 60 of these have been given the all clear.

It appears our fears really do overcome our sensibilities.

Think of the global economic position. If not for the fact that the media made sure we knew about each horrendous financial detail of every company the economies of the world would probably be operating as they had for the previous 5 years.

Many other situations can be thought of in the same light.

We need to carefully look at all situations that arise in our industry with a modicum of scepticism.

If we ask the question first of what is it we want from the situation it normally gives us our true course of action.

Firing off salvos of Chicken Little's lament "the sky is falling" normally only makes the situation worse and generally blinds us from the realities of the situation.

The changes to the OH&S, Fair Work Australia and other pressing issues are points in mind that need clear and concise thought of what we want from the situation. Yes there are challenges but as I have said before if we drive the change as an industry we normally will get what we want.

Make the challenges into opportunities for change.

30 SECONDS with NORM ARGENT - SPECIAL PROJECTS



SMS Spellcheck Name:

Normal Argument

How long have you been with the AMCA?

Um... (sorry)... 13 years until I retired in October 2007, and came back part-time at the end of August 2008.

Where did you work before the AMCA?

Um, I was with Matthew Hall-AMEC Constructions for 28 years.

What has been your favourite experience during your time at AMCA?

Seeing the AMCA expand to include the Associate and Affiliate Members.

What are you reading?

The Newspaper.

What are you watching?

What's that hospital show... All Saints!

What are you listening to?

...soothing music.

What was your most embarrassing moment?

The creation of an AMCA recommended charge-out rate which one AMCA member would claim from the other AMCA member; where the that member would only get a lesser amount from the builder!

What do you love?

My family... and grandkids! (...and golf!)

What do you hate?

Coming to work... nah! Hang on... the pressure that the world has forced everyone into.

What's on in NSW?

Date	Event	Contact
21 May 09	NSW Council	Guy Waters
1 June 09	Security of Payments	Martin Dennison
9/11 June 09	Mechanical Smoke & Fire Services	Martin Dennison
10 June 09	Low Risk Driving Seminar	Martin Dennison
15/22 June 09	Running a Small Business	Martin Dennison

My Say: David Eynon

CHANGES IN APPRENTICESHIP

Keeping up with the changes in apprenticeship training in the past decade has been difficult if not impossible for employers.

The old "32 CDA" apprenticeship course which many of today's tradesmen and employers went through was a good system and easy to understand.

All through the 1980s and 1990s, numerous reports were prepared on the way the system needed to be changed. These changes were not universally accepted and there was push back from many sections of the industry including the training system.

Industry training especially in the building trades is closely tied up with industrial relations issues. This complicated the process even more.

The end result of this turmoil is that the training package system we now have in place is not well understood nor accepted by many. Nevertheless the system must be complied with.

AMCA must accept some responsibility for the problems and difficulties we are now experiencing. However, we are fully committed to working in a cooperative manner with the TAFE system and other appropriate organisations to fashion the current training package system to achieve the best outcome possible for the mechanical contracting industry.

GREAT SPEAKERS –WEEKEND CONFERENCE

AMCA'S Annual Members weekend conference was held at the Sands Resort Torquay and was attended by 69 members including accompanying partners.

An evaluation is conducted at the conclusion of the conference where delegates and partners are invited to provide feedback on the structure and content of the program. Overwhelmingly the weekend was rated a success.

The Sands Resort is only 3 years old and surrounded by a Stuart Appleby design championship golf course.

Saturday's key note speaker was John Verbi from Inspirology. John conducted a lively seminar and workshop on a range of lifestyle, healthy living and dietary issues that are designed to help people achieve a better balance between work and family life.

Australian female champion cyclist Louise Yaxley spoke at the Sunday morning breakfast. Louise was one of the 5 Australian cyclists who was struck down by a motorist in Germany. Amy Gillett was killed in the accident in July 2005.

Louise suffered massive injuries in the accident and was within minutes of death when the medical team arrived at the scene of the accident. The story Louise told of the determination she displayed on the road to recovery had the audience spellbound.

Telling the story of the death of a very close friend is an emotional experience for Louise.

The AMCA member's weekend conference is highly valued by members. This year as well as the many people who are regular attendees, there were quite a few people who attended for the first time.

