

Prescriptive H & S regulations mooted for extractives

Simon Hartley - Wed, 25 Sep 2019

More prescriptive health and safety regulations are expected out of the current consultation round for the extractives sectors, with the possibility some Australian procedures may be introduced.

Members of the mining and quarrying health and safety body MinEx, Civil Contractors New Zealand, and the Aggregate and Quarry Association are being urged to talk to their respective bodies as soon as possible, before consultation closes next week, on 4 October.

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has proposed changes to Health and Safety at Work Regulations out for consultation, covering plant, structures and working at height.



What the sector has raised to date

MinEx CEO Wayne Scott, who is also CEO for the AQA, told *Inside Resources* today issues raised by members to date included the effects of regulatory change on sales of second-hand mining equipment, and also the use of cranes.

“The consultation focus seems to be prescriptive regulation, and not the actual, on-site hazards.”

He said the sectors’ needed the ability to assess risks on site, with each individual job, as opposed to relying on regulations, which might not suit every circumstance. “Some prescribed risk assessment is needed, but it’s better to assess on site.”

Regulation coverage of second hand equipment and cranes

Another issue was brought up by machinery suppliers of second-hand mining and quarrying equipment, and how new regulations might cover older equipment.

Scott highlighted secondhand equipment sales had become an issue in other countries in recent times.

“There could end up being a reluctance of dealers to trade in secondhand gear,” he said.

Members’ other concerns are around regulations covering the use of cranes, particularly in a tunnel situation and also in down-hole boring, Scott said.

Scott said while this is the “first phase” in the review of regulations, that may have been driven harder because of the number of fatalities in the construction sector during the past year.

Similar to MinEx, Civil Contracting New Zealand is making a submission on behalf of members and is urging them to come forward with suggestions.

What the introduction of Australian regulations may bring

Of several key points raised by CCNZ, there were questions on whether Australian regulations, for excavations beyond 1.5m and having a risk plan for the use of mobile plant, might be considered for adoption in New Zealand.

Scott said he expected there to be a re-drafting of risks and hazards within regulatory changes, with an eye to Australian regulations.

“If introduced, Australian regulations will be more prescriptive,” he predicted.