



Aggregate News

AGGREGATE & QUARRY ASSOCIATION OF NZ

People, Plant and Profit

Winter is upon us which means our annual conference is close.

Given this edition of Aggregate News reports that all hotel accommodation is now taken in Invercargill, the signals are we will be close to, or at capacity, at our superb ILT Stadium Southland venue. So, if you haven't yet booked, it's time to get your skates on for our conference with its theme, *Back to Basics – People, Plant and Profit*.

As someone with a technical bent, I'm pleased that a technical session has now become a strong feature of QuarryNZ. When you add to this the option of attending one of three free field trips, there's a heck of a lot to be gained, before you even mention CPD hours.

Of course, flood repairs are an increasing part of our supply work and our CEO Wayne Scott comments in this Aggregate News on the folly of roads being repaired time and time again without bringing in local players, including quarries.

He observes that, as a nation, we can't just keep doing what we've always done. We now have a major flood virtually every week and the repair bill is costing hundreds of millions a year. No wonder, when we learn that Cyclone Gabrielle alone created 300,000 landslides!

Wayne also puts the case for continued access to offshore sand if Auckland is going to have any chance of meeting its construction needs. He notes that opponents of one offshore sand proposal (Taranaki) rejoiced when a Fast-track Approvals panel rejected that project. This rather confirms that this process – which the AQA has fulsomely supported – is not some rubber stamp, nor one that rides roughshod over environmental concerns.

As we have always said, we want faster outcomes with more certainty, not decisions at the environment's expense. That's why we support the current fast-track process for sand extraction north of Auckland.



It's time to rattle the jar and get ready for our conference.

We also continue our series of articles in this edition on the quarrying companies successfully engaging with local iwi. You can read how Fulton Hogan is working with eight different iwi groups across the top of the South Island. Rather like people, each one is different and treated accordingly.

This Aggregate News also includes our usual Technical Update including some changes to the AQA Technical Committee. Thanks to Jos Grobler and Paul Donoghue for all you have contributed and welcome to Stacey Walker and Trevor Sawyer.

This edition took up the offer of extra pages from Q&M so we bring you a couple of MinEx stories looking at our sector's reducing incident statistics (though serious incidents remain high), and how to manage bullying, harassment, stress and violence in your worksite. We also have a look at good and bad machinery guarding.

So, plenty to read and digest about people and plant – and with skill and some luck, profit too.

Hope to see you in Invercargill.

Jayden Ellis
Chair, AQA. **AQA**

Time to rethink road repairs

New Zealand now has a major flood event almost every week, and it's critical the government urgently reviews its approach to road repairs, writes AQA Chief Executive Wayne Scott, who says the quarry sector can help avoid the worst of ongoing repairs and re-repairs.



NZTA's Journey Planner shows impacts in most regions.

During the current Government's term, over \$700 million has been set aside expressly for emergency repairs on state highways and local roads.

This is often throwing good money after bad. I saw the potential for quarries to play a role on a visit in 2019 to SH2 Waioeka Gorge, the road between Ōpōtiki and Gisborne.

The AQA was trying to help the previous Government bring down the cost of a new breakwater at Ōpōtiki. Part of a blowout in budget was because quarry materials were to be trucked in from up to 100 kilometres away. We worked with GNS Science to find local materials.

I suggested to the Transport Agency that quarry operators could take rock from corners of Waioeka Road to reduce the regular problems with slips. My idea got no traction, but eight years later the road is subject to even more frequent flooding. It suffered 40 slips when January's storm hit the region and stop/go traffic management remains in place as contractors do repairs.

These are often places where repairs have already been made. We as a nation can't afford to keep doing what we've already done.

While some regions are now more prone to flooding, nowhere is exempt, and this country is very prone to landslips.

During Cyclone Gabrielle in early 2023, there were around 300,000 landslides across the Hawke's Bay and Tairāwhiti regions alone.

I personally experienced April's floods in Wellington. We saw

suburban streets turned into rivers.

With climate change starting to hit, the number of closures and repairs will only get worse, unless we change what we do.

The government should bring in regional players, including quarries and contractors, and see if local solutions are possible, such as taking out slip-prone stretches of road.

The other thing we need to be doing is building far bigger culverts to drain away water. Often you see a channel that's less than a metre wide or deep; clearly these can no longer cope.

I lived for 30 years in Australia and its major roading network tends to have huge culverts alongside carriageways.

If a dry place like Australia is doing that, we, as a wetter nation, need to do so, especially as climate change brings floods almost every week.

As a country, we need to understand that these costs are only going to mount. At a recent briefing, the National Emergency Management Agency said more than 80 states of emergency were declared across NZ in the decade to 2024 and most regions are still recovering from one. Mostly these emergencies are floods and slips.

