

Submission from the AQA on the Crown Minerals Amendment Bill

October 2024

Introduction

The Aggregate and Quarry Association (AQA) is the industry body representing quarrying companies which produce 47 million tonnes of aggregate and quarried materials consumed in New Zealand each year.

Funded by its members, the AQA has a mandate to increase New Zealanders' understanding of the need for aggregates, improve our industry and users' technical knowledge of aggregates and assist in developing a highly skilled workforce within a safe and sustainable work environment.

We would like to thank you for the opportunity to submit on the Crown Minerals Amendment Bill.

Aggregates in New Zealand

In 2023, the New Zealand aggregate and quarrying sector produced an estimated 47.9 million tonnes of aggregate, including limestone and other products, with an economic contribution to New Zealand estimated at \$2.8 billion.

Accessing, extracting, processing and transporting aggregate is required for the construction of infrastructure in New Zealand. Aggregates form the foundation of every road and building, either directly or as part of materials such as concrete. Additionally, as catastrophic events in recent years have highlighted, the impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels, will put added pressure on rock supply for sea walls, riverbank protection and restoration, and other climate adaptation solutions.

Amending the purpose statement of the Act

Minerals such as aggregates are key to the functioning of our economy and critical minerals, such as cobalt, vanadium and rare earth elements will likely be essential in a low emissions economy. It is critical that the Crown Minerals Act (CMA) is amended to restore its emphasis on promoting efficient mineral use in order to ensure that the Government's goals are achieved.

It is appropriate to use the word '**promote**' in the purpose statement as it is a standard feature of a number of New Zealand Acts of parliament, governing a range of sectors and activities. Just a handful of these relevant to our sector include the Conservation Act, the Resource Management Act, the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Act, the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf Act.

The definition of "**promote**" is to support or actively encourage (a cause, venture, etc.); further the progress of (Oxford Dictionary). Aggregate is critical to building our

economy and is on the first draft of the Government's Critical Minerals list. The Government has stated that *"If access to some of these enabling minerals, such as aggregates to build infrastructure or phosphate to support our agricultural sector, was suddenly restricted or halted there would be serious implications for our economy"*. This surely means that the CMA must support, actively encourage or further the progress of aggregate and other minerals in order to support the Government's Minerals Strategy.

Introducing an optional Government policy statement (GPS)

We support the proposed Clauses 12 and 12A allowing for a GPS covering mining of petroleum and Crown owned minerals. This would be consistent with the Government's Minerals Strategy and a GPS could identify focus areas for the Government, provide strategic guidance to the regulator on how it should manage its functions, and inform the sector and general public of the Government's priorities for the sector.

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