

Before the Building Practitioners Board

	BPB Complaint No. 26980
Licensed Building Practitioner:	Shilin Zhang (the Respondent)
Licence Number:	BP 137019
Licence(s) Held:	Carpentry, Foundations and Site AoP 2

Decision of the Board in Respect of the Conduct of a Licensed Building Practitioner Under section 315 of the Building Act 2004

Complaint or Board Inquiry:	Board Inquiry
Hearing Type:	On the Papers
Draft Decision Date:	16 March 2026
Final Decision Date:	6 May 2026

Board Members Present:

Mr M Orange, Chair, Barrister (Presiding)
Mr G Pearson, Barrister and Solicitor – Legal Member
Mr G Anderson, LBP, Carpentry and Site AoP 2
Ms S Chetwin CNZM, Barrister and Solicitor, Professional Director

Procedure:

The matter was considered by the Building Practitioners Board (the Board) under the provisions of Part 4 of the Building Act 2004 (the Act), the Building Practitioners (Complaints and Disciplinary Procedures) Regulations 2008 (the Complaints Regulations) and the Board's Complaints and Inquiry Procedures.

Disciplinary Finding:

The Respondent **has** committed a disciplinary offence under section 317(1)(da)(ii) of the Act.

The Respondent is fined \$1,000 and ordered to pay costs of \$700. A record of the disciplinary offending will be recorded on the Public Register for a period of three years.

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Summary of the Board’s Decision

[1] The Respondent failed to provide a record of work on completion of restricted building work. He is fined \$1,000 and ordered to pay costs of \$700. The disciplinary finding will be recorded on the Public Register for a period of three years.

The Charges

[2] The prescribed investigation and hearing procedure is inquisitorial, not adversarial. The Board sets the charges and decides what evidence is required.¹

[3] In this matter, the disciplinary charge the Board resolved to further investigate² were that the Respondent may, in relation to building work at [OMITTED] have failed, without good reason, in respect of a building consent that relates to restricted building work that he or she is to carry out or supervise, or has carried out or supervised, (as the case may be), to provide the persons specified in section 88(2)

¹ Under section 322 of the Act, the Board has relaxed rules of evidence which allow it to receive evidence that may not be admissible in a court of law. The evidentiary standard is the balance of probabilities, *Z v Dental Complaints Assessment Committee* [2009] 1 NZLR 1.

² The resolution was made following the Board’s consideration of a report prepared by the Registrar in accordance with regulation 10 of the Complaints Regulations.

with a record of work, on completion of the restricted building work, in accordance with section 88(1) of the Act contrary to section 317(1)(da)(ii) of the Act.

Draft Decision Process

- [4] The Board's jurisdiction is that of an inquiry. Ordinarily, the Board makes a decision after holding a hearing.³ The Board may, however, depart from its normal procedures if it considers that doing so would achieve the purposes of the Act, and it is not contrary to the interests of natural justice.⁴
- [5] In this instance, the Board decided that a formal hearing was not necessary. The Board considered that there was sufficient evidence before it to allow it to make a decision on the papers. It noted, however, that there may have been further evidence in relation to the matter that the Board was not aware of. To that end, it issued a Draft Decision. The Respondent was provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft findings and to present further evidence prior to the Board making a final decision. The Board further noted that if the Respondent requested an in-person hearing, then the Draft Decision would be set aside, and a hearing would be scheduled.

Evidence

- [6] The Board must be satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the alleged disciplinary offences have been committed.⁵ Under section 322 of the Act, the Board has relaxed rules of evidence, which allow it to receive evidence that may not be admissible in a court of law.

Failure to Provide a Record of Work

- [7] A Licensed Building Practitioner must provide a record of work for any restricted building work that they have carried out or supervised to the owner and the Territorial Authority (TA) on completion of their restricted building work.⁶
- [8] There is a statutory requirement under section 88(1) of the Building Act 2004 for a licensed building practitioner to provide a record of work to the owner and the TA on completion of restricted building work⁷ unless there is a good reason for it not to be provided.⁸

Did the Respondent carry out or supervise restricted building work

- [9] The Respondent was engaged to carry out and/or supervise building work on a new residential dwelling under a building consent. His work included work on the

³ Regulation 10 of the Complaints Regulations.