These natural disasters are going to continue and we need some real and fast policy alignment. If quarries can help reduce slip risks (as well as flood risk through removing river gravel), let's get these solutions in place. It's a win-win-win in reducing risks and costs for local communities, government, and for the price of quarried materials. **AQA**



Bruno Brosnan, left, with James Blacklaws, Fulton Hogan Nelson Executive Divisional Manager Quarries & Services, standing on the removable bridge that allows periodic quarrying at Challies Island.

Meeting iwi needs in Nelson/Tasman

Fulton Hogan works with eight local iwi at its quarry sites across the top of the South Island, and Nelson Region Environment Manager, Bruno Brosnan, says that, even after eight years in the role, he is still learning about the priorities of each iwi.

The goals and aspirations of the different iwi are as different as our quarries – you can never apply a single rule of thumb or assume that their concerns will be the same,” he says.

Periodic people changes add to the complexity.

“Although iwi strategic planning can stretch out 150 years, changes in leadership, personnel, and staffing inevitably change some shorter-term priorities. That’s why staying close to manu whenua [customary authority for land] is so important.”

Bruno came to Fulton Hogan from Te Ātiawa O te waka-a-Māui, where he spent four years helping bed in the new structure after Te Ātiawa’s Treaty settlement. He says this has given him a useful perspective from ‘the inside’ – but only to a point.

“Te Ātiawa O te waka-a-Māui is one of a number of iwi and while it’s hard to overstate the importance of whenua [land] to all of them, there’s wide variance in what is most important to each.”

Using three recent quarry consent processes as examples – Challies Island, Motueka and Golden Bay – Bruno highlights these differences.

“At Challies Island, iwi’s main interest is in creating something better than currently exists, turning grazing pasture into functional natural wetland, and achieving a win-win for the community and the environment.

“In Motueka, it’s about creating community interest and cultural recognition of the river, while at Golden Bay there’s

deep interest in water quality.”

Bruno says iwi place great significance on water quality and will use a layered approach to water health in their planning and decision-making.

“These quality measures are not always able to be calculated scientifically, so it takes a lot of listening, interpretation and avoiding of assumptions,” he says.

Behind this focus on water health is the jewel in the iwi’s crown – Te Waikoropupū (Pupu) Springs.

Te Waikoropupū are New Zealand’s largest freshwater springs, reputedly the largest cold water springs in the Southern Hemisphere with some of the clearest water ever measured in the world. It is also the country’s newest water body to be given a Water Conservation Order status, the highest protection any water body can achieve in New Zealand.

“There’s nothing like having Pupu Springs in your backyard to raise expectations of water purity right across the whenua,” Bruno says.

After eight years of non-stop learning, he says there are two realities he can be sure of.

“The first is, you don’t know until you ask. And you can never show too much interest or ask too many questions, because people are so willing to share.

“You’re also seldom left wondering when there’s been a misinterpretation. People don’t hold back, which means few surprises, and I really appreciate that directness and honesty.” **AQA**

Where do we get your kilo an hour?

AQA Chief Executive Wayne Scott puts the case for continued offshore sand extraction to meet Auckland's needs.

First published in the NZ Herald [abridged].

To enable us to travel, live and work, our country uses on average one kilogram of aggregate each hour for every member of the population.

Opponents of a quarry development or a sand extraction project often suggest such operations should go further afield. The problem is the price of aggregate doubles after 30 kilometres of travel from its source and then keeps rising with every kilometre thereafter; that's partly why Auckland housing is more expensive. It carts in much of the aggregate it needs from Waikato and Northland. This is why it's crucial that aggregates are sourced as close as possible to where they are needed.

Manufactured sand is available and some proclaim it is often environmentally better than extracted sand. Yes, there is now some rock being turned into sand in New Zealand and it is helping meet increasing demand, but it either requires huge investment in increasingly precious electricity capacity or it burns a lot of diesel and creates more emissions.

In contrast, for decades Auckland received half its sand needs from offshore sites by barge. One of those sources was abandoned last year after facing significant opposition and legal battles.

A new site up the coast and further offshore is now attracting even more vociferous opposition than its predecessor. That proposal is to take eight million cubic metres of sand over a 35-year period, up to 250,000 tonnes a year, or the equivalent of around 70 ten-tonne truckloads daily, or roughly three house builds a day.

Ten kilometres north, the port company operating the Marsden Point wharf, in the last 20 years alone dredged more than two



New Zealand needs all the sand it can lay its hands on – be it manufactured, river or ocean-sourced.

million cubic metres of material, much of it sand. Last September the Environment Court approved some 1.72 million more cubic metres to be removed to deepen and enlarge the harbour's navigable areas.

