

Your health & safety experts are your staff

Look to your staff for the best advice on health and safety, rural contractors have been told by an industry expert.

Wayne Scott, who is CEO of the Mining/Extractive sector's health & safety organisation MinEx, told the Invercargill RCNZ conference that he wasn't a big fan of consultants offering advice to businesses.

"All the information is with you already. The people working for you are the experts."

Wayne is also not a big fan of paperwork.

"If it's a health & safety form that adds no value, don't do it."

There was far too much focus on filling in forms when rural contractors would do better to concentrate on engaging with their staff.

'Please concentrate on the big stuff.'

Business owners also needed to challenge every assumption and remain in a state of chronic unease over health & safety.

"Don't accept that shi** happens." Wayne Scott says Kiwis were far too accepting of serious injuries and fatalities in the workplace. "We feel sorry for the people and move on."

The biggest causes of workplace deaths were vehicle incidents, falls and breaches of procedure.

Of particular relevance to rural contractors was that in quarrying there was an average of an ADT roll-over every week and three a week in civil contracting.

He says the Health & Safety at Work Act 2015 was world-class legislation, putting the onus on employers to manage risks on their own sites.

One of the things MinEx does is encourage mines and quarries to report 'near misses' and then anonymises the information and reports it to the membership, to reduce the risk of similar incidents causing injuries on other sites.

This has been taken note of by RCNZ.

WorkSafe's Deputy Chief Inspector of Extractives Dave Bellett also spoke to the meeting.

Two rural contractors told the conference that there didn't need to be fear about WorkSafe.

Former RCNZ President Steve Levet says after engaging health and safety 'experts' after he bought a quarry, he had WorkSafe visit. "They were really good to deal with."



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Bulls contractor Adrian Bennie echoed his comments. “Don’t be scared of getting WorkSafe in. They’re not going to hang you.”

RCNZ CEO Andrew Olsen welcomed the discussion and says he encourages contractors to talk regularly to their staff on health and safety issues.