



## From the Quarry Face

Kia ora/greetings

We've just passed the shortest day which means things can only get brighter over coming months – at least climatically.

Clearly we have a longer way to go to get through the challenges of COVID-19. If I needed any reminding of that, it came in a Zoom meeting with quarrying association colleagues from around the world. Even normally buoyant Australia has entered a recession (it's first in three decades) and the quarry sector there, fears when current already contracted work comes to an end, there will be a major drop in demand.

With the General Election coming up, AQA have released a Briefing document on the quarry sector and aggregate supply. Intended for candidates, politicians, and officials the document identifies key issues, policies and recommendations on improvements for the quarrying sector. See details below.

At a local level, Auckland Council is fighting to stay within its already high debt to revenue ratios; amid staffing and programme cuts, quarries will also be affected. Let's hope both Auckland and the rest of the country do well from infrastructure projects in the Government's much-vaunted 'shovel ready' spend. (When did anyone last use a shovel on anything commercial?)

The long-term answer to our economic needs is a better trained workforce. So a big thumbs up to the Government for the major spend on apprenticeships, including for the first time, funding for employers. As many of us know, people take a lot of investment before they start to provide a return; at a time of recession, employers need extra support to take them on.

NZP&M have recently launched the annual survey of Industrial Rocks and Minerals Output and this year the survey is online and very easy to complete. We need accurate data on aggregate production and demand so that we can continue to run our arguments on the importance of aggregates with both central and local government. Please help us by completing the survey. See more details provided by NZP&M in this newsletter.

And I'm thrilled we've got at least 9 schools taking part in this year's Rock our Future [competition](#).

Schools from Auckland to Wanaka are on board, each coming up with their own designs for how to turn a disused quarry into a community asset.

Once again, we need quarries to open up to local schools and let them see.

Last year, Vickers Quarries did this with what proved to be the winning entries from Fitzroy School in New Plymouth.

Once again, we need quarries to open up to local schools and let them see. Please come on

board and support the local schools in your area which are taking part in the competition, it's a great opportunity to get community engagement.

Stay warm, safe and productive,



Wayne  
CEO AQA & MinEx

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## A Briefing on the Quarry Sector and Aggregate Supply

Accessing, extracting, processing and transporting aggregate (crushed rock, gravel and sand) is needed for the construction of infrastructure in New Zealand: this material forms the foundation of every road and building. It is therefore more vital than ever that local aggregate resources throughout the country are identified, protected, and effectively managed.

AQA has released a policy briefing outlining the issues confronting the sector and a list of recommendations on policy issues. This document is aimed at informing election candidates, politicians and officials on issues of concern to quarry operators.

A copy is being sent to every sitting politician.

The document is available as a downloadable PDF on our [website](#) or you can obtain printed copies by contacting [office@aqa.org.nz](mailto:office@aqa.org.nz)



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## Auckland Council on less cash options

Auckland Council gave a sobering assessment of COVID-19's economic impact on our major city when releasing their 2020/21 budget recently.

They expect 2-3 years of severe austerity as the Council struggles to keep its debt/revenue ratio levels under control (currently at 270%).

Reductions that may impact on the quarrying industry include:

- Road sealing budget reduced from \$6m to \$1m. (Road maintenance budget has been retained).
- Open space maintenance reduced by \$8m.

On a positive note, Auckland Council have 37 projects that have made the second round of "shovel ready" projects sent to Government for approval, totalling \$1 billion. If successful with 50% of these, the Council intends on reinstating the Auckland Transport Budget to \$900m. It will also try very hard to keep as much of its capital programme going as possible as this will speed up recovery for the Auckland region.

As by far our biggest city, to some extent so Auckland goes, so goes the country.

Another major concern in Auckland is retaining civil and construction sector capability in the face of vertical construction being down 60-70% and housing down 50%.



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## GAIN sees the pain

New Zealand is not alone in facing huge COVID economic impacts. In early June, I Zoom called in to represent the AQA at a meeting of the Global Aggregates Information Network (GAIN).

GAIN brings together industry association representatives from around the world. Representatives reported that after weeks of restrictions and lockdown in many countries, civil unrest and frustration was resulting in legal action against Governments (South Africa) and civil disobedience (USA, parts of Europe, and India). A number of countries are taking the view that relatively speaking, COVID-19 has been no worse in their country than any other virus or outbreak of disease, which they live with all the time. While this doesn't take account of the positive actions taken against COVID, in Africa for example, they have lived with TB for 136 years and HIV for 40 years, both of which continue to have higher fatality rates than COVID-19.

Another view is that the impacts of the economic downturn resulting from COVID-19 may in fact be worse than the pandemic itself.

All countries have implemented stimulus packages; however, there is generally little confidence in governments being able to actually generate enough stimulus to counter the recession. China is the exception. It is investing \$10 trillion RMB (NZ\$ 2.2 trillion) in infrastructure, tax reductions and other initiatives to promote economic recovery.

Australia has officially gone into recession this month for the first time in 30 years. The extractives sector is currently trading on pre-COVID work but expects this to "fall off a cliff" in September when Government wage subsidies stop. Housing makes up 75% of all construction in Australia and a 50% reduction in new housing activity is predicted. While our trans-Tasman cousins have had as good a health outcome as us, they are expecting a recovery period of many years.

South America is now the "hot spot" for COVID-19 cases with the pandemic out of control in Brazil and Argentina. Much of South America was struggling economically before COVID-19 and many are predicting a huge humanitarian crisis in the region. Even countries such as Mexico and Columbia where there has been relative success from lockdown, border control remains a problem and they expect cases to continue. Economic recovery is uncertain in South America with even the most optimistic suggesting little recovery until 2022.