The opposition to this project is nothing like the opposition to what is proposed down the coast, now under consideration by a Fast-track approval panel.

We are now seeing changes to the RMA and amendments to some government planning documents, which will help our industry to get access to rock and sand resources for Kiwis.

As for the Fast-track Approvals Act supposedly gutting environmental protections, we note one of the projects considered under the Fast-track process was rejected and then withdrawn by the applicant – the proposal to extract iron sand off Taranaki's coast.

We suggest those against the sand extraction proposal south of Whangarei should also have faith in the process and be prepared to accept the decision of the expert panel.

Throughout all of these resource management policy changes, our industry has been explicit: we do not want the environment coming off second in quarry and sand extraction developments. We are after certainty and speed – not environmental degradation.

We know that with the changes underway, we will need to deliver on those commitments and credentials along with the one kilogram per hour of aggregate and sand every one of us needs. **AQA**

AQA works for the quarry industry – join us today

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AGGREGATE & QUARRY ASSOCIATION OF NZ

Supporting New Zealand from the ground up



Invercargill accommodation now at a premium

If you haven't yet booked for Quarry NZ 2026, you are now very likely to need to find your own accommodation.

Conference organiser Melissa Bahler says that, at the start of May, virtually all rooms in the four Invercargill hotels chosen for attendee accommodation were booked out. Now she's advising people who haven't yet registered for the conference to do so and to also look for a room at one of Invercargill's many motels. Last year's conference in Hamilton saw some people (who tried to book on the day), get turned away.

The good news is that buses will be organised to bring people from pickup spots at or near motels to and from the Invercargill conference and its two dinner events at the ILT Southland Stadium. Melissa also reports that if the Bluff boats can get out, there will be a feed of Foveaux Strait's famous oysters at the conference.

Another feature of the Invercargill event is the three field trips available on the opening morning of Wednesday July 22. Buses are provided at no cost but you do have to register if you want to join one of these three trips. They variously offer a visit to a couple of quarries, the New Vale coal mine or AB Lime and its associated landfill.

The buses return in time for a Technical Session and the AQA and IOQNZ AGMs, prior to Crushing and Mining Supplies NZ drinks and the Terra Cat Welcome Dinner.

Thursday morning features economic and employment law speakers and there's a health and safety focus in early to mid-afternoon before a couple of technical presentations. The day concludes with Real Steel's famous Hard Rock Happy Hour(s).



Proud Southlander (and AQA Board member) Duncan McGregor will be helping host conference. He's pictured with his wife Tina at last year's Hamilton event.

Friday sees environmental, industry and technical presentations before the mid-afternoon conference conclusion, en route to Pirtek NZ's Pre-Dinner Drinks and the TDX Ltd/Volvo Awards Dinner.

Melissa says registration for QuarryNZ 2026 is going well. Early bird registration closed on May 31 but there is still some availability. There were also a few trade stands that have not yet been taken at the time of writing this.

Meanwhile, the AQA's Rock our Future school competition is again underway.

This year's entries must explain what a quarry is, why we have quarries, what aggregate is used for and include at least two sustainability practices used by quarries. Please reach out to schools in your area. Details on our AQA website.

The AQA is also again supporting the 2026 Future Roads conference, being held at the Claudelands Event Centre in Hamilton on 25-26 November.

The programme is yet to be announced but as always, you can expect a top line-up of industry, technical, economic, local government and political speakers.

Super saver delegate registration, with a discount of \$400, closes 17 August and Early Bird, saving \$200, closes 14 October. **AQA**

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AQA Technical update

New AQA Technical Committee members

- The AQA Technical Committee has welcomed some new members. Stacey Walker (National Laboratory and Quality Manager, Winstone Aggregates), and Trevor Sawyer (Head of Technical at Firth, representing Concrete NZ) joined us in March.
- Our thanks to Jos Grobler and Paul Donoghue for their contributions and service to the committee.
- With the M04 spec update in 2024 and a couple of other changes, the CCNZ BPG05 Quality Assurance of Aggregates Guide will get a refresh. Your Technical Committee worked with CCNZ on this in a workshop at the end of May.
- WSPs Wellington lab is progressing well with the XRD test method for New Zealand. We will publish any updates.

M04 Basecourse

- NZTA has confirmed all quarries producing M04 need to have a quality system conforming to ISO9001. We understand some members are going through accreditation now – contact me if you would like to discuss this tech@aqa.org.nz.
- Development of a Northland spec is progressing, with the last meeting in May.

Inspiring Futures Foundation Training

- The quarry products and testing training material is ready for use.
- The videos are still in production. Our thanks go to Fulton Hogan's Canterbury lab for showing our videographer around and helping out with useful information. **AQA**

Mike Chilton, AQA Technical Adviser

AQA Board

<https://aqa.org.nz/our-members/>

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Good, bad and ugly guarding

WorkSafe is taking a tougher line on guarding after some shocking failures and fatalities.

