

## Government strategy applies the base course

A review of the Government's recently-released Resource Strategy shows that finally our extractive sector is starting to get its message across.

Engaging with the Government has been an objective for the AQA through all of the 50 years of its existence. How successful we have been as an organisation in achieving good planning laws is about as clear as a settling pond intake, though it was good to see photos of AQA functions in the Beehive and with Ministers as part of our 50th celebrations (see article page 39).

Government projects like the Clyde Dam, which industry stalwart Murray Francis from Road Metals recalls on page 37, were huge boosts for our industry. Road Metals and many other quarry operators got another major uplift from the Christchurch and then Kaikoura earthquakes but as Murray notes, that work has now flattened off. It has also left some of the biggest challenges we face as a sector in dealing with communities; the peri-urban fringe around Christchurch is where the rubber really meets the road on issues around dust, noise and trucks.

This is where enduring Government policies, not one-off projects, are truly critical. The Resource Strategy has at last picked up on our issues. What is really pleasing is to see the AQA's own calculations – about the cost of aggregate doubling in the first 30km travelled – picked up and quoted in the Resource Strategy which says *'which is why it's important that quarries are located near their end users.'*

Such statements are picked because the AQA has framed engaging with Government as a key priority in its five-year strategic document delivered at the start of this year.

Of course, having identified the crucial importance of aggregate in one key Government document is only laying the base course; a network of interconnecting policies is required. As our Chief Executive, Wayne Scott notes on page 38, we literally have to start from the ground up with input to draft policies such as that on highly productive land which is currently failing to take full account that the most productive land of all is that where quarries exist.

As ever in this Aggregate News, Mike Chilton keeps us up to date with the technical oversight he provides including an intro to the AQA Technical Committee's work programme for the year ahead, see page 41.

I was personally pleased to be able to visit Fitzroy School in



Peter Walsh and teacher Nina Lobb with some of the Fitzroy School boys who won the Rock our Future competition.

New Plymouth earlier this year to judge their entries in the AQA's Rock our Future competition. The enthusiasm the two groups of boys showed saw them confirmed as winners (See page 40). What also deserves acknowledgement is the support that Vickers Quarries provided to the school, from closing its York Road site off for a day to host a visit, through to making a substantial school donation.

That sort of engagement at a community level reinforces what the AQA is trying to do with the Government and on the national stage. It gets our message across about what we do and how that makes everything else possible for a built environment.

Enjoy your Christmas break – let's engage again in 2020.

**Peter Walsh**  
**Chair**  
**Aggregate and Quarry Association**

# Rock solid

**Murray Francis has been on a Road Metals trip all his working life and still has ambitions for it...**

Inside Road Metal's Rolleston quarry buildings, spare wall space is covered in near life-size photos of company trucks and equipment from the 1950s onwards; actual trucks, restored to former glory, sit in showroom conditions.

This is a company that's proud of its history and confident of its future. On a chilly October Saturday, Murray Francis is hosting both the Civil Contractors NZ South Island digger competition and an open day for suppliers and staff. He breaks off to tour us around, pointing at the photos and where it all started. His father Stan, a true industry pioneer, began with a one-ton Dodge funded by rabbit trapping. He formed North Otago Road Metal in 1955. Murray joined the family firm as a driver in 1970. The company's biggest break prior to the Christchurch earthquakes came in 1974 when it tendered for the Twizel power project contracts, eventually producing 50,000 tonne of aggregates a month. This led on to the Clyde Dam project which saw 3m tonne of sand and aggregate processed – the biggest ever single supply in NZ at that time.

In 1994 North Otago Road Metal became Road Metals due to an expansion into Canterbury.

The previous year, Murray was talked into standing for Parliament in the 1993 election for the Waitaki seat. His ability to talk easily to anyone might have seen success if he'd decided to carry on but politics' loss was Road Metals gain. Murray instead was able to concentrate on his new role as managing director of the company which remains owned by him and brother Jonny who also worked all his life for the company.

Murray still regards Oamaru as Road Metals' main base although the Canterbury earthquakes propelled his and the company's move northwards. Four of Road Metals' dozen quarries are now in Canterbury, with the most recent expansions also being quake-driven – Ford Bros quarry north of Kaikoura along with



Murray Francis pointing to a photo of the processing plant for the Clyde Dam, one of many nostalgic photos the company is proud to display.



Murray Francis says staff are the key asset at Road Metals.

Harmac Concrete, purchased following the 2016 quake.

As post-quake work in both centres levels off Murray says Road Metals is experiencing a 25 percent plus downturn in demand and he forecasts some tough times ahead. But he's rock-solid confident his staff will be ok, noting the company has come through various economic cycles and he's never put staff off. 'I've no doubt it will come right.'

He says Road Metals staff (including Kiwi Concrete) are its biggest asset. Turn-over is low with some staff like industry veteran George Kelcher notching up 45 years with

the company and six others clocking 40+ years. Providing some balance are those including Murray's son Daniel who is now operations manager for the company.

