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PRESS RELEASE

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KZN quarry managers show the way

Sand and aggregate quarries in KwaZulu Natal are among the best in the country and show high degrees of compliance with health and safety regulations while simultaneously setting high standards of care for the natural environment.

Delegates attending a recent regional meeting of the Aggregate and Sand Producers Association of Southern Africa (Aspasa) at Afrisam's Newcastle quarry heard that the overall standard of quarries in the province is high and that the quarry at which the meeting was being held was among the very best run quarries in country.

During this year's strict annual health and safety audits, as well as separate environmental audits, the Newcastle was among the best in the country. In addition, ongoing efforts to improve surroundings and make the quarry more attractive were applauded as it adds considerably to the improvement of working conditions.

Vast improvements

Aspasa regional chairman, Jurgens du Toit, said that the standard of quarries in South Africa has risen considerably in the past 20 years. "Just two decades ago the average quarry manager was tasked mainly with managing people and machines to break rock. By comparison nowadays, a quarry manager has to be familiar with intense legal compliance matters and needs to be equipped with a substantial "toolbox" of skills in order to efficiently remove minerals from the ground.

"You need to become a specialist in environment protection and you need to be au fait with current health and safety procedures. You also need to have a firm grasp of engineering principals and be able to produce sand and aggregates to ever-stricter specification as required by consulting engineers etc. Perhaps, most importantly, you need to know how to be a good neighbor and be a socially responsible member of the community

"As a result of this good management the costs of running a quarry are increased and this makes the role of a good quarry manager an exceedingly important one. In KwaZulu Natal we are grateful to have highly experienced and well-motivated management teams in our quarries – and it shows," said Jurgens.

Assisting the industry

He added that Aspasa was an agent on behalf of the industry and plays an important role to assist

the industry to understand legislation and implement requirements wherever necessary. The association also works closely with the Department of Mineral Resources (DMR), South African Roads Agency Limited (Sanral) and other key role players to ensure the rules of engagement are fair and that the industry is properly governed.

Annual audits of member quarries also ensured that the overall standard of all quarries in the country are constantly improved and that non-compliant quarry operators could be identified and membership of the association terminated.

He concluded that companies, Government departments, municipalities etc should only use aggregates and sand that is sourced from responsible quarries that comply with requirements relating to health, safety, environment and that are socially responsible citizens of the area in which they operate.

“Membership of Aspasa is a guarantee that the quarry in question complies with the above. We therefore call on those people who specify, buy or use aggregates to work with Aspasa members and communicate with the association to ensure any problems in the industry are resolved.

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Ends...

Captions

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Aspasa regional chairman Jurgens du Toit

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Afrisam's Newcastle quarry was lauded as being among the very best in the country in terms of overall management

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Attractive features make working at the quarry more rewarding

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