Plumbers,
Gasfitters and
Drainlayers Board

Level 4, 45 Johnston Street
P O Box 10655, Wellington 6140
Tel 0800 743 262, 04 494 2970
www.pgdb.co.nz

Consultation Document

Proposed fees and levies for 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2030

November 2026

Introduction

The Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Board (the **Board**) is seeking feedback on proposed changes to fees and levies for the 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2030 licensing years. These include practising licence fees, disciplinary and prosecution levies, and certain assessment and exemption charges.

This document sets out the proposed changes, what they would mean for practitioners, why they are being considered, and the Board's approach to cost recovery. The Board welcomes your feedback in relation to the proposed changes.

Consultation runs from 25 November to 5pm on 22 December 2026. The Board is scheduled to consider submissions and make its final decision in early 2027. Any agreed changes to fees and levies will apply to the licensing period 1 April 2027 onwards.

The Board understands that any fee and levy increase affects practitioners. The practising licence fee has not increased since January 2022. The disciplinary and prosecution levy has also not increased since January 2022 and was reduced by $25 to $275 in 2023/24.

The proposed fees and levies are based on what the Board expects it will cost to carry out its work under the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006 (**Act**) and how much funding it needs to do that work over the next three years. No final decisions have been made. We will consider all feedback received through this consultation before deciding the final fees and levies.

Proposal

The Board is proposing changes to selected fees and levies from 1 April 2027 to ensure it can continue to meet the costs of carrying out its regulatory responsibilities. The review covers the three-year period from 1 April 2027 to 31 March 2030.

Updated financial forecasts indicate that some existing charges are no longer sufficient to meet the costs of delivering regulatory services, particularly disciplinary activities and prosecutions of individuals who commit criminal offences in relation to sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, or drainlaying work.

The proposed changes are intended to make sure the fees and levies better reflect the cost of the work they pay for. They would also contribute to rebuilding the Board’s funds so there is money available to meet future costs.

Proposed fees and levies

The Board proposes the following changes:

Charge	Current (GST inclusive)	Proposed (GST inclusive)	Change
Practising licence fee (per registration class, per trade)	$100	$105	+$5
Provisional licence fee (per trade)	$100	$105	+$5
Notification of exemption under supervision under section 19, 21, or 25 of the Act	$100	$105	+$5
Disciplinary levy	$210	$295	+$85
Prosecution levy	$65	$80	+$15

Other proposed fee changes

The Board has also looked at fees for exemptions, advanced proficiency assessments, employer licences and some registration pathways. The current Fees Notice says these fees are to be charged on a full cost recovery basis but does not specify the amount of each fee. In practice, the Board has used standard upfront charges.

The Board has reviewed these charges against the actual costs of carrying out the work they relate to and found that they do not always reflect those costs. The Board proposes setting specific fees that better reflect the cost of the work involved. This will also make it clearer to applicants what they will be charged and help ensure the costs are met by the people using these services.

The table below shows how the existing fees are described in the current Fees and Levy Notice 2023 and the proposed fees. It also identifies three additional fees relating to the overseas registration, experience registration and certifying plumber to certifying drainlayer pathways which are not in the current notice. These functions were previously carried out by an external provider and are now being carried out by the Board.

Fee	Current fee per Fees and Levy Notice 2023	Proposed fee to be in new Fees and Levy Notice (GST inclusive)
Exemption for installing and maintaining particular sanitary plumbing equipment (Section 18 of the Act)	Full cost recovery	$1,800
Exemption for person authorised to carry out or supervise gasfitting (Section 20 of the Act)	Full cost recovery	$1,800
Exemption for fixing of water heaters by gasfitters (Section 24 of the Act)	Full cost recovery	$1,800
Exemption from registration and licensing requirements and conditions (Section 52 of the Act)	Full cost recovery	$2,600
Employer licence in respect of gasfitting (Section 62 of the Act)[1]	Full cost recovery	$4,000
Advanced Proficiency Assessment[2]	Full cost recovery	$3,000
Overseas registration pathway[3] - initial assessment - remaining assessment	Not in current notice	 $670 $2,200
Experience registration pathway (Section 52 of the Act)[4]	Not in current notice	$1,900
Certifying plumber to certifying drainlayer pathway (Section 52 of the Act)[5]	Not in current notice	$1,900

[1] From 2027, the employer licence fee will include the cost of the Board carrying out its own regulatory audit of employer licence holders. This is separate from the independent audit of the employer's system of operations, which will continue to be undertaken and billed separately.
[2] Clause 11(b) of the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers (Registration and Licensing) Notice 2025.
[3] Clauses 11 and 14 of the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers (Registration and Licensing) Notice 2025. For more information on the overseas registration pathways for persons seeking to be registered as a plumber, gasfitter and/or a certifier see the Board's website here and here.
[4] For more information on the experienced registration pathway see the Board's website here.
[5] For more information on the certifying plumber to certifying drainlayer pathway see the Board's website here.

