

MinEx newsletter September 2015



THE NATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY COUNCIL FOR THE
NEW ZEALAND MINING AND QUARRY SECTOR

September 2015

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**In the interests of safety in our industry please
circulate widely.**

Recent Fatalities

A fourth fatality occurred in the quarry sector in July with a drowning in a Waimea River (Richmond area) alluvial quarry operation. A general MinEx safety alert was issued on the event and once we have more information we will update this. In the meantime operations that involve river crossing should ensure they have robust procedures in place to manage the risks associated with river crossings.

Quarry Sector Meeting

An industry meeting attended by approximately 40 people including at times representatives from WorkSafe and MITO and arranged by AQA and IOQ was held in Auckland 6 July.

The essential driver for the meeting was the 3rd quarry sector fatality and the meeting was called to address the following issues:

- New competencies training required by January 2016;
- The quarries are different to mines issue;
- MinEx's May 2015 submission to MBIE to extend the 2013 mining regulations, with changes, to quarries and alluvial mines; and,

- MinEx's role.

MinEx prepared a briefing paper for the meeting which can be found [here](#).

The meeting provided a useful forum for feed-back from MITO and WorkSafe on various issues and provided the opportunity to share wide ranging views on certificate of competency and regulations issues and, where appropriate and required, address misunderstandings. The meeting highlighted the communication challenge the quarry sector faces - getting information to people, and getting people to read that material.

Quarry Regulations

It seems almost certain now that the quarry and alluvial sectors will get regulations during 2016/17 and these are most likely going to be an amended fit for purpose version of the 2013 mining regulations.

In the interim MinEx will work with AQA, IOQ and Minerals West Coast (representing the Gold Miners Assoc) to review the regulations in detail to provide recommendations to Government that are best fit for the sector and consistent with our safety performance goals..

Extractive Industries H&S Forums

The Forum is a joint WorkSafe/MinEx initiative with the objective of drawing in those operations that are not engaged with any of the industry organisations and in this way assisting them to improve their health and safety performance.

Four of these Forums have now been held and are proving very successful in terms of the attendance and the numbers of new companies that we are making contact with.

Attendances so far have been as follows:

- Greymouth - 100
- Tauranga - 70
- Alexandra - 45
- Whangarei - 65

The next forum dates follow so please, if you live in the catchment area for these meetings, then help us and the industry by mobilising local quarry operations people to attend.

The next forum is:

Ashburton, 5.30pm on 6 October at: Ashburton Club, 231 Burnett Street

And then:

- Hawkes Bay 29 October - Taradale Club
 - Invercargill 26 November - Invercargill Workingmen's Club
 - December - Palmerston North - location and date to be confirmed.
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Workplace exposure standards (WES)

Diesel particulates management (DPM)

In December last year MinEx submitted on a diesel particulates WES. While we have had no feed-back on our submission, which was that the proposed WES of 100µg/m³ (measured as elemental carbon) is too low and that a more appropriate level is 400µg/m³ total carbon, MinEx found that the general industry knowledge of DPM issues was not widespread. Consequently we

decided that we needed to raise awareness within industry of DMP.

Through the AusIMM mining conference held in Dunedin from August 31 to September 2 we managed to get an Australian expert, Dr Brian Davies, to present at the conference and run a short course on DPM after the conference in Dunedin.

Supporting this, SENZ and OceanaGold agreed to fund Dr Davies to run a workshop based course at both Macraes mine and Huntly East mine 4 and 7 September respectively. These courses were focused on practical aspects of engine maintenance to manage diesel particulates.

Silica WES submissions

MinEx submitted on the proposed crystalline silica workplace exposure standard (WES) and this can be found on the MinEx website [here](#). WorkSafe proposed lowering the current WES from 0.2 mg/m³ to 0.025 mg/m³.

MinEx submitted that it saw no reason to lower the current WES on the basis of expert advice that the WorkSafe's consultant analysis of long term silica exposure effects was flawed due to these overstating the exposure levels experienced during the quoted long term studies.

Notwithstanding our submission on silica, the industry needs to get serious about the effects of exposure to crystalline silica. Many quarry and mining operations are currently not testing workers for their exposure levels. Health monitoring is a general requirement of the current H&S act and a specific requirement of the 2013 regulations.

In developing the MinEx submission, some mining and quarry operations assisted by supply the results of their monitoring for silica and many showed the presence of silica at levels within the current WES but above the proposed WES. There were a small number of samples where even the current WES was exceeded.