A presentation on guarding is featuring at this year's MinEx workshops.

Last year, the courts imposed more than \$800,000 in penalties after two workers were killed in separate incidents in manufacturing involving unsafe guarding.

One incident saw a young worker die in a Timaru timber yard where there was no guarding on a conveyor belt, no risk assessment, and safety recommendations had not been acted upon.

Another saw a Bay of Plenty man killed while cleaning near an operating conveyor which had exposed rollers and nip points; emergency stops were not readily accessible.

WorkSafe asks the extractive sector what conveyor belt safety looks like in our sector. Is it any different or have we just been lucky?

It noted a 2015 death at a South Canterbury quarry where a worker became entangled in a rotating Vee belt. The manager did not have a Certificate of Competence; the worker was working alone; there were no regular audits of machinery; guards were not fitted on dangerous parts; and maintenance happened while machinery was running.

WorkSafe says it has seen some excellent guarding in place at some extractive/resources sites, such as the one below.



However, there is also the bad...



And the ugly!



It says guarding is the top category for which inspectors issue enforcement notices, with nearly 50 issued in the last half of 2025 alone.

"If guarding is not up to standard, expect immediate action and don't be surprised when inspectors intervene."

Guarding has to prevent access to nip points, entanglement and moving parts. Missing, damaged or ineffective guarding is not acceptable.

When guarding poses serious risk, prohibition notices will be issued and there can be further enforcement if risks are not addressed.

At the Greymouth MinEx workshop, mines inspector John Ewen said a quarry or mine manager (or nominated trained person) needs to do daily inspections of a site, including its guarding.

"That person must have the authority to stop work if something is not right.

"If you walk past something, you've accepted it is meeting the required standard."

He says sites need to develop an inspection checklist.

"These checks are written in blood – that's why they are there." **AQA**

Fewer incidents but mental health risks

The extractives sector is reporting about half the health and safety incidents of seven years ago.

That pat on the back is being delivered by Wayne Scott, in his alternate role as Chief Executive of MinEx, as he leads the health and safety organisation's 16 regional workshops this year.

The figures are those reported to MinEx covering all incidents including serious incidents. Seven years ago, there was an average of about 100 incidents reported every month, now it's around half that.

Wayne told the Greymouth workshop in April – attended by about 50 people – that in calendar year 2025, there were 20 percent fewer incidents despite there being 15 percent more extractives sites (reflecting in particular increased mining activity).

This is the third year in a row there has been a decrease in the number of incidents reported to MinEx.

"We must have done something right. Unfortunately, the really serious incidents haven't changed much. There were seven last year that, but for luck, could have resulted in a fatality," Wayne says.

Collisions remain the biggest cause of reported health and safety incidents.

Breach of procedure and occupational injuries also continue to grow.

Later in the workshops, Wayne talks about managing psychosocial issues – bullying, harassment, workplace violence and stress.

These can see more absences, lateness, more risky mistakes, low workforce morale, higher turnover and reputational loss.

"We have a real problem with bullying and harassment in this country."



Wayne Scott, MinEx CEO presenting at one of 16 regional health and safety organisation's workshops this year.

According to UNICEF, New Zealand has the highest under-14 suicide rate in the OECD.

Bullying could be a supervisor victimising or belittling a worker, or workers picking on one of their colleagues.

"It used to be that teasing apprentices was considered harmless fun. Not in 2026."

Harassment included unwanted sexual advances or jokes or insults directed at someone based on their ethnicity or gender. Calendar photos of semi-naked women are no longer acceptable.

WorkSafe data suggested 30 percent of people suffered from work-related mental health issues, much of it related to stress.

He acknowledges this might not be related to the workplace; the key was to not add to that stress or allow it to put workers at risk.

Wayne says managers need to articulate what they expect from employees and their behaviour. When an issue arises, don't jump to conclusions but do act.

"You are allowed to manage people but treat them with respect."

You are not bullying someone by giving constructive feedback, telling them how to do their job, performance managing them or going through disciplinary procedures when required.

As a young manager, Wayne ended the employment of a woman who was voicing sexual innuendos across the RT system used by a hundred truckies. "She thought it was acceptable behaviour!" She later took him to the Employment Court but lost.

Wayne later faced the issue of a woman employee who said a colleague 20 years her senior was making sexual advances. Wayne had no proof but believed the claims were true. After launching an investigation, the valued female worker left the business and the man retired a month later.

It was not a good outcome but Wayne said if he hadn't intervened, it could have got worse, and sometimes as a manager that's the best you can do. **AQA**