

Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs

Submission from John Samuel

Dear Hon Simon O'Brien

Petition No. 119 - The Building Commission and the State Administrative Tribunal

The subject matter is the handling of complaints by the Building Commission and the SAT.

I have conferred sufficiently with the appropriate people before presenting this submission, so I have not done so lightly. This group consists of true industry experts, legal, political and consumers.

I have not been to the Ombudsman.

Attached with this submission today is a cartoon printed in the "Brief" magazine of December 2014. Even people who are consumed with rage because they believe they have been treated unfairly, have laughed when they see this cartoon. Many or most consumers don't bother complaining about builders because they believe it is a waste of time. They believe that the only difference between the old BDT and the BC/SAT is the name on the building. The complaints about the BC are related to incompetence and negligence.

When their file ends up in the "too hard" basket, the issue then leaves the "stroll in the park" pace of the Building Commission and the consumer (who dared to complain) finds himself in the "F1 GP" pace of the SAT, where the issue becomes more about speed and statistics, rather than justice, the real reason the SAT was created. Mediation is fine, but not when consumers are urged, even manoeuvred, into accepting a bad compromise on quality.

Also attached with this submission is an excerpt from Hansard 22 April 2010, a question from Mr A J Simpson to the Minister of Commerce, Mr T R Buswell.

All who have read this agree that in six years nothing has changed (except the name on the building).

My enquiries into white set plaster, the Building Commission and the SAT all began because of one incident. On 26 October 2015, Mr Neville Harrison attended my son's home in company with the Construction Manager of Blue Print Homes.

He made a series of threats trying to intimidate me into submitting to his demands, and then statements implicating all members of the SAT, including judges and senior members, in conduct tantamount to perverting or attempting to pervert the course of justice.

Subsequent to this meeting and after further enquires, I am reliably informed by industry people at an open meeting that this is not uncommon conduct by Mr Harrison.

I would be pleased to appear before any public enquiry.