Why these increases are being proposed

Practising licence fee

The annual practising licence fee has remained at $100 since 1 January 2022. Since that time, the cost of delivering the Board's licensing functions has increased, including staffing, operating costs and the maintenance of regulatory systems.

These functions include processing licence applications and renewals, maintaining accurate practitioner information and managing the systems that support registration and licensing. The costs associated with supporting licensed practitioners to maintain their knowledge and skills have also increased.

The proposed fee reflects the increased cost of delivering and maintaining these regulatory functions.

The Board is therefore proposing an increase of only $5 per practising licence, from $100 to $105. This represents the first increase in more than five years and is approximately one-quarter of the cumulative rate of inflation since the fee was last increased. The proposed increase reflects the Board's commitment to managing the cost of regulation and limiting additional costs to practitioners while continuing to meet its regulatory responsibilities.

Provisional licence and exemption notification fees

The provisional licence fee and notification fee for exemptions under supervision under sections 19, 21 and 25 of the Act have remained at $100 since 1 January 2022.

The Board proposes increasing both fees to $105. These fees contribute to the costs of processing applications and notifications, maintaining accurate records of practitioners' authorisations, updating the register, and administering the relevant regulatory requirements.

The proposed $5 increase reflects the rising costs of providing these services and maintaining the systems that support them.

Disciplinary levy

The disciplinary levy funds the Board's investigation of complaints and allegations concerning practitioners and any disciplinary proceedings that follow. This work is an important part of protecting public health and safety, maintaining professional standards, and holding practitioners accountable for their work.

The disciplinary process can involve assessing complaints, gathering evidence, preparing cases, conducting hearings and responding to appeals. Some cases are complex and require significant staff time, legal expertise and other resources. The Board has also increased its use of education,

reflective learning sessions, and formal warnings where these provide a more appropriate and proportionate response than formal disciplinary proceedings.

Education and reflective learning can help practitioners understand what went wrong, identify how their practice could be improved, and reduce the likelihood of similar concerns arising again in the future. Formal warnings provide a clear regulatory response where concerns need to be formally addressed but disciplinary proceedings are not warranted. Using a range of responses allows the Board to address concerns proportionately, while focusing more resource-intensive disciplinary proceedings on matters presenting greater risks to public health and safety or otherwise requiring formal action.

Every complaint or allegation must first be assessed and, where appropriate, investigated so the Board can determine the appropriate response. The level of work required varies depending on the nature and complexity of each matter, and some cases require specialist legal or other technical expertise. As the volume and complexity of matters can change from year to year, the Board needs to maintain sufficient capacity to meet its regulatory responsibilities and respond appropriately when concerns arise.

The Board recognises that an increase in the disciplinary component of the levy will have an impact on practitioners. The disciplinary reserve has now been exhausted, and the levy has not increased since January 2022. The Board also reduced the combined disciplinary and prosecution levy by $25, to $275, for the 2023/24 licensing year to keep costs to practitioners as low as possible for as long as possible.

The current position is no longer sustainable. The Board cannot use money collected through annual practising licence fees, including money held in its general reserve, to meet ongoing disciplinary costs. The Act only allows disciplinary work to be funded separately through the disciplinary levy. Where the disciplinary levy is not sufficient to meet the costs of this work, the levy needs to be adjusted.

The proposed increase in the disciplinary levy from $210 to $295 will ensure that the Board can meet the continuing costs of the disciplinary work, while progressively rebuilding the disciplinary reserve by 31 March 2030. Maintaining an adequate disciplinary reserve ensures the Board can manage variations in disciplinary activity and respond to complex or costly cases, while reducing the need for significant changes to the levy in response to short-term fluctuations in costs.

