

October 2017

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## You can help save lives

I still vividly remember attending my first fatality. A young electrician was electrocuted on a steel gantry. He had so much life ahead of him. And yes, his death was avoidable.

No one needs to lose their life in our industry. But sometimes we only learn from our experiences.

What I am asking you – and everyone in the extractive sector – is to share those experiences that stop short of a fatality or injury – but only by good luck or the grace of God.

Every quarry and mine has at least one narrow call that everyone on a site remembers. And hopefully learns from. But that's where it stops. These 'near misses' are currently not included in notifiable incidents. So any learnings from a potentially fatal or serious injury are limited, at best, to the site where the near miss occurred.

I want to use these near misses to provide safety alerts to other New Zealand mines and quarries.

If we can get a regular stream of them, I believe we will save lives and serious injuries. Because these will be real examples that other quarries and mines can





learn from.

So please take a few minutes to email or call me your site's 'near miss' experience. I give my word that the information will not be on-passed and any use of it will remove any details that can identify a site.

I believe I will get a good response here. That's in part because three months ago I asked for people to assist in another way – by becoming mentors to those sitting oral exams. We now have more than 20 mentors stretching from Northland to Southland. Have a read of what that's meant for our first mentor – Keri Harrison – and one of her first students, Lara Murphy.

I'm still working my way around regional quarries and often finding some good practices such as those detailed in the article about my visit to the Barracks quarry in Marlborough.

You'll also find some photos from a recent alluvial gold field trip on the West Coast and some commentary about whole body vibration issues.

All in all, a whole lot of shaking is going on here at MinEx and your 'near miss' experiences can help us build a safer and more productive extractive sector.

Wayne Scott

CEO

MinEx

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## Mentoring builds confidence and results

Keri Harrison didn't need much encouragement when her Southern Screenworks boss Brett Swain asked her if she'd mentor staff from other quarries who were preparing for oral exams.

Now she's assisting people from around Canterbury to prepare themselves,



including a very grateful Lara Murphy from Isaac Construction who says Keri's assistance was a fantastic boost in gaining her B Grade Certificate of Competence including the oral exam pass.

After putting herself through a B Grade Certificate of Competence, Keri was already helping her own colleagues pass their exams. So when MinEx's new Chief Executive Wayne Scott asked the Aggregate and Quarry Association board to back his mentoring plan, Brett Swain didn't hesitate to approach his Health and Safety manager.

Keri Harrison put herself through her B Grade CoC in November 2015 and then set about helping her Southern Screenwork colleagues. "I developed a package of tools for our guys." She was already starting to help staff from Winstone GBC Canterbury quarries when Wayne Scott asked if she could also assist a couple of Isaac Construction staff.

"I'm just lucky I've got a big office," says Keri. She'd developed an easy to follow format that looks at the various guidelines, regulations and legislation affecting quarries. "The biggest thing is how to manage risks. Everyone I've taught is highly competent. Many of them just lack confidence."

Most of her students are in their 40s through to late 50s. "I draw pictures and take them out into the quarry and ask them to tell me what they'd do on that site." To date, Keri has mentored 10 people with four passes, three awaiting results and three fails – all of whom are re-sitting.

Lara Murphy is one of her passes. The former Auckland landscape gardener began working for Isaac four years ago as a plant operator. She set her sights on a B Grade CoC and was already studying hard for it when she heard of Keri's mentoring offer.



"I had exhausted myself," she says. While she was making some progress it didn't help to hear about the high failure rates with oral exams. The only external assistance had been a one-day course which didn't greatly help. "To be quite honest I didn't find it one little bit helpful. It confused me. The stuff I got in that course was stuff I already knew."

Keri provided workable two-hour periods and sent Lara and other mentorees home

with some things to think about. She also offered to be on call by phone.

Mentorees are taken through the Good Practice Guidelines for quarrying, H&S Management Plans, Risk Assessments and Emergency Management Plans.

“Keri gave me the confidence I needed to go into that exam without feeling worried,” says Lara. “She didn’t tell me any of the answers but would point me in the right direction.”

Wayne Scott says he’s blown away that in just two months since he launched the initiative, MinEx now has more than 20 mentors providing support to CoC candidates in various parts of the country.

**If you think you could assist, or would like to be mentored, please contact Wayne on 021 944 336, [wayne@minex.org.nz](mailto:wayne@minex.org.nz)**

*Photo. Mentor Keri Harrison with Lara Murphy from Isaac Construction.*

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## Taking it from the top

A Marlborough quarry has gained a big tick from MinEx for mining their Barracks Rd Quarry from the top down.

Wayne Scott visited Blenheim last month as part of a series of regional visits he has initiated since becoming CEO in July. He met the board of Simcox Construction and then toured the company’s Barracks Rd quarry in Omaka Valley.