In parts of Europe, countries are slowly lifting restrictions with Italy the first to open its borders as the summer tourist season opens. This appears to be more out of desperation around the economy than a sensible return to the new normal or belief that they have overreacted to COVID. While there has been significant stimulus, construction activity is operating at significantly lower volumes due to supply chain issues. Lack of tourism remains the single biggest concern to EU countries.

All countries have been successful in implementing appropriate H&S protocols around daily temperature monitoring of workers, physical separation, deep cleaning and use of PPE. All agree that these protocols may continue beyond the COVID crisis as they represent good practice in managing the spread of all diseases.

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## Annual Return of Industrial Rocks and Minerals Output

# 2019

NZ Petroleum and Minerals (NZP&M) have launched the 2019 Annual Return of Industrial Rocks and Minerals Output survey for the 2019 calendar year .

You can supply your data through:

- The new [online survey](#) (Chrome or Edge browsers recommended)
- Downloading and completing a [PDF survey form](#)
- For organisations with a large number of operations to report, there is a bulk response template spreadsheet available: [Bulk response survey template](#)

We encourage you to use the online survey to supply your data. The survey can be accessed on PC, tablet or smartphone.

If you are unable to utilise any of the above methods, contact NZP&M via the email address below.

Please complete the survey before **31 September 2020**. Once the survey is completed, NZP&M will publish the statistics alongside production statistics for coal and metallic minerals.

All information collected will be treated as strictly confidential. Only regional totals will be released publicly and this will be restricted if the information is identifiable to a single operation.

If you have any queries regarding this survey please email:  
[NZPAM-QuarriesSurvey@mbie.govt.nz](mailto:NZPAM-QuarriesSurvey@mbie.govt.nz)

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## Extractive Apprenticeship Training gets Budget Boost

Training in our sector was already picking up prior to COVID-19; the May Budget has now introduced two major new schemes to bolster apprenticeships. This includes for the first time, direct funding to employers to help cover the cost of apprentices.

Apprenticeship Boost provides businesses with up to \$16,000 towards the costs of apprentices in their first two years of training, from August 2020 to April 2022.

In our industry, those employing apprentices enrolled in the New Zealand Certificate in Mining and Quarrying (First Line Supervision) – Surface (Level 4), will be able to apply for \$1,000 per month for the first year of the apprenticeship and \$500 per month for the second year. This unprecedented funding will also apply to new enrolments during the period of the funding.

This comes on top of the latest MITO training activity figures which show in the first half of this year it had 93 B-Grade surface extraction CoC learners and a similar number spread across A-Grades and other qualifications. During the same period some 46 people got their B-Grade CoCs awarded, along with two A-Grades.

MITO is also running the RockUp™ pathway from school to industry, a secondary school micro-credential programme for the surface mining and quarrying industry. It is a Level 3, 9 credit micro-credential available to Year 11, 12 and 13 secondary students, allowing them to gain credits towards NCEA. The training consists of eLearning theory and practical assessment on safety in a quarry or surface mining workplace. If you are interested in hosting a student at your workplace or would like more information - Contact MITO's Vocational Careers Advisors - [vca@mito.org.nz](mailto:vca@mito.org.nz).



## Rock our Future's rocking

Last year the AQA launched Rock our Future, a competition aimed at getting primary school age children interested in our industry.

We decided to run it again in 2020 and even with schools being closed for a couple of months, we have 9 schools currently taking part – with the competition now being extended to the end of Term 3.

Last year's theme – designing a quarry of the future – has now become for this year's entrants the challenge of developing a community asset from a quarry at the end of its working life.

Last year Vickers Quarries near Stratford did an outstanding job of hosting Fitzroy School from New Plymouth which was the eventual [winner](#).

Listed below are the list of schools taking part (to date). Most have expressed an interest in visiting a local quarry so please let us know if you will host them - [office@aqa.org.nz](mailto:office@aqa.org.nz)

- Clevedon and The Gardens schools, Auckland
- Leamington Primary, Cambridge
- Otoumoetai Intermediate, Tauranga
- Tokirima Primary, Taumarunui
- Makahu School, Stratford
- Papatawa School, Dannevirke
- Leithfield School, North Canterbury
- Mount Aspiring College, Wanaka

The competition is open to year 5-8 and both single & group entrants.



*Please provide bucket loads of help for local children interested in quarries as Vickers did last year*

**Highlights of what we have been up to since last issue**

- Submissions on the Government's:
  - [COVID-19 Recovery \(Fast-track Consenting\) Bill - June 2020](#)
  - [Policy Statement on Land Transport: 20/21 - 2030/31 - June 2020](#)
  - [NPS - Discussion Document for Proposed Indigenous Biodiversity - March 2020](#)
- District Plans:
  - [District Plan - Manawatu Proposed Change 65 - March 2020](#)

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## New AQA Member

We welcome Eastern Bay Concrete who have joined AQA as a new member recently.

Check out all our [members](#).



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## MinEx workshops return

MinEx are set to resume the series of full day workshops, starting in KeriKeri on Tuesday, 7 July.

You can view the full list of workshops and register on the MinEx [website](#).

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## Minerals Sector Awards open



The Minerals Sector Awards is an opportunity to recognise, reward, and celebrate excellence within the minerals and mining sector. This includes aggregates, coal, gold, iron sands, industrial minerals and a range of other minerals. Winners will be announced in [Hamilton in October](#).

The categories are:

- Health and Safety Initiative Award
- Innovation Award
- Environmental Management Award
- Community Initiative Award

Entries close Tuesday, 28 July - see further [details](#).

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