While still South Island-based, Murray says the company has operated in the North Island at times.

Meantime, Murray Francis will keep one eye on the economic clouds and proudly relive Road Metals history as a quarrying and transport company with those interested to learn it.

"It's the people I meet and work with that make it for me. I just think it's the best industry in the world.' AQA

# Quarries earn more, deserve policy protection

With quarrying able to deliver returns on rural land at 10 and even 100 times what farming activity produces, this needs to be acknowledged across Government policies, says AQA chief executive Wayne Scott.

In welcoming the Government's new resource strategy and its recognition of the need to retain local sources of quarry materials, Wayne Scott says it shows the AQA is now being listened to – and this now needs to be widened.

“While the references to quarrying’s importance in the strategy show the efforts by the AQA and the extractive sector, this need to be backed up across a whole raft of other Government policies.”

He says Government’s National Policy Statement (NPS) on Highly Productive Land is one example where alignment is needed.

The AQA has noted and submitted on the fact that the Highly Productive Lands discussion document uses a definition of “primary production” which is inconsistent with National Planning Standards introduced by Government in April this year.

The National Planning Standards defined primary production to include quarrying and mining and the initial processing of extracted material. This is not picked up as it should be for consistency in the proposed NPS on Highly Productive Land.

“There’s been a lot of talk by Ministers and others about the need to retain land such as that with rich soils around my home area of Pukekohe,” says Wayne Scott. “The fact is that in many regions, quarrying is actually the most highly productive use of land for primary production.”

Using 2016/17 figures, the revenue per hectare from various primary production activities shows:

Dairy	\$ 6,928 /ha
Beef/lamb	\$ 749 /ha
Horticulture	\$ 10,166 /ha
Quarrying	\$ 78,012 /ha

Wayne Scott says it’s vital that as with highly productive farmland, local aggregate resources throughout the country are identified, appropriately protected from urban encroachment and able to be developed for extraction subject to appropriate environmental controls and site restoration planning.

“We welcome that the Government has formally acknowledged



Engaging with the Government is the key for AQA in getting alignment across policy areas. Here Wayne Scott with WorkSafe’s Deputy Chief Inspector Extractives Dave Bellett and his wife Fiona at the AQA’s 50th celebration.

the importance of retaining aggregates supply in the Resource Strategy from Minister Woods’ foreward in support of housing and transport programmes.

“The strategy even repeats the AQA’s own calculations that transporting aggregate sees the cost double in the first 30km and states ‘which is why it’s important that quarries are located near their end users.’

“This is the key message we have been trying to get successive Governments to recognise.”

The AQA has recently submitted on draft National Policy Statements for Urban Development and Indigenous Biodiversity as well as that for Highly Productive Land.

“We are also concerned that the resource strategy claims to be consistent with the “no new mines on conservation land” statement when a third of future hard rock aggregate resources in New Zealand sit in the DOC estate including stewardship land. If all of that is roped off there will be major impacts.”

Wayne Scott says next year new Resource Management Act law will be introduced, presenting the Government with the opportunity to align all its policies and deliver the economic and environmental benefits envisaged under the resource strategy from sectors including quarrying.

The Aggregate & Quarry Association appreciates the support of our associate members





# AQA celebrates

It was a gala occasion in Christchurch in October as 80 people gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Aggregate and Quarry Association. There were also some video presentations including those of founding members George Cunningham and Jim Hunter. Topping it all was a global view of the quarrying sector from Jim O'Brien, founder of the Global Aggregates Information Network. AQA thanks its principal event sponsors J Swap Contractors and the other sponsors – Fulton Hogan, Golders Associates NZ, Wirtgen Group NZ, Holcim NZ, MITO, Q&M magazine.

*Brendon Burns and Mikaela Marsh took the photos...*

AQA



1. Former AQA chairs Bruce Taylor and Brian Roche with Julie Taylor
2. George Cunningham dropped in via video with some memories of how it all began.
3. Concrete NZ CEO Rob Gaimster with AQA CEO Wayne Scott, wife Vicki and Natalie Davis, wife of MC Steve Davis
4. Bryan Pidwerbsky of Fulton Hogan with AQA Technical Adviser Mike Chilton, wife Susannah and Simon Hartley from Inside Resources.

5. Keri Harrison from Tui Creek Consulting glammed up with her 50s look. She's with Stuart Lyons of Wirtgen NZ and wife Michelle.
6. AQA Business Manager Sarah Walker (right) helped host guest speaker Jim O'Brien and partner Carmen Gastro.
7. Road Metals and AQA veteran George Kelcher (left), with partner Joanne McGaughy and Holcim's Brian Bouzaid with wife Maylene.

# Making their mark

Generosity comes in many forms and Vickers Quarries in Taranaki certainly knows how to contribute.

The company is well known within the AQA, not least for the corsages which women partners are given to wear at the TransDiesel awards dinners at QuarryNZ conferences.