Prosecution levy

The prosecution component of the levy funds the investigation and prosecution of individuals who commit criminal offences in relation to sanitary plumbing, gasfitting or drainlaying such as working unauthorised or holding themselves out as an authorised plumber, gasfitter, or drainlaying when they are not. Effective enforcement helps protect the public from unsafe and unauthorised work, deters others from undertaking restricted work unlawfully, and reinforces the importance of complying with licensing requirements. It also helps protect the integrity of the licensing system and the investment licensed practitioners make in meeting the standards required to practise.

Recent prosecutions demonstrate the nature and range of unauthorised work investigated by the Board. These have included illegal plumbing and drainlaying across multiple properties, unsafe gasfitting installations, and other non-compliant work presenting risks to public health and safety. Outcomes have included fines and orders requiring offenders to pay reparation to affected homeowners. Further examples of the Board's prosecution work are available in the October 2026 Info Brief article and April 2026 prosecution media release.

The prosecution reserve is forecast to fall below its target under the current levy. The proposed increase from $65 to $80 is intended to bring levy revenue closer to the level required to meet forecast prosecution costs, rather than fully rebuild the reserve. The reserve is therefore expected to remain below its target through to 31 March 2030. This approach limits the increase for practitioners while providing greater funding to support the Board's ongoing enforcement activity.

In considering the proposed increase, it is also important to recognise that the Board has not increased the disciplinary and prosecution levy since January 2022. The Board also reduced the combined disciplinary and prosecution levy by $25 for the 2023/24 licensing year to keep costs to practitioners as low as possible for as long as possible.

Registration pathway assessment fees

The Board proposes introducing separately specified fees for three existing registration pathways under section 52 of the Act and/or clauses 11 and 14 of the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers (Registration and Licensing) Notice 2025: overseas registration, registration based on experience, and certifying plumber to certifying drainlayer.

These assessments involve different processes and costs. The proposed fees are intended to reflect the work involved in assessing applicants and determining whether they meet the requirements for registration.

For the overseas registration pathway, the Board proposes a two-part fee comprising an initial assessment of $670 and if an application progresses, an additional assessment fee of $2,200, bringing the total to $2,870.

For the experience registration pathway and the certifying plumber to certifying drainlayer pathway, the Board proposes a fee of $1,900.

Employer licence

The proposed increase in the employer licence fee reflects the cost of the Board introducing its own regulatory audit of employer licence holders. This will give the Board greater visibility of how each employer licence is operating in practice, including the work being carried out under the licence, the staff working under it, the training provided to those staff, and relevant on-site practices.

The Board's audit is separate from the independent audit of the employer's system of operations undertaken by Telarc for the purposes of certifying an employer licence applicant's system of operation. Telarc will continue to undertake and invoice employers separately for that audit.

Background information

Why the trades are regulated

Sanitary plumbing, gasfitting, and drainlaying are regulated because poor or unauthorised work can put public health and safety at risk. Failures can result in contaminated drinking water, sewage exposure, gas leaks, fires and other serious hazards. The Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006 provides the framework for requiring people who undertake restricted work to meet appropriate standards.

Regulation protects the public by establishing competence and licensing requirements and providing mechanisms to investigate complaints and take action where standards are not met. It also supports practitioners who have invested in qualifications, training and ongoing competence. Enforcement helps ensure that people who have not met the required standards cannot undertake restricted work without accountability.

The Board's functions

- Setting registration classes and minimum competence requirements.
- Registering and licensing practitioners and maintaining public registers.
- Supporting practitioners to maintain and develop their competence through continuing professional development.
- Providing information and guidance to help practitioners understand their regulatory obligations and expected standards of practice.
- Assessing complaints and conducting disciplinary processes where appropriate.
- Administering the regulatory regime for self-contained vehicles, including setting inspection requirements and appointing, monitoring and regulating certification authorities.
- Investigating and, where appropriate, prosecuting unauthorised plumbing, gasfitting and drainlaying work.

Funding provided for separate Crown-funded functions, such as the Self-contained vehicle regime, is accounted for separately and is not available to fund ordinary practitioner regulatory activities.

How the Board's work has changed

Since 2023, the Board's responsibilities and the way it delivers regulatory services have expanded considerably.

