

Before the Building Practitioners Board

	BPB Complaint No. 27012
Licensed Building Practitioner:	Wen Bo Liu (the Respondent)
Licence Number:	BP 131807
Licence Held:	Carpentry

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
Hearing and Draft Decision Date:	24 April 2026
Finalised Draft Decision Date:	16 June 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 \$1,500 and ordered to pay costs of \$700. A record of the disciplinary offending will be recorded on the Public Register for 3 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 \$1,500 and ordered to pay costs of \$700. The disciplinary finding will be recorded on the Public Register for 3 years.
- [2] If the Respondent provides a record of work by the close of the submission period to both the owner and the Territorial Authority, as per the requirements of section 88(1) of the Act, the fine will be reduced to \$1,000.

The Charges

- [3] The prescribed investigation and hearing procedure is inquisitorial, not adversarial. There is no requirement for a complainant to prove the allegations. The Board sets the charges and decides what evidence is required.¹
- [4] In this matter, the disciplinary charges 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) 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.

Service

- [5] Prior to considering the disciplinary charge, the Board needs to determine whether the Respondent has been provided with notice of the complaint and with an opportunity to respond to it. This is to ensure that he is afforded his right to natural justice as section 283 of the Act stipulates that the Board “*must comply with the principles of natural justice*” and with the Complaints Regulations.
- [6] The principles of natural justice require that hearings are conducted in a manner that ensures that a respondent is given a fair opportunity to be heard, to contradict the evidence and that the decision-making process is conducted fairly, transparently and in good faith. In terms of a fair hearing, a respondent should be given the opportunity to respond to an allegation which, with adequate notice, might be effectively refuted. The Complaints Regulations recognise those principles and prescribe a process that must be complied with when a complaint is made. That process includes providing the Respondent with a copy of the complaint and an opportunity to respond to it³ and the opportunity to appear and be heard at a hearing.⁴
- [7] In this matter, the Respondent has not responded to either emails outlining the allegation made against him and the process for him to submit his response, or phone calls from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment case officer. The emails and phone calls were made to the contact details provided by him on the Register of Licensed Building Practitioners (LBPs).

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.

³ Regulation 7(2) of the Complaints Regulations.

⁴ Regulation 12 of the Complaints Regulations.

- [8] The Register must contain certain information, including under section 301(1)(d) of the Act, an “address for communications under this Act”. Under section 302, the LBP must keep their details up to date:

302 Obligation to notify Registrar of change in circumstances

- (1) *Each [person applying to become licensed], and each licensed building practitioner, must give written notice to the Registrar of any change in circumstances within 10 working days after the change.*
- (2) *Change of circumstances—*
 - (a) *means any change in the information that the person has provided to the Registrar under this subpart; and*
 - (b) *includes any change that may be prescribed (if any).*

- [9] As the Respondent has not provided any updated details, the address to be used for communications with him is that contained in the Register.⁵ It is also an offence if an LBP fails to update the Register.

- [10] The Act also provides for the service of notices in section 394. It provides that:

394 Service of notices

- (1) *Any notice or other document required to be served on, or given to, any person under this Act is sufficiently served if it is—*
 - (a) *delivered personally to the person; or*
 - (b) *delivered to the person at the person’s usual or last known place of residence or business; or*
 - (c) *sent by fax or email to the person’s fax number or email address; or*
 - (d) *posted in a letter addressed to the person at the person’s usual or last known place of residence or business.*
- (5) *A notice or other document sent by post to a person in accordance with subsection (1)(d) must be treated as having been received by that person at the time at which the letter would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post.*

- [11] Given the above, the Board finds that the required notifications under the Regulations have been provided to the Respondent.

- [12] The Respondent is not obliged to respond. The requirement is that he is given the opportunity to do so. As that has occurred, natural justice requirements have been met. The Board will consider the matter.

⁵ Section 314 of the Act.

- [13] The Board also notes that the purposes of the disciplinary provisions in the Act would be defeated if LBPs were able to avoid complaints by not engaging in investigations or appearing at hearings. As such, it is appropriate that it deals with the matter.