⁴ Under Clause 27 of Schedule 3 the Board may regulate its own procedure and it has summary jurisdiction, which allows for a degree of flexibility in how it deals with matters: *Castles v Standards Committee No.* [2013] NZHC 2289, *Orlov v National Standards Committee 1* [2013] NZHC 1955

⁵ *Z v Dental Complaints Assessment Committee* [2009] 1 NZLR 1

⁶ Section 88(1) of the Act.

⁷ Restricted Building Work is defined by the Building (Definition of Restricted Building Work) Order 2011

⁸ Section 317(1)(da)(ii) of the Act

foundations of two new duplexes, which is restricted building work because they form part of the primary structure of a residential dwelling.⁹

Was the restricted building work complete

[10] The Respondent's building work took place between October 2023 and July 2024. He had no further involvement in the building work. As such, July 2024 was the completion date.

Has the Respondent provided a record of work

[11] The Respondent did not provide a record of work on completion or soon thereafter. He did provide one as a result of the Board's investigations. The Respondent's late provision of a record of work has been taken into consideration as a mitigating factor only.

Was there a good reason

[12] The Respondent set out that he was only a subcontractor and that the main contractor did not provide him with any notification that a record of work was required for the owner's information. Neither of those reasons is a good reason.

[13] Firstly, the requirement is on the Licensed Building Practitioner to provide a record of work, not on the owner or the TA to demand one. He was required to act of his own accord and not wait for others to remind him of his obligations.

[14] Secondly, whilst the Respondent may not have had immediate access to the owner's details, there was no impediment to his providing a record of work to the TA as per his obligation to do so. Also, he could have made enquiries to ascertain the owner's details so as to provide a record of work to the owner.

Further Evidence and Submissions Received

[15] Following the Board's issuance of a Draft Decision, the Board received a submission from the Respondent. The Respondent did not seek a hearing.

[16] The Respondent set out that he had not intentionally withheld his record of work. He also stated that he mistakenly believed the main contractor was the owner and that he had an established protocol of providing his records of work to the main contractor. Finally, he noted that he had immediately rectified the situation after the complaint had been made.

Consideration of further evidence and submissions

[17] Dealing first with intent, the disciplinary offence does not require that the Respondent have acted intentionally. Section 317(1)(da)(ii) of the Act is a form of strict liability offence. If the elements of the offence are met, completion of the

⁹ Clause 5 of the Building (Definition of Restricted Building Work) Order 2011

restricted building work and a failure to provide, then the offence has been committed, and it is for the Respondent to establish a good reason as a defence.

- [18] Turning to good reasons, the Respondent says he thought the main contractor was the owner. The building consent the Respondent would have built from would have included the owner's details, so it should have been clear who the owner was. Also, the requirement is to provide a record of work to the owner and the TA. There is no evidence that the Respondent met the requirement to provide his record of work to the TA.
- [19] Regarding his established practice of providing a record of work to the main contractor, whilst it may be common practice in some quarters of the building industry for records of work to be provided to main contractors, it is a practice that carries with it the risk that the record of work will not be passed on to the required recipients, the owner and the TA. This can occur for a variety of reasons, including as a result of a contractual dispute. If the main contractor does not pass a record of work on to the final recipients, it is the author of the record of work that will be held accountable by the Board, not the person or entity that they entrusted to fulfil their statutory obligation.
- [20] Finally, the Board has taken into account the late provision of a record of work following a complaint as a mitigating factor.

Board's Decision

- [21] The Respondent **has** failed to provide a record of work on completion of restricted building work.

Penalty, Costs and Publication

- [22] Having found that one or more of the grounds in section 317 applies, the Board must, under section 318 of the Actⁱ, consider the appropriate disciplinary penalty, whether the Respondent should be ordered to pay any costs and whether the decision should be published.
- [23] The matter was dealt with on the papers. The Board made an indicative order in its Draft Decision. It has since received submissions and made a final decision on its penalties, costs, and publication orders.

Penalty

- [24] The Board has the discretion to impose a range of penalties.ⁱⁱ Exercising that discretion and determining the appropriate penalty requires that the Board balance various factors, including the seriousness of the conduct and any mitigating or

aggravating factors present.¹⁰ It is not a formulaic exercise, but there are established underlying principles that the Board should take into consideration. They include:¹¹

- (a) protection of the public and consideration of the purposes of the Act;¹²
- (b) deterring the Respondent and other Licensed Building Practitioners from similar offending;¹³
- (c) setting and enforcing a high standard of conduct for the industry;¹⁴
- (d) penalising wrongdoing;¹⁵ and
- (e) rehabilitation (where appropriate).¹⁶

