



# Wayne Scott

CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MINEX

## How did you get involved in health & safety?

I have spent most of my working life in quarry operations and management. I experienced my first fatality at a site I was working at in Sydney in the early 1990s and I became determined that I would do whatever I could to stop this happening to others and to promote workplace safety in subsequent management roles.

## How did you arrive at your current role?

For the eight years to July 2017 I worked on the small mines strategy for the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines. I was a mines inspector although I worked predominantly in training and assisting small mine and quarry owners to improve H&S and comply with H&S legislation. Prior to that I managed quarrying and concrete operations for Holcim Australia (then Readymix) in NSW and Queensland for 21 years after migrating from NZ to Australia with my young family.

## What will be your biggest challenge in the next 12 months?

Engaging with all in the extractives sector, including those that don't see value in H&S and those with entrenched ideas and practices. My challenge is to bring everyone in the sector along for the ride in improving H&S performance. By this I don't just mean compliance, but genuine H&S improvement.

## In your career, what has been your most satisfying H&S achievement?

In my eight years with the Queensland Government I helped a large number of small family businesses to realise the benefits of good H&S practices, and develop simple and practical systems for managing risks at their sites. This included people with low literacy and those for whom English was not their first language. I got great satisfaction from seeing the improvement at these sites.

## In your career, what has been the hardest thing you've had to do in H&S?

Fatalities are the things you remember. The human cost of these events significantly outweighs any fines or legal action. I investigated two fatalities while working for the QLD Government, both of which were totally avoidable, and these were the hardest things I have ever done.

## In your view, what is the most important single issue in H&S facing New Zealand?

The comfort that many boardrooms have with their documented H&S management systems. Increasingly I witness a huge disconnect between what companies think is being done in H&S and what is actually happening on the ground.

## How best to address this issue?

Companies need to genuinely engage with

their workers and talk about practical ways to improve safety, and not get bogged down in theory and historical ways of managing things. There needs to be greater direct supervision and physical workplace inspections so that organisations can be confident that their controls are in place and are effective.

## Tell us something about yourself that might surprise readers.

Besides my family, my great passion is jazz music. I have played saxophone since I was 12 years old (the same Alto I still play) and have played with a number of big bands and dance bands in Australia. Once I get my feet on the ground I hope to find somewhere to play my horn in Wellington.

## What is the riskiest thing you've done that you're willing to confess to?

Probably showing my age here, and hindsight is a wonderful thing, but driving a vehicle heavily under the influence of alcohol is the riskiest thing I have ever done. When I look back on that practice it was only good luck that saved the lives of a lot of us. Good H&S practice is about not relying on luck.