“It’s a good operation,’ he said. ”It is always good to see someone with a well thought out quarry development plan.”

Wayne worked in quarries in Australia for 30 years before returning to New Zealand and says just about every site he’s ever been to has issues with what to do with the overburden material, removed before reaching rock that is suitable for quarrying.

Simcox Construction general manager Antony Clark says the company started operations with a clear vision. “Our plan says we work from the top and that’s what we’ve done.”

Wayne Scott says often quarries work at different levels, with quarrying faces influenced by the ease of extraction and design of haul roads, rather than by a plan for the future optimisation of the resource. There is also a tendency to “get behind” with overburden removal due to the immediate cost and short term demand.

Bruce Carey, Simcox’s quarry supervisor at the Barracks quarry says the quarry presented some particular challenges in working from the top as it was an existing operation.

“It’s always tempting to go in and take rock from various locations.”

*Photo. Mining Health and Safety Council (MinEx) CEO Wayne Scott, right, was impressed on a visit to Simcox Construction’s Barracks quarry, with board member Ian McNabb and chair Russell Hopkins helping show him the site.*

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## A whole lot of shaking going on

The issue of Whole Body Vibration (WBV) is very real in the extractive sector given the nature of the machinery we operate.

WBV sees the vibrations from machinery such as excavators or trucks transmitted to the driver's body. A range of medical problems can emerge including with digestion, vision and balance, stiffness/back pain and muscle fatigue, joint and spinal disorders, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases.



MinEx will shortly be releasing its own version of a Worker Health in Extractives guidance note which includes a significant section on vibration. This will see us make more substantive comment.

Safe Work Australia last year released a Guide to Managing Risks Exposure to Whole-Body Vibration in Workplaces which has some very good information.

Monitoring is important when you think WBV may be an issue but it is not the only management tool. You should observe the workplace and identify where workers are exposed to WBV, visually inspect plant, ask workers about

problems they may have, and review incidents and injuries that may be related to vibrating plant.

If you do engage someone to monitor, ensure they are qualified as an ergonomist or human factors professional.

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## CoC review shows sector cohesion

MinEx provided a strong lead for the quarry/alluvial sector in the recent submissions process on the proposed new site specific CoC and associated MITO reviews of qualifications.



WorkSafe has recently acknowledged the input in [a newsletter](#), noting the vast majority of nearly 80 submissions were from the quarry/alluvial sector, with 16 individuals and companies, as well as IOQNZ, AQA, Civil Contractors New Zealand and Minerals West Coast, all endorsing MinEx's submission to some extent.

Thanks to everyone for this support. It's important we show a cohesive approach.

WorkSafe is saying the large number of submissions means that the Board of Examiners' analysis of the feedback will take some time – and then it has to make its final recommendations to the WorkSafe Board. Similarly, MITO is saying its response to submissions on changes to qualifications and training won't emerge until next year.

More encouragingly, WorkSafe says the Gazette notice with the new CoC requirements will be published in the first quarter of next year.

Meantime, WorkSafe's long-awaited on-line system to allow CoC holders to record CPD activities electronically will be available at the end of this month.

WorkSafe also reports a turnaround in the number of competent oral exam candidates, with 78- 80% of all oral exam candidates found competent between July and September.

We'd like to think that our mentoring scheme is playing a role here.

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## Going for gold

I was recently delighted to attend an alluvial mining field day on the West Coast and see how well some of these miners are doing on health and safety.

The day was organised by Tai Poutini Polytechnic on behalf of the West Coast Gold Miners Association.

We started with a 45 minute training session on traffic management at Tai Poutini's Greymouth campus and then a group of about twenty of us visited two gold mines to see how traffic is managed and review operations.



The day concluded with the AGM for the group, which was held at the Ross Hotel – typical West Coast hospitality ensued.

The highlights for me were the size and scale of some of these operations, the obvious improvements they have made in health and safety management, and compliance generally, and their knowledge of alluvial gold deposits and how to mine it efficiently.

Wayne

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## A new event on the New Zealand extractives calendar



New Zealand Petroleum & Minerals (NZP&M) and Straterra have announced the launch of a new conference and expo.

The event will be called the New Zealand Minerals Forum and the inaugural event will be held in May 2018 in Queenstown.

The Minerals Forum seeks to: showcase the New Zealand mining sector; promote our mineral prospectivity; educate and inform the New Zealand mining community; share stories of environmental excellence; and, provide regulatory roadmap guidance.

The event will be run by Freeman Media, publisher of *Inside Resources* - the industry's online publication. Please contact [Eliza Murray](#) to register your interest or obtain more information about the event.

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