This weekend conference is held annually around the end of April. It provides an excellent opportunity for some professional development in a relaxed environment.



Glen Coombs gets the news on his body fat index



Dinner at Pettavel Winery and Restaurant



Presentation to Graham and Carol Spencer for their 21st attendance at an AMCA Members Weekend

What's on in VIC?

Date

15 May 09
19 May 09
16 June 09

Event

Managing Finance Course commences
Victorian Executive
Victorian Executive

Contact

Laura Steedman
David Eynon
David Eynon

My Say:

Graham MacKrell

ECONOMIC CYCLE BITES HARD

April as the commencement of a pre-budget quarter is often slower in both the private and public sector for commercial construction. As the global economic crisis bites hard, the number of stalled private sector projects has seen a renewed emphasis on the public sector resulting in unsustainable levels of competition in this sector which in boom times represents approximately between 37 and 40 % of commercial construction in Queensland. The reliance on government projects during recessionary periods sees this figure jump to as high as 60% of the available market.

Reports of a doubling of tenderers on tender lists are common as the market compresses and the industry competes for survival often in circumstances where newer entrants would take inexperienced risks in a sector with higher compliance regimes.

Both State and Federal Government policy settings which include the stimulus package, various training incentives, pay-roll tax rebates, make a minimal immediate positive impact on contractors committed to direct employment models. Regardless of government policy settings, the industry is challenged with a need to remain focussed on the possibilities during a time of recession.

Experience confirms that after every recession, we move towards a period of growth again and it is usually a question of timing before the private sector investment commences again.

Strong leadership together with a well communicated vision and staying close to the business and customers are all part of the strategy to manage during difficult times.

The association will do what it can to support members including placing pressure on policy-makers to ensure that governments honour their commitments.

GOVERNMENT ACTS ON REVIEW OF BOARDS AND STATUTORY AUTHORITIES

The Bligh Government will abolish more than 100 boards and committees and statutory authorities in a sweeping move to reduce bureaucracy and slash unnecessary red tape.

Premier Anna Bligh said the government had responded to the independent review of Queensland Government boards, committees and statutory authorities by Simone Webbe and Professor Patrick Weller, accepting 177 of the report's 210 recommendations.

"The government's response to these recommendations are in concert with significant public service structure reforms which are aimed at modernising the Queensland Government to enable better service delivery.

The Premier said 175 of the recommendations accepted by the government affected 263 bodies, 103 of which will be abolished, 81 of which will be subject to some form of change and 79 of which will retain their status quo

Ms Bligh said the functions of each of the boards and authorities would be assumed by either government departments or local governments.

"The government has also opted to support the review's recommendations that many groups maintain their status quo and continue in their current form or with some change.

Decisions 120 and 121 of this review recommend that the functions of the Queensland Plumbers and Drainers Board are placed under the authority of the Queensland Building Services Authority.

QUEENSLAND HOMES GO GREEN

All new houses in Queensland will be required to achieve a minimum 5 stars (out of 10) energy equivalent



rating from early next year under new sustainable housing regulations.

The 5-star rating - which will also apply to major renovations where possible - is just one of several new mandatory regulations covering house design and construction, and energy and water fixtures and fittings. The Towards Q2: Tomorrow's Queensland program is to cut the State's carbon footprint by a third and these measures will reduce the amount of electricity consumed in the domestic sector.

From 1 March 2009, the current minimum rating will be increased to 5 stars instead of the current 3.5 to 4.

A significant aspect of this program is the announcement that effective as of 1st July 2009, all split air-conditioning units which do not meet the new minimum standards will be banned from sale or installation in several classes of residential dwellings. Although industry is supportive of a reduction in the State's carbon footprint, the negative consequence of Queensland moving ahead of the rest of the nation in terms of Minimum Energy Performance Standards are being voiced by both equipment manufacturers and associations.

What's on in QLD?

Date

26 / 27 May 09
3 June 09
18 June 09

Event

John Pilley Contractors Session
NEBB AGM
Council meeting

Contact

Graham MacKrell
Graham MacKrell

My Say: Alan Layton

PROPOSED NATIONAL LICENSING SCHEME REMAINS UNCLEAR

Perhaps I've missed something, but it still remains unclear to me exactly what the Commonwealth is intending to license when it comes to the Air Conditioning and Mechanical Services industry. This is despite my attending two stakeholder consultation sessions run by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Taskforce and speaking with the departmental staff in WA who will have the task of implementing the licensing scheme in this State if indeed the scheme ever sees the light of day.