The Board has made a number of changes to how it delivers its regulatory functions and services. Continuing Professional Development is now delivered in-house and includes online learning, examinations have moved from scheduled sittings to an on-demand model, and online registration services have been introduced. The Board has also taken on new responsibilities associated with opt-in self-certification, while other activities, including exemptions and employer licence audits, have been or are being brought in-house. New registration pathways have also been introduced, including overseas registration, experience-based registration, and a pathway from certifying

plumber to certifying drainlayer. The Board has also introduced alternatives to formal disciplinary processes, including education and formal warnings, where these provide a more appropriate response to concerns.

These changes have increased the volume and complexity of the Board's work. Additional staff and specialist expertise have been required across registration and licensing, complaints and investigations, legal and compliance, and corporate support to deliver these services, support new regulatory processes, maintain digital systems and meet increased operational demands.

The Board has also taken on new responsibilities for opt-in self-certification and self-contained vehicles. These activities are outside the scope of this fees review.

The current review takes account of the changes relevant to the activities funded by the fees and levies under review, and the forecast costs of delivering those activities over the next three years.

How the Board is funded

The Board's core regulatory functions are funded through fees and levies paid by practitioners, rather than general government funding. Funding provided for separate Crown-funded functions, such as the Self-contained vehicle regime, is accounted for separately and is not available to fund ordinary practitioner regulatory activities.

The difference between a fee and a levy

A fee generally pays for a specific regulatory service, such as issuing a licence or assessing an application. A levy spreads the cost of a defined regulatory function across the relevant practitioner group. The disciplinary and prosecution levies support functions that benefit public safety and confidence in the regulated trades, even where an individual practitioner is never involved in a complaint or prosecution.

How fees and levies are set

The Board's approach is guided by the Auditor-General's Good Practice Guide to Setting and administering fees and levies for cost recovery and the Treasury's Guidance for Setting Charges in the Public Sector.

The Board reviews the expected costs of each regulatory activity, practitioner numbers, likely income and appropriate reserve levels. The Board uses financial forecasts and estimates of staff time to allocate costs across its regulatory activities. It also considers expected practitioner numbers and demand for services when calculating proposed charges. Costs are allocated to the relevant fees and levies as accurately as possible, with charges set to recover no more than the reasonable costs of delivering these activities over the three-year review period.

Fees and levies may recover more or less than the actual costs in individual years, but the aim is to balance income and expenditure over the full period. This helps provide stability and certainty for practitioners.

The Board also considers affordability, opportunities to manage costs and how existing reserves can be used. Reserves can help fund one-off projects and major investments but cannot sustainably cover ongoing funding shortfalls.

The Board's cash and reserves

The Board maintains financial reserves to meet its regulatory responsibilities, manage unexpected costs and support investment in essential systems. Its Reserves Policy provides for operational requirements[6], future capital replacement and potential wind-up costs.

The proposed increases are based on the forecast costs and ensuring the Board meets its reserve requirements for its regulatory functions, rather than the Board's overall cash position[7]. This approach balances the need to maintain adequate reserves with the financial impact of increased levies on practitioners.

As at 31 March 2026, the Board held approximately $9.8 million in cash and term deposits. However, a significant proportion of this money is income received in advance or related to Crown funded activities and therefore is not within the Board's reserves for fee and levy funded activities.

The remaining $4.773 million comprises total operating and asset replacement reserves for the fee and levy funded activities of the Board (including General, Disciplinary and Prosecutions). In addition to providing operational flexibility, the reserves will fund the significant investment in a unified regulatory platform (commencing in 2027/28) discussed under the heading 'Investing in regulatory systems' below.

The Board maintains separate reserves for disciplinary and prosecution activities to help meet the costs of complex investigations and proceedings, which can vary significantly from year to year.

The proposed disciplinary levy is intended to progressively rebuild the disciplinary reserve to its target level by 31 March 2030. The proposed prosecution levy is expected to cover ongoing costs, although the prosecution reserve is forecast to remain slightly below its target at that date.

Investing in regulatory systems

The Board is planning to replace its ageing, separate regulatory systems with a single, unified system. This will bring together practitioner information, registration and licensing, complaints and investigations, and disciplinary processes.

The existing systems have been developed and maintained over a number of years and are becoming increasingly costly and complex to support. Continuing to rely on these systems presents risks associated with ageing technology, cybersecurity, information management and the Board's ability to respond efficiently to legislative and regulatory changes.

