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MinEx newsletter December 2015

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

## December 2015

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## Follow the guidelines and halt fatalities



*Chris Baker, chair of MinEx, joined Tony Forster, WorkSafe's Chief Inspector Extractives and Brian Roche, chair of AQA and MinEx Board member, to mark the launch of the Good Practice Guidelines.*

If quarries and surface mines follow new guidelines, further industry fatalities could be halted, says the chair of the Mining and Extractives Health and Safety Council (MinEx), Chris Baker. He says WorkSafe's Good Practice Guidelines for quarrying, opencast and alluvial mining provide the sector with a template to become fatality free.

"We welcome these **Guidelines**. MinEx has worked with WorkSafe to deliver a practical document for both those who work in the industry and who provide health and safety training."

The Good Practice Guidelines provide the first health and safety document specifically for the quarrying and opencast mining sector. The Guidelines emerge ahead of the new Health and Safety at Work Act which takes effect from next April.

"People in this sector have been asking for this guidance. However, our challenge is to get these guidelines to all the smaller operators – this is where recent fatalities have occurred – and engage these operators in the practical and effective safety practices set out in these guidelines" says Chris Baker.

MinEx's CEO Les McCracken says the Good Practice Guidelines have been developed by WorkSafe and reviewed by an industry team representing all sectors of mining and quarrying from small and large operations to ensure the best technical and operational input into the guideline.

"Everybody should look at their systems against the Guidelines. Whatever they have in place needs to be at least as good as the Guidelines.

Les McCracken also welcomed the Pocket Guide alternative to the full 262 page Guidelines.

"This gives the sort of easy summary that the workers and supervisors can use and which newcomers to the industry can pick up."

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## Replacing the Chief Inspector

MinEX chair Chris Baker has been appointed to the selection panel tasked with the replacement of Tony Foster as Chief Inspector Extractives. Two candidates were being interviewed in November from a short list and it is hoped an appointment can be made pre christmas. Tony Forster returns to Britain in late January.

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## Welcome change in date to meet new

### COC requirements

MinEx welcomes WorkSafe's announcement that people in safety-critical roles in mining, tunnelling and quarrying operations will now have longer to meet the new competency requirements.

An amendment was made in late November to the Health and Safety in Employment (Mining Operations and Quarrying Operations) Regulations 2013.

It means existing Certificates of Competence which would have expired on 31 December 2015 have now been extended until 31 December 2016. Also, without the amendment, people in new roles established by the 2013 regulations would have needed new competencies by 1 January 2016. They will now have until 1 January 2017.

The deadline of December 31 this year was an issue at the seven Health and Safety forums which MinEx and Worksafe held this year.

"WorkSafe has had pretty consistent feedback that this date was putting too much pressure on the industry," says Tony Forster. "This is the right outcome to enable all safety-critical role-holders to complete the necessary training and evaluation, and should set up the industry for a safe and successful future."

In welcoming this change, MinEx notes that some companies invested heavily to meet the 2016 deadline, while others took a more 'wait and see' approach. The reality remains, safety performance must improve, 5 fatalities this year is 5 too many, and these training requirements are a vital part driving that improvement.

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## Fulton Hogan wins Chief Inspector's first Safety Award

MinEx congratulates Fulton Hogan's quarrying division on winning the inaugural WorkSafe New Zealand Chief Inspector Safety Leadership Award for the Extractives Industry. This recognises Fulton Hogan's commitment towards safety leadership in the industry.



## Training Leadership Group formed

In a major step forward, a Training Leadership Group has been formed to help ensure the mining and quarrying sector gets the best possible range of training as we move into a new era marked by a much more regulated Health and Safety environment. It was established after the industry's training forum in September.

Its members are Les McCracken, MinEx, Mike Higgins and Darcy Madden, quarry sector, Dave Stewart, trainer across all sectors, Tony Forster, WorkSafe, Ray Urquhart, MinEx & E tū union, Michael Alford, MITO, Dale Pierson, NZQA, Charles Gawith, metalliferous sector, Fiona Bartier, coal sector, Peter O'Sullivan, training provider.

The group will provide explicit recommendations to industry and trainers consistent with the improved H&S outcomes we all seek. It is comprised of experienced and knowledgeable industry leaders, who will work with industry and trainers to improve content, quality, standards, qualifications, CoC's and assessment of trainers. The Training Leadership Group had its first meeting on November 5 and began by taking responsibility for the implementation of the outcomes from the Sept 17 Training Forum.

## Industry Safety Performance

### Fatality requires assessments of hydraulic jack risks

MinEx is urging workplaces to complete a risk assessment of hydraulic jacks after a November 5 fatality which occurred when a mine worker at the Waikaia Gold alluvial mine in Southland was using a hydraulic jack.

MinEx understands that the jack was to be used to lift a piece of heavy equipment. It came to the end of its stroke but was not yet lifting when the barrel split, discharging hydraulic fluid at high pressure into the worker's body and causing critical injuries. Until a full WorkSafe investigation has been completed MinEx will not be sure of the cause of the accident but the activity the worker was involved in is a common workshop activity. MinEx strongly recommends that all companies re-examine their risk assessments for the use of hydraulic jacks and in particular:

- Ensure the right capacity jack is used for the job;
- The jack has an operating pressure relief valve; and,
- The pressure relief valve is set at the appropriate pressure given the rated pressure capacity of the lifting ram.

**If you have not completed a risk assessment for the use of hydraulic jacks then MinEx strongly recommends that you complete one before doing any more lifting**

work with any type of jack.

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# Membership and Industry Liason

## H&S Forums

- MinEx, in conjunction with WorkSafe and industry bodies completed its final Health and Safety forum of the year in Gore on 25 November. This meeting attracted 65 industry members with particular thanks to the efforts of Ollie Turner from Civil Contractors NZ. Those attending included a large group of lime producers and the Question and Answer session brought out some issues which require MinEx and WorkSafe to respond.
- The Gore meeting was the 7<sup>th</sup> and final one of the year, with other recent forums held at Whangarei, Ashburton and Napier, all attracting good turn-outs and interest. We will hold our first Health and Safety forum for 2016 in Palmerston North early in the New Year (date still tbc). We are also reassessing the planned programme for 2016 with about 5 more needed to cover all of NZ (Taupo, New Plymouth, Whanganui, Oamaru and Palmerston North.)
- MinEx wishes to thank all those involved in helping organise and support the seven Health and Safety forums held this year – in particular the IOQ, CCNZ and AQA. In total, about 350 industry members attended a forum, which underscores the importance we are all attaching to Health and Safety.

## Industry conferences

- MinEx attended the AusIMM conference 31 August to 2 September and presented two papers. These were among nine H&S presentations from a range of industry participants.

## Communications

- At its November meeting, the AQA board agreed to fund AQA's Communications Advisor, Brendon Burns, to assist MinEx communications from December to April 2016. Brendon is reviewing MinEx communications, including newsletters and helped with the launch of the new Good Practice Guidelines. Brendon is planning a series of stories in regional media during the holiday period. He is keen to learn about other positive industry initiatives on Health and Safety which might be communicated more widely. Contact him at [brendon.burns1@gmail.com](mailto:brendon.burns1@gmail.com) or 0274 305501

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