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AQA proposes full-time chief exec role

Cameron Massey - Wed, 23 May 2018

The Aggregate and Quarry Association is seeking to strengthen the industry's identity and representation with a full-time chief executive.

Current executive director Roger Parton has been in the part-time role for 12 years. He will step down from his position after the Quarry NZ Conference in Hamilton in July.

He told *Inside Resources* today that he could achieve only so much with the limited resources at his disposal.

"There are more things the association should be doing for its members and for the industry, like advocating for the sector, being more involved in planning and getting the aggregate industry a higher profile."

He says he is ready to stand down and wants someone new and fresh to take the AQA to the next level.

Stronger identity

AQA chair Brian Roche told *Inside Resources* today there has always been a need for a "more solid" chief executive position.

"Not to say that Roger has doesn't the job awesomely, because he has, but being part-time there is limitations on what he can do to run the association," he says.

"We need someone to get out and get around the quarries and talk to the business owners and understand their requirements and where their issues are then to get down to Wellington and bang on doors to tell these people what quarries need."

The desire to have a peak extractive industry representative group had been pushed by quarry sector members who, Roche says, felt they needed "a bit more representation more than what the AQA was offering at the time".

A report commissioned last year told the AQA what its members thought the organisation was doing well and what could be improved.

At the time an idea was lobbied to join the AQA with existing extractives groups and make a "super extractives representative office" forming a peak organisation.

The AQA needed to make sure it wasn't going to get swallowed up, Roche says.

"That was a lot of the worry or fear, unfounded or otherwise, that the AQA would lose its identity and that the quarry guys were quite keen to keep themselves separate but not divorced, to keep their own identity in the discussion."

Better positioned

Based in Wellington, the proposed new chief executive role would be well placed to work closely with other extractive groups, like Straterra and MinEx, Roche says.

"We will have better representation and our foot in the door to a lot of the good work that Straterra does, as well as lot of the industry bodies down in Wellington," he says.

"We will also have our own identity and continue on as an elected board working for the quarry industry."

Roche says the people who were supporting the peak body will still see the closer alignment between the extractive industry groups, plus having specific representation to Government officials and ministers.

"We're going to have all of these opportunities to get in front of ministers and be involved in a few different issues that are going on, but also to make things better for quarries."

Next steps

The AQA will be sending its members a remit detailing the proposal and position details ahead of its AGM in July.

"We've done a business plan, we've done a position description we've looked at the financial implications and now we need to take it to the members" Parton says.

Roche and deputy chair Jayden Ellis are also stepping down from their positions while putting themselves forward to remain on the board.

Roche has been chair of the AQA for three years, while Ellis has held his position for five.

"I've enjoyed the personal develop that I've been able to achieve through the different things I've had to do, presenting to big crowds of people, chairing meetings and talking the press and being confident to do so," Roche says.

He would like to thank his employer Ravensdown for allowing him the time to fulfill his role as chair of the AQA.

"I'd like to acknowledge Jayden too. He's done a bloody good job and is excellent to work with."

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