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MINING AND QUARRYING INTELLIGENCE

Tuesday 21 November, 2017

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Interviews

EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW: Peter Silcock - chief executive, Civil Contractors NZ

Matt Freeman



Peter Silcock is two years into the role of chief executive of Civil Contractors New Zealand (CCNZ).

Stop trainees dropping out of MITO-funded courses - MinEx

Bernie Napp - Mon, 20 Nov 2017

Certificate of Competency course requirements should be expanded to a New Zealand Certificate or Diploma to lower the mining and quarry manager drop-out rate on those qualifications, MinEx says.

MinEx CEO Wayne Scott was responding to an *Inside Resources* opinion poll that has found the training system is the biggest health and safety challenge for mining and quarry companies.

Trainees enrolled in MITO-supported Certificate and Diploma courses often drop out after gaining the health and safety unit standards needed for their CoC.

Outgoing chief inspector extractives Mark Pizey says the situation is a lost opportunity to improve recognition of, and respect for the industry.

"The industry is missing a trick here, an opportunity to produce a smarter and more competent set of managers, and employees and operations."

Scott proposes the New Zealand Mining Board of Examiners should specify via Gazette Notice that to gain a CoC requires a Certificate or Diploma of Mining and Quarrying, among the other requirements.

"That is what the UK and Australia do, and it is easy to implement."

Scott says he has run into difficulty with industry in advocating for this solution because most employers are happy with the current arrangement.

"You have people thinking, all I need is my CoC."

Against that, he says, a significant number of companies would like to lift the overall skill levels of their employees. He notes a general labour and skills shortage across mining and quarrying.

The BoE is reviewing the unit standards for CoCs. The submission period closed in August. WorkSafe will advise next steps in due course.

Non-completion of qualifications

Pizey says people are either not enrolling in, or dropping out of Certificate and Diploma courses partly because they "don't want to do more than they have to do; for these people, the view is - why expend the effort, time, cost and stress?"

A further reason for dropping out is that the industry training organisation, MITO, provides funding support for enrolments in a Certificate or Diploma but not for people who seek only the unit standards necessary for the CoC.

"There is a financial incentive to sign on as if you are going to do a qualification," Pizey says. "If you then decide not to complete, the government has funded your training for the CoC."

The solution

Pizey says he agrees with MinEx's proposed solution, in principle: "If you turn up with your Diploma or Certificate, you can take your oral exam, because to gain the qualification, you will have completed all the mandatory requirements for the CoC but at this time the qualification is not a pre-requisite."

In practical terms, however, the BoE has a narrow mandate to examine people only in respect of their competency in relation to workplace health and safety.

The alternative would be to review the regulations, Pizey says, "to enable the BoE to say we need a broader background, before allowing people to take the oral examination".

The other requirements to gain a CoC from WorkSafe are: a first aid qualification, logbook of work experience, to be a "fit and proper person", and having completed the necessary course work before taking an oral examination.

Inside Resources opinion poll

Earlier this year Inside Resources held an opinion poll for subscribers asking: "What is the biggest health and safety challenge at your mine or quarry?"



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Cameron Massey

Blackhead quarry on Dunedin's south coast is well placed to meet the city's aggregate demand.



Quarry manager Gavin Hartley says the seaside site is more than capable to cope with an increase in demand and has got at least another 40 years' worth of resource.

Blackhead produces about 250,000 tonnes of aggregate each year, Hartley says, with scope to produce more.

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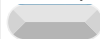
■ **EXECUTIVE INTERVIEW 2: Mick Wilkes – Chief Executive, OceanaGold**

Forty-two per cent of the respondents identified CoCs and continuous professional development for mine and quarry managers as their biggest challenge, and 28 per cent, sourcing qualified workers.

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