[25] Overall, the Board should assess the conduct against the range of penalty options available in section 318 of the Act, reserving the maximum penalty for the worst cases¹⁷ and applying the least restrictive penalty available for the particular offending.¹⁸ In all, the Board should be looking to impose a fair, reasonable, and proportionate penalty¹⁹ that is consistent with other penalties imposed by the Board for comparable offending.²⁰

[26] In general, when determining the appropriate penalty, the Board adopts a starting point based on the principles outlined above prior to considering any aggravating and/or mitigating factors present.²¹

[27] Record of work matters are at the lower end of the disciplinary scale. The Board's normal starting point for a failure to provide a record of work is a fine of \$1,500, an amount which it considers will deter others from such behaviour.

[28] The Respondent provided a record of work as a result of the Board's investigations. The late provision has been taken into account as a mitigating factor, and the fine has been reduced by \$500.

Costs

[29] Under section 318(4) of the Act, the Board may require the Respondent to pay the costs and expenses of, and incidental to, the inquiry by the Board. The rationale is

¹⁰ *Ellis v Auckland Standards Committee* 5 [2019] NZHC 1384 at [21]; cited with approval in *National Standards Committee (No1) of the New Zealand Law Society v Gardiner-Hopkins* [2022] NZHC 1709 at [48]

¹¹ Cited with approval in *Robinson v Complaints Assessment Committee of Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand* [2022] NZCA 350 at [28] and [29]

¹² Section 3 Building Act

¹³ *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

¹⁴ *Dentice v Valuers Registration Board* [1992] 1 NZLR 720 (HC) at 724

¹⁵ *Patel v Complaints Assessment Committee* HC Auckland CIV-2007-404-1818, 13 August 2007 at p 27

¹⁶ *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354; *Shousha v A Professional Conduct Committee* [2022] NZHC 1457

¹⁷ *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

¹⁸ *Patel v Complaints Assessment Committee* HC Auckland CIV-2007-404-1818

¹⁹ *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

²⁰ *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

²¹ In *Lochhead v Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment* 3 November [2016] NZDC 21288 the District Court recommended that the Board adopt the approach set out in the Sentencing Act 2002.

that other Licensed Building Practitioners should not be left to carry the financial burden of an investigation and hearing.²²

- [30] The courts have indicated that 50% of the total reasonable costs should be taken as a starting point in disciplinary proceedings.²³ The starting point can then be adjusted up or down, depending on the particular circumstances of each case.²⁴
- [31] The Board has adopted an approach to costs that uses a scale based on 50% of the average costs of different categories of hearings: simple, moderate and complex. The current matter was simple. Adjustments are then made.
- [32] Based on the above, the Board's costs order is that the Respondent is to pay the sum of \$700 toward the costs of and incidental to the Board's inquiry. This is the Board's scale amount for a simple matter that has been dealt with by way of a Draft Decision. It is significantly less than 50% of the actual costs.

Publication

- [33] As a consequence of its decision, the Respondent's name and the disciplinary outcomes will be recorded in the Public Register maintained as part of the Licensed Building Practitioners' scheme as is required by the Act,²⁵ and he will be named in this decision, which will be available on the Board's website. The Board is also able, under section 318(5) of the Act, to order further publication.
- [34] Within New Zealand, there is a principle of open justice and open reporting, which is enshrined in the Bill of Rights Act 1990.²⁶ Further, as a general principle, publication may be required where the Board perceives a need for the public and/or the profession to know of the findings of a disciplinary hearing, and the courts have stated that an adverse finding in a disciplinary case usually requires that the name of the practitioner be published.²⁷
- [35] Based on the above, the Board will not order any publication over and above the record on the Register, the Respondent being named in this decision, and the publication of the decision on the Board's website. The Respondent should note, however, that as the Board has not made any form of suppression order, other entities, such as the media or the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, may publish under the principles of open justice reporting.

²² *Collie v Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2001] NZAR 74

²³ *Kenneth Michael Daniels v Complaints Committee 2 of the Wellington District Law Society* CIV-2011-485-000227 8 August 2011

²⁴ *Cooray v The Preliminary Proceedings Committee* HC, Wellington, AP23/94, 14 September 1995, *Macdonald v Professional Conduct Committee*, HC, Auckland, CIV 2009-404-1516, 10 July 2009, *Owen v Wynyard* HC, Auckland, CIV-2009-404-005245, 25 February 2010.