But when it came to supporting the AQA's Rock our Future competition, Vickers took support to a whole new level. With encouragement from a parent and teachers at New Plymouth's Fitzroy primary school, two groups of boys were keen to take part in the competition.

Obviously, a good starting point in devising a quarry of the future that used only renewable energy was to look at an existing quarry. Vickers shut down operations at the York Rd quarry for a day in May to host two busloads of Fitzroy pupils.

The quarry's operators Noddy and Kevin Vickers thought about how to best present what they did to the children. Noddy's daughter Georgie, who attends another school, came along and helped host the visitors.

This extended to her outlining the history of the quarry, on the lower slopes of Mt Taranaki, from the turn of the last century. A rail track was built to cart rocks to Port Taranaki. Today it's a notable walkway which Georgie's class helps maintain with visits every term.

Vickers' support of Fitzroy School did not end there. When the two groups of boys – Storm Industries and Little Egg Inc – won their prizes, Vickers announced a substantial donation to the school.

Vickers was itself in the win in the annual Taranaki Regional Council awards.

The company was given the environmental leadership in business award.

Taranaki Regional Council says the 36-hectare Vickers York Road quarry, one of the region's largest, is also the strongest environmental performer. "It takes meticulous care to prevent waterways being choked with sediment-laden storm water, which is one of the biggest environmental risks of quarrying. The well-maintained Vickers quarry has good bunding to redirect stormwater to a well-designed treatment system that includes several large settling ponds. Shut-off valves at the discharge points offer a further layer of protection. Vegetated riparian margins also act as sediment buffer zones, filtering sediment and further reducing the impact on waterways. The outcome is impressively clean wastewater discharges that maintain the water quality and integrity of the aquatic ecosystems of the Waitara catchment. The company sets the bar for environmentally sound quarrying in Taranaki," says the council. A video was produced to mark Vickers' achievements.

Vickers Quarries was started by Russell Vickers in 1958 on their Stratford farm after discovering its supply of metal had a market. He later founded the Toko Quarry and 25 years ago the company bought the York Road site. Sons Kevin and Noddy now run the business. **AQA**



Georgie Vickers announced a generous donation by Vickers Quarries to Fitzroy School as they were receiving their Rock our Future awards.



The winning teams for Rock our Future 2019 with Wayne Scott, New Plymouth MP Jonathan Young and parent Mark Ford.

The AQA is running its **ROCK OUR FUTURE** competition again in 2020. This time school students have to turn a disused quarry into a community asset. Entry forms available on the AQA website [www.aqa.org.nz/news-events/rock-our-future/](http://www.aqa.org.nz/news-events/rock-our-future/)

# Technical update

AQA Technical Adviser Mike Chilton

## General Items

- AQA Board member Mike Higgins has noted that non-industry people like judges, council planners and others, don't understand basic quarrying sector language or processes. AQA Communications Adviser Brendon Burns and I are developing a glossary of terms and processes for the benefit of people who are not from our industry but who have the capacity to make decisions which affect it. Our starting point is the IOQNZ's glossary – and our thanks to them for that assistance. We expect to produce a short summary document before Christmas.
- The AQA Technical Committee has drafted a workplan of its forward workload. It will be available soon on the AQA website for AQA members..
- The AQA is still encouraging all local authorities to identify and protect their future aggregate resources. Although there has been high engagement and interest in the GNS potential resources project, there is as yet no confirmed funding to finish this work. That said, the Government's new Minerals and Petroleum Resource Strategy document does refer to an annual MBIE quarry survey, which aligns with what we have been doing with GNS.

## NZTA

- The new M/4 statistical acceptance criteria will be introduced in training sessions starting early next year. AQA is helping with delivery. We are expecting this to happen at 4-5 locations nationally and will share these and dates as they are confirmed.
- The Transport Knowledge Hub is forming a Resource Efficiency and Energy Group. This aims to share knowledge around recycled and marginal materials and make better use of them within NZ. Contact Mike Chilton if you want details – tech@aqa.org.nz
- Opus has finalised its report to NZTA on recycled aggregates which aligns with AQA's views. It has found the main barriers to wider use of recycled materials is a lack of policy/specifications and a negative perception towards them.
- The interviews for the NZTA Review of Pavement Delivery in New Zealand have been completed.

## Sand Grading Exponent

- Fulton Hogan is piloting a research programme this summer on SGE vs repeated load triaxial test (RLT) results. This will look for relationships between the two measures and hopefully direct a wider research programme once the initial testing is complete.
- If your company is willing to anonymously share RLT results to include in the research we would be grateful. A particle size distribution (grading curve) and associated RLT result is all that's needed. For further info contact Mike Chilton – tech@aqa.org.nz
- Sand Grading Exponent has not had its inclusion in the new M/4 confirmed yet.

## Government

- The EPA is currently consulting on the classification framework for hazardous substances to the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS), Revision 7 (2017). This proposed system will reduce complexity for Hazardous Substances and New Organisms and promote international alignment. Quarries could see minor changes in labelling on ecotoxic substances and explosives.

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