

Plumbing and Drainage Bill 2017

I wish to make a submission in regard to the Plumbing and Drainage Bill 2017.

My submission is in regard to the decision period for low risk plumbing application i.e. new dwellings connected to a reticulated sewer scheme.

The proposed 2 business days to approve a plumbing application for this type of work is not possible for a number of regional rural Local Government Areas where there is only one Plumbing Inspector and in some cases that person is required to carry out other duties such as operate water treatment plants etc.

If the inspector is to attend a conference or seminar which is essential in keeping up to date with changing technologies it can take a day's travel to get there and another to return so even a one day conference will be likely to exceed the time frame.

Most applications in our Council area are decided within 5 business days and this would be a more realistic time frame for low risk work.

The industries expectations are unreasonable when it considered in most cases the designers have taken a month to design the development and the builder has a month to price it up and then the plumber has 2 days to get an approval because the principle contractor is not getting it organised prior to the day he starts setting out the site. This is typically the information I am receiving from the Plumbing contractors some who are asked to start the work without prior notification that they are to arrange the plumbing approval.

While I agree that the current 20 Business days is excessive I think the 2 business days proposed is an absolute knee jerk reaction when a more sensible approach could be taken to improve the current time frames.

While industry associations are pushing for this ridiculously short turnaround time frame it is there members who need to be more organised and submit the applications in a timely manner. I have seen this as a contract plumber and now as a Plumbing Inspector. But it is being made out the Local Governments are causing delays in the commencement of building work.

I believe form indications from other Local Governments that most compliance Permits are issued in 5 Business days and this would be a more time frame.

While legislation often states "a reasonable time" I doubt that 2 days would be considered reasonable in any of the clauses that this is referred to.

Please consider these comments when reviewing the legislation, and note similar was provided in the survey when first put to public comment.

Regards

Gerard Irwin

