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Media Release from AQA

New Zealand closer to delivering on infrastructure strategy

Today marks an important step in delivering a world-class infrastructure strategy that will enable New Zealand to remain a first-world economy.

That's how the quarry industry has responded to the Government's tabled response to Te Waihanganga/ New Zealand Infrastructure Commission's first infrastructure strategy.

Aggregate and Quarry Association (AQA) CEO Wayne Scott, applauds the Government's general support for Rautaki Hanganga o Aotearoa – New Zealand Infrastructure Strategy 2022–2052, which brings together all the elements needed to ensure New Zealand can deliver on its economic, environmental and infrastructure ambitions.

“This is the road map for how we can build a future that gives everyone good roading, rail, cycling, water and electricity networks emitting the least possible carbon, and which remain durable through climate change's impacts,” says Wayne Scott.

“I'm particularly pleased to see Government's acknowledgement that local authorities must plan to protect aggregate supplies in long-term plans.”

“That's essential as our population rises another 1.2 million over the next 30 years. If quarry supplies aren't roped off from urban sprawl, then there will be huge cost and carbon consequences to bring in supplies from remote areas, or even from overseas.”

The report's identification of the need for more resilient infrastructure in the face of climate change's impacts has been increasingly evident to the quarry sector.

“We need better design and build approaches because we are seeing too many roads and bridges washed away time and again. Patching up things which the next downpour will erode not only wastes public money, we also don't have enough quarry materials to squander them.”

The AQA CEO also welcomes Government support for the Infrastructure Commission's recommendations for better recycling and reuse of materials in infrastructure projects and the focus on encouraging a better trained and more diverse infrastructure workforce.

“The key thing now is how quickly these recommendations can be implemented. In reality, it will take several years. In the interim, I trust any Government will continue expanding the use of fast-track consenting for critical projects.

“Given how fundamental quarry materials are to every infrastructure project, we are going to need to see some fast-tracked quarries in that mix if there's any hope of delivering the \$60 billion plus of infrastructure projects already in the pipeline,” says Wayne Scott.

Contact: Wayne Scott wayne@aqa.org.nz 021 944 336