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Att: Hon. Shane Jones, Minister of Oceans and Fisheries, Regional Development, Resources, Associate Minister of Finance and Energy.
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Submission on Fuel Response Plan

This submission is made on behalf of the Aggregate & Quarry Association, Winstone Aggregates, Fulton Hogan, Kaipara Limited and J Swap.

We support the Government's approach to managing fuel security and the use of priority bands in Phase 3 to ensure continuity of critical and economically important activity. This submission addresses the treatment of quarrying and aggregate production within that framework.

Quarry operations are integral to infrastructure delivery

New Zealand consumes approximately 50 million tonnes of aggregate annually. Winstone Aggregates, Fulton Hogan, Kaipara Limited and J Swap produce approximately 54% of national supply and 75% of the aggregate supplying the Auckland market.

Aggregate is a foundational input into all major infrastructure, including state highway and local road construction and maintenance, major transport projects, and civil infrastructure such as water, energy and public works, as well as broader construction activity across both public and private sectors.

There is no substitute for aggregate in these applications. It must be extracted, processed and transported from quarry sites. Quarry operations are therefore not ancillary to infrastructure delivery, they are upstream and essential.

Alignment with Phase 3 priority bands

Phase 3 provides for prioritisation across Bands A to E, including economically important services (Band B) and essential services such as infrastructure maintenance (Band C).

Infrastructure delivery and maintenance cannot occur without a continuous supply of aggregate. The classification of infrastructure within Band C must therefore extend to the inputs required to sustain it. On that basis, quarry operations should be recognised within Band C, with fuel access sufficient to maintain normal production and distribution.

Consequences of insufficient prioritisation

If quarry operations are constrained below Bands B and C, infrastructure and roading projects will slow or halt, disrupting construction supply chains and materially extending timelines and costs.

Experience during COVID-19 restrictions demonstrates that even short interruptions to quarry output and construction activity delay the delivery of major projects. For large, sequential programmes such as Auckland's City Rail Link, disruptions to materials supply did not just pause progress, they compound delays and increased costs across the programme.

Recommendation

Quarry operations and aggregate supply should be explicitly recognised within B and C in Phase 3, ensuring continued fuel access to maintain normal operations, continuity of supply to infrastructure and roading projects, and avoidance of system-wide disruption and downstream economic impacts. This reflects the role of aggregates as an enabling input to infrastructure, rather than a discretionary or deferrable activity.



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