The Air Conditioning and Mechanical Services industry is one of seven industries which has been selected among the first group of industries to be licensed. Why our industry is among the first to be chosen nobody can tell me. It was not made clear at the national consultation sessions and the WA departmental staff could not offer any answers when I raised the issue with them.

Why an industry which operates in the commercial sector, as the members of AMCA do, needs to be licensed I'm not sure. The hard cold facts of commercial life are that if a company doesn't perform in the commercial sector it's out of business. The industry client base sees to that. Perhaps there's a case for introducing a national licence for tradespersons who operate in the residential sector. The plumbing and electrical industries seem comfortable with that, judging by some of their public utterances.

It appears to me that exactly who and what is to be licensed for whatever reasons will eventually be decided by detailed consultation with stakeholder interests. In this regard the Intergovernmental Agreement signed by all States and Territories on 30th April 2009 provides for the establishment of Occupational Licence Advisory Committees (OLACs). I understand that AMCA will be invited to be represented on the OLAC for our industry along with other industry organisations and unions.

AMCA at the National and State level will need to come to a clear view, as I'm sure it will, about what it wants out of the proposed national licensing scheme, prior to our participation in the OLAC process. I anticipate that there will be a range of views that will come forward along the pathway of developing a licensing regime for our industry. We need to be clear and forthright in our views and make sure that any licences that are introduced produce a benefit for AMCA members. No doubt it will be AMCA members, among others, who will contribute directly or indirectly to the costs of any scheme.

ASSOCIATION TO HOST SPECIALIST CONTRACTORS' AND SUPERVISORS' COURSES

AMCA has made arrangements with construction contracts lawyer, John Pilley, for him to deliver courses for specialist contractors and for site supervisors. The two courses will take place at the Association office on 17th and 18th June 2009.

Topics to be covered in the one-day contractor course include – tendering and its pitfalls, formation of contracts, preparation of contract documents, management of payment claims, site supervision, OH&S and environmental protection, and dispute resolution.

The half-day course for site supervisors will focus on the importance of filling out the various forms and daily diaries accurately and as required. The course will explain how these records often provide the frontline information to protect the company's contractual position in its dealings with the client and head contractor.

SWAN TAFE TO RUN CERT IV COMMISSIONING COURSE

Following consultations with AMCA WA, the Carlisle Campus of Swan TAFE is planning to conduct a Certificate IV course in HVAC Commissioning, commencing in the coming semester, 20th July 2009. The duration of the course is one year.

The qualification will be offered to people working in the mechanical services industry who hold a Certificate 111 in Engineering – Mechanical Trade (Refrigeration and Air Conditioning). The course will offer a mix of 'off the job' training and 'on the job' skill practice. Assessment will be a mix of project based assessment either through simulation or real workplace situations and testing of underpinning knowledge.

The pathway for further study following this qualification is obtaining diploma qualifications in engineering.

ED MEETS WITH BID RE INDUSTRY LICENSING

Alan Layton met with staff of the State Building Industry Development (BID) Directorate to discuss the current situation with industry licensing, following the recent round of national industry consultations conducted by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Taskforce.

It was confirmed at the meeting:

- The task in this State for progressing industry licensing will fall to the new WA Building Commission which is scheduled to get underway on 1st July 2009
- COAG is scheduled to sign off on the Inter-Governmental Agreement when it meets in April 2009 (subsequently signed on 30th April 2009)
- The lead jurisdiction for establishing the legislative model to implement the licensing scheme is Victoria
- Occupational Licensing Advisory Committees (OLACs), comprising employer and employee representatives, will be established to help craft the licensing regime in each industry, including air conditioning & refrigeration and plumbing
- The COAG Taskforce will conduct a further round of national stakeholder consultations later this year

NEW AMCA WA PRESIDENT

At the April meeting of AMCA Younis Tehfe the General Manager of Triple 'M' in WA accepted nomination to take over the role of Association President.

