

Scott ups AQA ante on Govt

Bernie Napp - Mon, 01 Oct 2018

Wayne Scott is to complete shortly a quarry sector briefing paper to central government on key concerns, as the Aggregate and Quarry Association's [new CEO](#).

Scott says the sector priority is to protect existing quarry resources, and to identify and protect future ones.

"The Government has an ambitious programme for infrastructure and housing, all of which will require quarried products."

Resource management planners and policy makers around the country do not seem to understand this reality, Scott said in an interview with *Inside Resources*.

The average price of aggregate has increased by 15 per cent over the last 12 months, Scott says, because of increased demand, distance of cartage, and, additionally in Auckland, the regional fuel tax, and mounting traffic congestion.

"What's missing in New Zealand is a resource strategy," and Scott says most States in Australia have them.

The point is that with regulatory processes taking as long as 10 years to consent new quarries, sources of future aggregate supply need to be identified well ahead of time.

The Transmission Gully construction joint venture is struggling to find aggregate for that reason, Scott says, "because no one thought about it when the project was conceived".

"The Victorian State government had their 'oh shit' moment with their huge infrastructure plans. The sector said: 'where are you going to get the rock'."

The State government's response was to halve regulatory processing timeframes to release "critical resources" in a timely manner, and introduce measures to protect these resources from encroachment of non-compatible land uses.

Building bridges and trust

Scott says with his MinEx CEO role he has a home advantage in taking on his new role.

"I have built up a lot of relationships with people in the quarry sector; I pretty much know all the players. I have a feel for their issues."

The Yaldhurst dust issue has morphed into a broader environmental issue, as one example. "I have continued my involvement in that, which is really an AQA function."

Scott notes synergies with Straterra, in terms of Resource Management Act planning, and advocacy to government.

The no-new-mines-on-conservation-land policy proposal will have a significant impact on the quarry sector, not just on mining, Scott says.

He is visiting the West Coast this month to talk to quarry operators, many of whom are working on conservation land in river protection, and the building and maintenance of tracks and car parks.

As well, much quarrying is done around rivers involving both Land Information New Zealand and DoC land, e.g. the river bed and adjoining marginal strips. Land access can also be an issue.

Talking to Transport and Housing Minister Phil Twyford recently, Scott is now seeking a formal meeting with him, and with Infrastructure and Regional Economic Development Minister Shane Jones.

Scott is already engaging with other industry bodies, such as Civil Contractors New Zealand, and intends engaging with Concrete New Zealand, where there are concerns in common with those of quarrying.