For those covered by these regulations:

- S 108 requires that all mining operations have a worker health control plan if 1 or more principal hazards have been identified that may have long-term effects on the health of mine workers (s107);
- For silica, at the very least, this means you need to first carry out a monitoring programme to see if silica dust poses a risk to your workers and if it does then you need to take the appropriate steps to protect workers;
- S 84 requires that all mining operations have a principal hazard management plan (PHMP) for air quality if there is any contaminant in the work-place air likely to trigger the principal hazard test in s65. If monitoring shows the presence of crystalline silica dust then this will trigger the need for an air quality PHMP;
- S84 (2) (a) requires mining operations to monitor and assess dust and airborne contaminants;
- S 84(2)(c) requires mining operations to effectively reduce, dilute or extract dust; and,
- S 84(2) (f) requires mining operations to suppress dust.

Quarry and alluvial operations should treat the 2013 mining regulations as a good practice guideline in terms of what are considered practical steps to protect workers from the effects of crystalline silica.

CoC training

Training course schedule

An industry training schedule can be found on the MinEx website [here](#). This incorporates training that can be found through MITO , Tai Poutini and ACT Safety by following the links [here](#).

MinEx will shortly send out a survey to all safety alert recipients to gauge where the most suitable locations are for the remainder of the extra competency training. Your assistance would be appreciated by responding to this survey.

Withdrawal of ITNZ consent to assess

NZQA recently announced that it has withdrawn Industry Training New Zealand Limited's (ITNZ's)

consent to assess against standards in the Extractive Industries sub-field, effective immediately (11 August 2015).

NZQA issued a letter explaining the reasons behind their decision. If you are affected by this decision then more information can be found [here](#).

Training forum, 17 September

In response to the ITNZ issue, and a high level of interest and concern about training, a training forum, sponsored by WorkSafe and run by Straterra and MinEx was held in Auckland 17 September. The purpose of the forum was to look at how we can improve training for mining and quarries, including content, delivery, standards and assessment.

45 people attended from a good cross section of the industry including underground and surface coal and gold, hard rock and alluvial quarries, limestone, tunnels, drillers, training providers, trainers, MITO, WorkSafe, the Board of Examiners and MinEX. The meeting was chaired by Chris Baker and Les McCracken with short introductions from MITO and Tony Forster.

The Forum was run in small groups as a problem solving exercise and addressed the following questions:

- What are the training outcomes the mining and quarrying industry wants?
- Are these outcomes being delivered?
- What are the barriers to these outcomes?
- What are the enablers for these outcomes?
- What do we need to do to overcome the barriers and enhance the enablers to yield the outcomes we want?
- Who needs to do this?

There was a good level of constructive engagement and a range of views expressed. Reasonable consensus was generated around the outcomes and the actions required to lift training standards and results aimed at improving H&S performance. The concept of establishing a voluntary charter that all trainers and assessors would abide by was discussed and received strong support. The charter would result in voluntary certification by an industry group, including the Board of Examiners, of any trainers wanting to work in the mining and quarrying field. This system would support the current NZQA/MITO quality assurance processes.

The results of the forum are being collated and will be sent out for comment and ratification by all attendees. The final outcome report will be posted to the MinEx website. It is proposed that a small steering group will oversee implementation of the actions agreed at the forum.

In order to maintain communication on training issues the Chief Inspector announced his intention to convene an annual one day training seminar which would give industry participants a forum for both updates to progress on lifting standards and an opportunity to raise issues around performance within the training system.

Human factors training

This unit standard was a level 5 unit and as part of the qualifications review it was recommended that this be dropped to a level 4 unit.

Training in the unit commenced using the level 5 material given that this was all that was available. Given concerns raised about the level of the unit, NZQA have approved the review recommendation and training providers are now amending their training to reflect the level 4 requirement. MITO are working on a level 4 assessment tool and have agreed that trainees who completed the level 5 unit but have not yet completed the assessment material will be able to complete the level 4 assessment as soon as it is available.

Consequently we recommend that if you are finding the level 5 assessment material too difficult to work through that you wait until the level 4 assessment is released and your trainer supplies you with new assessment material.

Codes and guidance programme

Opencast, quarry and alluvial mines guidelines

The 3rd draft of these guidelines were released to the MinEx review team 31 July, the team met 12 August and submitted on the guidelines 14 August.

The overall view of the review team was that the guidelines were very good and the review team only had a few issues that were discussed with WorkSafe 10 September. At this meeting the MinEx team reached agreement with WorkSafe on all of our issues and the good practice guidance is expected to be released in late October to early November 2015.



Pro-Visual Publishing, in collaboration with the New Zealand Institute of Safety Management, have released their latest edition of the *Mining and Quarry Industry Guide to Safety 2015/16*. You can see their full press release [here](#)

To receive a free copy of this chart please contact marketing@provisual.com.au or visit www.provisual.com.au



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