Draft Decision Process

- [14] The Board's jurisdiction is that of an inquiry. Complaints are not prosecuted before the Board. Rather, it is for the Board to carry out any further investigation that it considers necessary prior to it making a decision.
- [15] Ordinarily, the Board makes a decision after holding a hearing.⁶ 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.⁷
- [16] In this instance, the Board has decided that a formal hearing is not necessary. The Board considers there is sufficient evidence before it to allow it to make a decision on the papers. There may, however, be further evidence in relation to the matter the Board was not aware of. To that end, this decision is a draft Board decision. The Respondent will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the draft findings and to present further evidence prior to the Board making a final decision. If the Respondent requests an in-person hearing, or the Board directs that one is required, this decision will be set aside, and a hearing will be scheduled.

Evidence

- [17] The Board must be satisfied on the balance of probabilities the alleged disciplinary offences have been committed.⁸ 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

- [18] There is a statutory requirement under section 88(1) of the Building Act 2004 for an LBP to provide a record of work to the Owner and the Territorial Authority (Council) on completion of restricted building work⁹ unless there is a good reason for it not to be provided.¹⁰

Did the Respondent carry out or supervise restricted building work

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

⁶ Regulation 10 of the Complaints Regulations.

⁷ 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

⁸ *Z v Dental Complaints Assessment Committee* [2009] 1 NZLR 1

⁹ Restricted Building Work is defined by the Building (Definition of Restricted Building Work) Order 2011

¹⁰ Section 317(1)(da)(ii) of the Act

fire/acoustic rating, building wrap, weatherboard profile cladding and bracing. This is restricted building work because the work formed part of the primary structure and/or external moisture management system of a residential dwelling.¹¹

- [20] Council records show the Respondent was the named LBP on the project from 26 August 2024 through 9 January 2025. He was noted as being on-site on 7 and 22 October 2024 during Council inspections.

Was the restricted building work complete

- [21] There is no further work recorded as being carried out by the Respondent after 9 January 2025. That is when his restricted building work came to an end and it is when he should have provided, or shortly after, a record of work to the Council and the Owner.

Has the Respondent provided a record of work

- [22] This matter came to the attention of the Board on 2 December 2025 when it was considering the conduct of another LBP alleged to have been working at the site (matter (OMITTED)). That has been dealt with separately. Information provided to the Board at that time identified the Respondent as an LBP who may have carried out or supervised work at the property.
- [23] On 5 February 2026 an investigator acting on behalf of the Board emailed the Respondent the complaint allegations and gave a response date of 6 March 2026. On 27 February 2026 a courtesy reminder was sent. On 10 March 2026, the investigator informed the Respondent his due date had passed and gave him a final extension to 13 March 2026. The investigator received no response then and that remains the case.

Was there a good reason

- [24] The Respondent has failed to provide any evidence of his reasons for not providing a record of work to either the Council or the Owner, despite being given opportunities to do so (see **Service**).

Did the Respondent fail to provide a record of work

- [25] The Respondent has failed to provide a record of work.

Board's Decision

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

Penalty, Costs and Publication

- [27] Having found that one or more of the grounds in section 317 applies, the Board must, under section 318 of the Act,ⁱ consider the appropriate disciplinary penalty,

¹¹ Clause 5 of the Building (Definition of Restricted Building Work) Order 2011

whether the Respondent should be ordered to pay any costs and whether the decision should be published.

- [28] The matter was dealt with on the papers. Included was information relevant to penalty, costs, and publication. The Board has decided to make indicative orders and give the Respondent an opportunity to provide further evidence or submissions relevant to the indicative orders.

Penalty

- [29] 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.¹² It is not a formulaic exercise, but there are established underlying principles that the Board should take into consideration. They include:¹³
- (a) protection of the public and consideration of the purposes of the Act;¹⁴
 - (b) deterring the Respondent and other Licensed Building Practitioners from similar offending;¹⁵
 - (c) setting and enforcing a high standard of conduct for the industry;¹⁶
 - (d) penalising wrongdoing;¹⁷ and
 - (e) rehabilitation (where appropriate).¹⁸
- [30] 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 cases¹⁹ and applying the least restrictive penalty available for the particular offending.²⁰ In all, the Board should be looking to impose a fair, reasonable, and proportionate penalty²¹ that is consistent with other penalties imposed by the Board for comparable offending.²²

