

Published and issued by the New Zealand Government Department of Labour

NEW ZEALAND ELECTRICAL INDUSTRY – AMENDMENT OF
APPRENTICESHIP ORDER

Dated 23/8/74

In the Court of Arbitration of New Zealand – In the matter of the Apprentices Act 1948; and in the matter of the New Zealand Electrical Industry Apprenticeship Order, dated the 8th day of March 1973, and recorded in 73 Book of Awards.

Whereas by section 13 (2) of the Apprentices Act 1948, the Court is empowered to amend any apprenticeship order: And whereas application has been made to the Court by the New Zealand Electrical Trades Apprenticeship Committee for amendment of the New Zealand Electrical Industry Apprenticeship Order, dated the 8th day of March 1973: And whereas the Court has considered the recommendations made to it by the said Committee, and has heard the employers, workers, and other persons concerned: Now, therefore, the Court, in pursuance and exercise of the powers vested in it by the said Act, doth hereby order as follows:

1. That the said apprenticeship order shall be amended by adding to paragraph (b) of the schedule of operations and skills for Electrical Appliance Servicing the following new item – “(13) Domestic refrigeration”.

2. That this order shall operate and take effect as from the day of the date hereof.

Dated this 23rd day of August 1974.

A. P. BLAIR, Judge.

MEMORANDUM

On 16 May 1974 the Commissioner of Apprenticeship – as Chairman of the New Zealand Electrical Trades Apprenticeship Committee – applied for an amendment to the New Zealand Electrical Industry Apprenticeship Order dated 8 March 1973. The proposed amendment was that “Domestic Refrigeration” should be added to the Schedule of Operations and Skills set out in paragraph (b) of the Schedule of operations and skills for electrical appliance servicing. Paragraph (b) contains additional and optional skills. A hearing was called for, and the Court heard submissions and evidence against the amendment by Mr J. Butterworth for the Engineers Union and by Mr J. S. Stewart, an employer and interested party. Submissions and evidence supporting the amendment were presented by Mr A. J. Neary for the Electrical Workers Union and by Mr M. D. H. Clark for the Electronic Appliance and Servicing Federation of New Zealand Incorporated.

The matter presents difficulties as it has some of the flavour of a demarcation dispute. While we do not minimise the difficulties we have, in the final analysis, come to our decision on simple grounds. We are conscious that we are sitting as a controlling authority under the Apprentices Act 1948 (s. 2 (2)) and that the welfare of the apprentice is the main consideration. We are aware also that it was the intention of the framers of the Act to keep apprentice matters distinct from award problems as far as possible (s. 17). With this background we note that the amendment that it sought goes no further than to add “domestic refrigeration” to the list of additional and optional skills in the branch of “electrical appliance servicing”. To the apprentice training in this branch it seems to us that it must be to his advantage to have the opportunity of electing to have the additional skill taught, provided always that the employer is willing and capable of giving or arranging for the extra training. The result should be a more versatile tradesman.

It may be, as Mr Stewart indicated in his submissions, that there is a movement

towards a greater subdivision of trade work in the sphere of domestic refrigeration and that this may lead to more rigid boundaries. Whether or not this is a desirable development is for the trade to work out for itself. As regards this particular application we see it as giving the apprentice in this branch a possible opportunity to broaden his knowledge, and viewed as an apprenticeship matter we believe that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

Accordingly we have decided to make the amendment applied for.

A. P. BLAIR, Judge.