²⁵ Refer sections 298, 299 and 301 of the Act

²⁶ Section 14 of the Act

²⁷ *Kewene v Professional Conduct Committee of the Dental Council* [2013] NZAR 1055

Section 318 Order

[36] For the reasons set out above, the Board directs that:

Penalty: Pursuant to section 318(1)(f) of the Building Act 2004, the Respondent is ordered to pay a fine of \$1,000.

Costs: Pursuant to section 318(4) of the Act, the Respondent is ordered to pay costs of \$700 (GST included) towards the costs of, and incidental to, the inquiry of the Board.

Publication: The Registrar shall record the Board's action in the Register of Licensed Building Practitioners in accordance with section 301(1)(l)(iii) of the Act.

In terms of section 318(5) of the Act, the Respondent will be named in this decision, which will be published on the Board's website.

[37] The Respondent should note that the Board may, under section 319 of the Act, suspend or cancel a licensed building practitioner's licence if fines or costs imposed as a result of disciplinary action are not paid.

Right of Appeal

[38] The right to appeal Board decisions is provided for in section 330(2) of the Actⁱⁱⁱ.

Signed and dated this 18th day of May 2026.



Mr M Orange
Presiding Member

ⁱ Section 318 of the Act

- (1) In any case to which section 317 applies, the Board may
- (a) do both of the following things:
 - (i) cancel the person's licensing, and direct the Registrar to remove the person's name from the register; and
 - (ii) order that the person may not apply to be relicensed before the expiry of a specified period:
 - (b) suspend the person's licensing for a period of no more than 12 months or until the person meets specified conditions relating to the licensing (but, in any case, not for a period of more than 12 months) and direct the Registrar to record the suspension in the register:
 - (c) restrict the type of building work or building inspection work that the person may carry out or supervise under the person's licensing class or classes and direct the Registrar to record the restriction in the register:
 - (d) order that the person be censured:
 - (e) order that the person undertake training specified in the order:

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- (f) *order that the person pay a fine not exceeding \$10,000.*
 - (2) *The Board may take only one type of action in subsection 1(a) to (d) in relation to a case, except that it may impose a fine under subsection (1)(f) in addition to taking the action under subsection (1)(b) or (d).*
 - (3) *No fine may be imposed under subsection (1)(f) in relation to an act or omission that constitutes an offence for which the person has been convicted by a court.*
 - (4) *In any case to which section 317 applies, the Board may order that the person must pay the costs and expenses of, and incidental to, the inquiry by the Board.*
 - (5) *In addition to requiring the Registrar to notify in the register an action taken by the Board under this section, the Board may publicly notify the action in any other way it thinks fit."*

ii Section 318 Disciplinary Penalties

- (1) *In any case to which section 317 applies, the Board may—*
 - (a) *do both of the following things:*
 - (i) *cancel the person's licensing and direct the Registrar to remove the person's name from the register; and*
 - (ii) *order that the person may not apply to be relicensed before the expiry of a specified period:*
 - (b) *suspend the person's licensing for a period of no more than 12 months or until the person meets specified conditions relating to the licensing (but, in any case, not for a period of more than 12 months) and direct the Registrar to record the suspension in the register:*
 - (c) *restrict the type of building work or building inspection work that the person may carry out or supervise under the person's licensing class or classes and direct the Registrar to record the restriction in the register:*
 - (d) *order that the person be censured:*
 - (e) *order that the person undertake training specified in the order:*
 - (f) *order that the person pay a fine not exceeding \$10,000.*
- (2) *The Board may take only 1 type of action in subsection (1)(a) to (d) in relation to a case, except that it may impose a fine under subsection (1)(f) in addition to taking the action under subsection (1)(b) or (d).*
- (3) *No fine may be imposed under subsection (1)(f) in relation to an act or omission that constitutes an offence for which the person has been convicted by a court.*
- (4) *In any case to which section 317 applies, the Board may order that the person must pay the costs and expenses of, and incidental to, the inquiry by the Board.*
- (5) *In addition to requiring the Registrar to notify in the register an action taken by the Board under this section, the Board may publicly notify the action in any other way it thinks fit.*

iii Section 330 Right of appeal

- (2) *A person may appeal to a District Court against any decision of the Board—*
 - (b) *to take any action referred to in section 318.*

Section 331 Time in which appeal must be brought

An appeal must be lodged—

- (a) *within 20 working days after notice of the decision or action is communicated to the appellant; or*
- (b) *within any further time that the appeal authority allows on application made before or after the period expires.*