



Media Release

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New Zealand Mining Board of Examiners Appointed

A highly experienced group of extractives industry practitioners has been appointed to set and assess competency standards of those working in safety-critical roles within the extractives industry.

WorkSafe NZ Board Chair, Professor Gregor Coster said new mining health and safety regulations and amendments to the Health and Safety in Employment Act came into force in December last year including a requirement for WorkSafe to establish the New Zealand Mining Board of Examiners.

“The New Zealand Mining Board of Examiners will advise the Board of WorkSafe on the health and safety competency requirements for workers in the extractives industry – a key recommendation of the Royal Commission on the Pike River Tragedy,” Professor Coster said.

The Board of Examiners will also examine applicants for certificates of competency and issue, renew, and suspend certificates of competency. It has additional responsibilities to ensure training and continuing professional development programmes are fit-for-purpose.

The New Zealand Mining Board of Examiners will work closely with its Australian counterparts to ensure equivalent standards in both countries.

The Board of Examiners will be chaired by WorkSafe’s Chief Inspector, Extractives Tony Forster.

Working with Mr Forster will be 12 other industry experts including, operators, trainers, academics and union representatives.

“The establishment of the Board of Examiners is an important step in the extractives industry’s development and it will ensure New Zealand is matching international best practice in competency development, management and oversight,” Professor Coster said.

The Board members are:

- Tony Forster, Chair Chief Inspector, Extractives, WorkSafe New Zealand
- Stephen Bell Solid Energy

- Michelle Crompton MITO
- Andrew Dallas Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, Australia
(representing the EPMU)
- Steven Ellis Stevenson Resources Ltd
- Andy Loader First Rock Consultancy
- Bernie O’Leary, OceanaGold
- Marianne Rogers Felix Services
- Dr John St. George Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering,
University of Auckland
- Iain Simmonds McConnell Dowell
- Craig Smith Mining Consultant
- David Stewart MinServe International
- Dean Torstonson Orica Mining

New Zealand Mining Board of Examiners Members' Biographical Details

Tony Forster (Chair)

Tony Forster, is WorkSafe's Chief Inspector, Extractives . He holds a First Class Mine Manager's Certificate from the UK, and is a Chartered Mining Engineer and Fellow of the Institute of Mining Engineers. He has a Master's Degree in Occupational Safety and Health and has been a visiting lecturer at Salford University.

Before moving to New Zealand in February 2013 to take up his current role with WorkSafe Tony served in the UK as Her Majesty's Principal and acting Chief Inspector of Mines. He was President of the South Wales Institute of Mining Engineers and a board member of the London Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining. Tony has taken a lead role in various major investigations including the Gleision inundation disaster in Wales in 2011 and is engaged in the Pike River mine recovery proposals.

Stephen Bell

Stephen is a highly experienced mine operator, mine manager and mining engineer with over 30 years' experience working in underground and surface coal mines in New Zealand, Australia, and USA.

He was a founding member of the Mines Rescue Trust Board, serving three years as Chair and a Mines Rescue Brigadesman for over 15 years. He served on the board of the previous Extractive's ITO where he helped to establish and scope unit standards for extractives qualifications. He has also been a trainer and examiner.

Stephen is currently Solid Energy's General Manager, Operations,

Stephen holds a Bachelor of Mineral Technology (Hons), First Class Underground Coal Mine Manager's Certificate and a risk management qualification.

Michelle Crompton

Michelle is Principal Advisor, Strategy and Performance to MITO's Chief Executive. MITO is the Industry Training Board (ITO) for the extractives industry.

Michelle has a comprehensive understanding of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework and has overall responsibility for working with WorkSafe on Mining Certificates of Competence. Currently she is managing the review of extractives qualifications. She worked with MBIE's Pike River Implementation Team to integrate recommendations on current and future qualifications within the extractives industry.

She holds a Bachelor of Science in Decision Making, Certificate in Technical Communication, Diploma in Information Systems and Technology and a New Zealand Certificate in Science.

Andrew Dallas

Andrew Dallas is the NZCTU and EPMU nomination. He is a lawyer with the Australian Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, based in Sydney and has eight years' experience representing the interests of extractives industry workers, with a particular focus on health and safety issues. Prior to this he was a solicitor with the NZPSA for 4 years.

Andrew provided legal research and advice to support EPMU's submissions to the Pike River Royal Commission and was the EPMU representative on the MBIE Expert Reference Group reviewing the new mining regulations last year.

He holds a Master of Laws 1st class honours degree from Auckland University and has submitted his PhD thesis to Queensland's Griffin University. He is a Barrister and Solicitor of the High Court of New Zealand, Solicitor of the High Court of Australia and a Solicitor of the Supreme Court of Queensland.

Steven Ellis

Steven is a highly experienced quarry business leader with extensive quarrying operational experience since the early 1970s. He brings a strong track record in people leadership, safety, quality, environment and technical innovation and a commitment to training and upskilling staff.

Steven is the inaugural winner of the Quarry Industry Leadership Award and has received an award for services to the quarry industry. He was a member of the EXITO Board, the previous industry ITO. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Quarrying (IoQ) and has been a member its Executive Board, including serving as President.