¹² *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]

¹³ Cited with approval in *Robinson v Complaints Assessment Committee of Teaching Council of Aotearoa New Zealand* [2022] NZCA 350 at [28] and [29]

¹⁴ Section 3 Building Act

¹⁵ *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

¹⁶ *Dentice v Valuers Registration Board* [1992] 1 NZLR 720 (HC) at 724

¹⁷ *Patel v Complaints Assessment Committee* HC Auckland CIV-2007-404-1818, 13 August 2007 at p 27

¹⁸ *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

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

²⁰ *Patel v Complaints Assessment Committee* HC Auckland CIV-2007-404-1818

²¹ *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

²² *Roberts v A Professional Conduct Committee of the Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2012] NZHC 3354

- [31] 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.²³
- [32] 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. There are no aggravating or mitigating factors present. As such, the Board sees no reason to depart from the starting point.
- [33] The Board will provide the Respondent with an opportunity to provide a record of work before it makes a final decision on the appropriate penalty. If one is provided to both the Owner and the Council as per the requirements of section 88(1) of the Act, it will be taken into consideration as a mitigating factor, and the penalty will be reduced by \$500 to a fine of \$1,000.

Costs

- [34] 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 that other LBPs should not be left to carry the financial burden of an investigation and hearing.²⁴
- [35] The courts have indicated that 50% of the total reasonable costs should be taken as a starting point in disciplinary proceedings.²⁵ The starting point can then be adjusted up or down, depending on the particular circumstances of each case.²⁶
- [36] 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.
- [37] 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

- [38] 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 LBP scheme as is required by the Act,²⁷ and he will be named in this decision, which will

²³ 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.

²⁴ *Collie v Nursing Council of New Zealand* [2001] NZAR 74

²⁵ *Kenneth Michael Daniels v Complaints Committee 2 of the Wellington District Law Society* CIV-2011-485-000227 8 August 2011

²⁶ *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.

²⁷ Refer sections 298, 299 and 301 of the Act

be available on the Board's website. The Board is also able, under section 318(5) of the Act, to order further publication.

- [39] Within New Zealand, there is a principle of open justice and open reporting, which is enshrined in the Bill of Rights Act 1990.²⁸ 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.²⁹
- [40] 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.

Section 318 Order

- [41] 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 \$1,500.

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.

- [42] The Respondent should note the Board may, under section 319 of the Act, suspend or cancel an LBP's licence if fines or costs imposed as a result of disciplinary action are not paid.

Submissions on Draft Decision

- [43] The Board invites the Respondent to:

- (a) provide further evidence for the Board to consider; and/or
- (b) make written submissions on the Board's findings. Submissions may be on the substantive findings and/or on the findings on penalty, costs and publication.

²⁸ Section 14 of the Act

²⁹ Kewene v Professional Conduct Committee of the Dental Council [2013] NZAR 1055

- [44] Submissions and/or further evidence must be filed with the Board by no later than the close of business on **Monday 15 June 2026**.
- [45] If submissions are received, then the Board will meet and consider those submissions.
- [46] The Board may, on receipt of any of the material received, give notice that an in-person hearing is required prior to it making a final decision. Alternatively, the Board may proceed to make a final decision which will be issued in writing.
- [47] If no submissions or further evidence is received within the time frame specified, then this decision will become final.

Request for In-Person Hearing

- [48] If the Respondent, having received and considered the Board's Draft Decision, considers that an in-person hearing is required then one will be scheduled, and a notice of hearing will be issued.
- [49] A request for an in-person hearing must be made in writing to the Board Officer no later than the close of business on **Monday 15 June 2026**.
- [50] If a hearing is requested, this Draft Decision, including the Board's indicative position on penalty, costs and publication, will be set aside.

Right of Appeal

- [51] The right to appeal Board decisions is provided for in section 330(2) of the Act.ⁱⁱⁱ

Signed and dated this 22nd day of May 2026.



Mr M Orange
Presiding Member

This decision and the order herein were made final on Tuesday, 16 June 2026 on the basis that no further submissions were received.

Signed and dated this 16th day of June 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:*
 - (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.*