The proposed investment is intended to:

[6] The Board seeks to hold a minimum of 6 months of relevant operating expenditure for its general reserve, and a minimum of three months of relevant operating expenditure for its Disciplinary and Prosecution reserves.

[7] The Board is targeting reserves at 31 March 2030 of $3.7m (General), $0.983m (Disciplinary) and $0.262m (Prosecutions) for operational requirements and capital replacement.

- Improve the security, reliability and resilience of the Board's regulatory systems.
- Reduce reliance on ageing and separately maintained systems.
- Improve the efficiency of registration, licensing, complaints and investigations processes.
- Reduce duplication and manual administrative processes.
- Improve the experience of practitioners interacting with the Board.
- Support the implementation of future legislative and regulatory changes.

The Board is progressing the procurement of an established technology platform rather than developing a bespoke regulatory system. This approach is intended to manage implementation risk and support a cost-effective and sustainable technology environment.

A new practitioner portal will make it easier for practitioners to access and manage their information online, complete regulatory processes and interact with the Board. Bringing these functions together should also reduce duplication, improve the accuracy of information and support more efficient processing of applications and enquiries.

A significant proportion of this investment will be funded from reserves accumulated for replacing the Board's assets and systems. Using these existing reserves reduces the amount that needs to be recovered through current practitioner fees and levies, while allowing the Board to invest in systems needed to deliver its regulatory functions. The Board will continue to refine the estimated costs through its procurement and due diligence processes.

Other cost pressures and exclusions

The self-certification endorsement fee and audit levy introduced in September 2026 are not being reviewed as part of this consultation. While the costs of administering the scheme are accounted for separately, the Board's financial forecasts include an allowance for additional disciplinary work that may arise from self-certification, and this has been included in our proposed fees and levies review.

Future legislative or regulatory changes could affect the Board's responsibilities and costs. These include potential changes arising from the Strengthening Occupational Licensing Regimes Amendment Bill, or other reforms introduced by the Government.

The costs of these potential changes have not been included in the forecasts because their scope, timing and financial implications remain uncertain. The Board will continue to monitor developments and may need to review fees and levies if its responsibilities or costs change significantly.

Next steps after consultation and analysis

Once the consultation period closes at 5pm on 22 December 2026, the Board will analyse the submissions and consider the feedback before making a final decision on the proposed fees and levies. The Board is scheduled to consider the proposals in early 2027.

The Board will communicate its decision to practitioners and publish any changes to fees and levies in the New Zealand Gazette in accordance with the Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Act 2006. If approved, the new charges would take effect from 1 April 2027.

If the consultation results in substantially different proposals that require further consultation, the Board will advise practitioners of the next steps and relevant timeframes.

Publication of consultation feedback

Following its decision, the Board intends to publish a summary of the main themes raised in submissions and how they were considered. The summary will not identify individual submitters. The Board may use anonymised excerpts from feedback; please tell us if you do not want your comments quoted in this way.

The Board is subject to the Official Information Act 1982. Submissions may be requested under that Act, and any decision to release information will be made in accordance with the law. If your submission contains information you consider confidential, please identify it and explain why.

Privacy statement

The Board collects personal information provided with submissions, including names, registration numbers and contact details, to administer the consultation, analyse feedback and inform its decisions on the proposed fees and levies. Feedback may also inform future consultations. Personal information will be handled in accordance with the Privacy Act 2020 and the Board's privacy statement. Information may be disclosed where required or permitted by law, including under the Official Information Act 1982.

Have your say

The Board welcomes your feedback on the proposed fees and levies, including the proposed amounts, the reasons for the changes and the approach to using and rebuilding reserves. Your feedback will help inform the Board's final decision.

Consultation will run from 25 November to 5pm on Tuesday 22 December 2026. You can provide feedback by:

- Completing the online consultation form (preferred option)
- Emailing your comments to consultation@pgdb.co.nz.
- Posting your comments to: The Registrar, Plumbers, Gasfitters, and Drainlayers Board, PO Box 10655, Wellington 6143.

Please ensure your feedback reaches the Board by 5pm on 22 December 2026. Include your name, registration number (if applicable), organisation (if relevant), email address and phone number so we can contact you if clarification is needed.

Thank you for taking the time to provide feedback. The Board appreciates your contribution and will consider all submissions before making its final decision.