He is the Minerals Executive for the Stevenson Group. Stevenson Mining Ltd is the largest New Zealand based coal mining contractor in New Zealand.

Steve holds a number of extractives' Certificates of Competence.

Andy Loader

Andy has over 30 years of experience working in the extractives industry (particularly quarrying) in New Zealand, Australia, and the Pacific. He manages his own consultancy, First Rock Consultancy Ltd, provides training and assessment, safety and health management planning, and mine and quarry planning and auditing services. He is an ITO-registered assessor, an accredited safety auditor and an explosives use test certifier.

Andy is the CEO of the New Zealand Safety Council. He is a past president of the IoQ and was elected an Honorary Fellow in 2005.

He holds a number of extractives' Certificates of Competence.

Bernie O'Leary

Bernie has over 20 years' industry experience in New Zealand and Australia working in underground, open pit and tunnelling operations. Recently he has been involved in developing the mining regulations that came into force in December 2013 and giving feedback on WorkSafe codes of practice.

He is General Manager, Macraes Operations, OceanaGold.

Bernie holds a Bachelor of Mining Technology (Hons) and certificates of competence from New Zealand and Australia. He is a member of the Australasian Institute of Mining.

Marianne Rogers

Marianne brings both an operational mining and training experience to the Board. She is currently an independent consultant who tutors at Tai Poutini Polytechnic for A and B Grade Quarry Managers' qualifications. She has extensive experience, including management, in quarrying, underground coal and metaliferrous mining in Australia and New Zealand.

She has a Bachelor of Engineering (Mining), First Class Mine Manager's Certificate of Competence, Bachelor of Laws (Hons), and a Graduate Diploma, Legal Practice Skills. She has received scholarships and awards in both mining and law.

John St George

Dr St George has 40 years of international and New Zealand experience in mining operations and academia. He has published extensively. He was advisor to the New Zealand Police during the Pike River Mine tragedy and was a member of the expert panel for the Pike River Coal Mine receivers (PWC), to advise on mine recovery.

He is Head of Department (Academic) at Auckland University's Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering. He holds a Bachelor of Science (Mining Engineering), Master of Science (Rock Mechanics and Excavation Engineering) and a PhD in Mining Engineering.

His professional affiliations include: Fellow of the Australasian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy; Member of Institute of Professional Engineers, New Zealand (IPENZ); Member of the Institute of Materials, mining and metals, London; Member of the International Society of Explosives Engineers and Chartered Engineer, Engineering Council, UK. He was the Vice-President of the International Society of Rock Mechanics in 2003-2007.

Iain Simmons

Iain has 30 years of civil engineering experience, including 20 years of working in the tunnelling industry in England and New Zealand. He is a highly experience project manager of complex projects who promotes high performance in the areas of safety, quality and environment by creating a strong culture of excellence.

Iain is employed by McConnell Dowell and is currently the Tunnel Construction Manager for the Waterview Project, one of the biggest tunnelling projects undertaken worldwide.

He holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Civil). He is a Chartered Professional Engineer, a registered International Engineer and a Member (IPENZ).

Craig Smith

Craig has 42 years' experience in underground and surface coal mining in Australia and New Zealand. He is currently reviewing the Extractives' Certificate of Competence requirements for WorkSafe. He was part of MBIE's Pike River Implementation Team to assist in developing the new mining regulatory framework.

He is a member of the WorkSafe Board's Extractives Industry Advisory Group (EIAG) and is currently an independent mining consultant. Craig has been a mines rescue brigadesman and has been a member of the Mines Rescue Trust Board for the past 14 years.

He has a Bachelor of Science (Hons), Mineral Technology, and First Class Coal Mine Manager's CoCs from Queensland and New Zealand.

Dave Stewart

Dave has 30 years' experience as a mine engineer, manager, trainer and mining technical advisor and consultant. This includes training and assessing extractives industry workers for NZQA/ITO standards and Certificates of Competence in coal, gold, mineral and quarrying operations.

He is a member of the EAIG and was a member of MBIE's Expert Reference Group reviewing regulations. Dave is Chair and Trustee of the New Zealand Mines Rescue Trust and a Fellow of the Australasian Minerals Institute. He contributed to the development and review of the Mines Rescue Trust Act 2013.

Dave has a Bachelor of Mineral Technology (Hons) and numerous extractives' certificates and qualifications.

Dean Torstonson

Dean and has over 20 years' experience in the quarrying industry. He has also worked in surface and underground mining and tunnelling operations in New Zealand and Australia. He is a member of the IQA Executive Council, past Chair, Waikato/BOP IQA and IQA representative on the Quarry Industry Group which is drafting new quarry regulations. He has received an award for operational excellence in the quarry industry.

He is North Island Commercial Lead/Operations Manager at Orica Mining Ltd.

He holds numerous extractives' certificates and a National Certificate of Learning. He is a technical verifier and workplace assessor.

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For further information: WorkSafe NZ media phone 021 823 007