He succeeds Greg Waters who stepped down from the position following a change of employment.

Younis Tehfe is a long-term employee of Triple 'M'. He recently relocated with his family from New South Wales to head up the WA branch of the company. His previous position with Triple 'M' was for over 8 years as engineering manager, a position which gained him significant experience with consultants, clients and major head contractors.

What's on in WA?

Date	Event	Contact
26 May 09	AMCA General Meeting	Alan Layton
17/18 June 09	Specialist Contractors & Supervisors Courses	Maree Licastro

SANEWS

President : Albert Watson Executive Director: Chris Rankin
Hilton Central 42 Sir Donald Bradman Drive Mile End SA 5031
Ph: 08 8234 2899 Fax: 08 8234 1615
Email: crankin@amcasa.com.au

AMCA SA GOLF DAY 2009

With perfect weather, over 70 players and one of the best golf venues in Adelaide, the stage was set for a great event.

Held at the recently at upgraded Kooyonga Golf Club the day began with a BBQ lunch on the patio overlooking the first tee from 12:15 p.m. and ended with dinner in the new Member's dinning room. All of us were made to feel welcome by Kooyonga's staff (headed by Robert Taylor) and golf pro – Mike Sprengell and special guest and golf pro – Mike Haslett who gave advice and raised money on the 14th.

Congratulations to all of the winners on the day and thank you for all of the support from sponsors of the day and those companies that registered teams for the event.

Finally I would like to thank all of those who made contributions to our charity the Oncology Children's Foundation (OCF). We were able to raise over \$2,000 with the help of members and their guests.

If you didn't go this year – ask someone who did and we are sure you will in 2010.

Prize Winners For 2009

Winning Team: Air Diffusion Agencies (Captain – Bill Threadgold).

Second placed Team: Frigrite Hastie Group (Captain John Bowman)

Third placed Team: Alerton Australia (Captain – Ken Nealie).

Longest Drive: A Grade Winner: Grant Oates, B Grade Winner: Anthony Underwood.

Straightest Drive (Hole 10): Albert Watson, Nearest the Pin (Hole 7): Michael Barnes,

Nearest the Pin (Hole 14): Andrew O'Connor, Nearest the Pin (Hole 3): Andrew Darr

To all of our Sponsors Thank you:

Air Con Serve, Daikin Australia, Fantech (SA Division), Thermal Control Industries, TRP Ductwork / Spiraltube.



AMCA SA INDUSTRY DINNER

PLEASE put this date in your diary Friday, 17 July 2009.

The dinner invitations will be sent to you closer to the date, but in the mean time start getting together your list of guests to attend the function.



CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY REPORT: MARCH '09

In February over \$1,457,000,000 worth of projects were reported the data (covering start dates from April '09 through to late 2011). In the same report over \$165,000,000 worth of projects were put back between three and 6 months.

Trends of activity over the next five months remain little changed when compared with last month's report.

THE "STIMULUS PACKAGE" – SET TO GO

The national fiscal stimulus package recently announced by the Federal Government, is now well underway in SA.

The government is currently finalising up to twenty standard plans, for the various types of class rooms, science and language centres, libraries and assembly halls.

Some most of these buildings will require some form of air conditioning / mechanical services. The smaller Schools Pride component of the package does not provide for any form of air conditioning.

Minister Holloway has announced announcing the streamlining of the approvals process so that works can commence in May of this year.

For further information on the summary of the programme of project types and the time lines for those projects go to www.dtei.sa.gov.au/coordinator_general

For the processes for schools must follow, which may assist the reader to better understand the roll out and priorities of the projects go to www.decs.sa.gov.au/buildingtheeducationrevolution.

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS 2009

Over the past six months the AMCA SA has worked with contractor members to finalise a series of collective agreements for their plumber employees. The resulting agreements, which will run for the next three years, will be finalised in the coming days and should ensure a stable foundation into the future.

What's on in SA?

Date	Event	Contact
25 May	LDO 6	
2 Jun	Executive & General Meeting	Chris / Maureen
9 Jun	RDO 6	
17 Jun	Airconditioning Service Group Meeting	Chris / Maureen
18 Jun	Associate Members Meeting	Chris / Maureen