

# Quarry Manager of mines other than underground mines or coal mines certificate of competence

## Examiner's report 2024-2025

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### Written examination

#### Paper A – Legislation knowledge

##### Summary of results and general comments

Exam date: 28 August 2024

Number of candidates: 10

Number who passed: 8

Highest mark: 96.4%

Average mark: 73.5%

Lowest mark: 53.9%

Examiners' comments – Overall, the panel feels that candidates were better prepared in 2024. This was apparent by the higher quality answers and the improved overall pass rate for Paper A & Paper B.

##### Section 1 – Focus area 1.1 (total 20 marks)

Highest mark: 20

Average mark: 14.8

Lowest mark: 9.5

Examiners' comments – this section was designed to assess a candidate's understanding of the Quarry Managers statutory duties and the duties of others who they may supervise or engage with. The marks for this section varied considerably, from a perfect score to less than 50 %. For the poorer performing candidates, a common theme was the lack of understanding of the requirements of WHS(Mines and Petroleum Sites) Regulation (WHS(MPS)R) s125, 'Duty to notify the Regulator of other matters'.

## **Section 2 – Focus area 1.2 (total 30 marks)**

Highest mark: 29

Average mark: 21.3

Lowest mark: 13

Examiners' comments – this section required candidates to demonstrate an understanding of how the legislation relates to a mines safety management system (SMS), its contents, control plans and associated specific controls. Most candidates answered this section well, however some let themselves down with respect to the necessary inspection requirements in a SMS and the contents of Principal Hazard Management Plans, WHSMPSR s28.

## **Section 3 – Focus area 1.3 (total 40 marks)**

Highest mark: 40

Average mark: 28.9

Lowest mark: 20

Examiners' comments – this section of the paper assessed a candidate's knowledge of the legislation as it related to incident reporting, incident management and investigations. Most candidates answered the questions well, with the exception of two candidates who were not able to adequately describe the process they would use to develop and implement an emergency plan on a new site.

## **Section 4 – Focus area 1.4 (total 40 marks)**

Highest mark: 37

Average mark: 30.3

Lowest mark: 17.5

Examiners' comments – This section assessed a candidate's broad understanding of the legislation (WHS Act (WHS Act), WHS Regulations (WHSR), WHS(Mines and Petroleum Sites )Act (WHMPSA) & WHSMPSR as it relates to managing risk, the general duties of the PCBU, obligations pursuant to the Explosives Act and Regulations and specific controls at a Tier 1 quarry site. Marking would suggest that some candidates did not have a good understanding of the 'key fundamentals' in the overarching WHS legislation.

## **Section 5 – Focus area 1.5 (total 10 marks)**

Highest mark: 9

Average mark: 7.7

Lowest mark: 7

Examiners' comments – these questions assessed a candidate's understanding of relevant Australian Standards, codes of practice, safety alerts and bulletins and their application to the quarry/mining sector. The questions were generally well answered, with all candidates reaching the minimum competence mark.

## Paper B – Legislation application and technical knowledge

### Summary of results and general comments

Exam date: 28 August 2024

Number of candidates: 10

Number who passed: 8

Highest mark: 87.1%

Average mark: 74.9%

Lowest mark: 57.6%

Examiners' comments

### Section 1 – Focus area 2.1 (total 25 marks)

Highest mark: 22.5

Average mark: 19

Lowest mark: 14

Examiners' comments – this section of the paper assessed a candidate's technical knowledge in relation to the Principal Hazards that are likely to be found in a Tier 1 quarry. This year's topics included blast management and design, tyre handling and inflation management. The majority of candidates were found competent in this section.

### Section 2 – Focus area 2.2 (total 30 marks)

Highest mark: 29

Average mark: 23.4

Lowest mark: 12

Examiners' comments – the technical knowledge for the implementation of effective controls was assessed by examining candidates understanding of the change management processes to introduce new mobile fleet to a mine and what 'key criteria' is required for the safe operation of mobile plant.

### Section 3 – Focus area 2.3 (total 30 marks)

Highest mark: 26.5

Average mark: 23.8

Lowest mark: 18

Examiners' comments – this section included an assessment of a candidates understanding of traffic hazard controls, waste dump design and the management of slope stability hazards. It also assessed a candidate's understanding of the controls to be used to manage worker exposure to respirable crystalline silica (RCS). Some candidates failed to provide hard barrier 'engineering'

controls in their traffic management answers and some did not have a good understanding of national exposure standards for dust.

#### **Section 4 – Focus area 2.4 (total 30 marks)**

Highest mark: 28

Average mark: 22.5

Lowest mark: 17

Examiners' comments – this section focused on assessing the candidates understanding and application of information, training and instruction systems that would be used to manage workers and contractors. Questions were based around 'safety critical controls' on conveyors and the design of defect reporting systems. It also included an assessment in relation to the Code of Practice for managing psychosocial hazards.

#### **Section 5 – Focus area 3.1 (total 35 marks)**

Highest mark: 34

Average mark: 22.4

Lowest mark: 12

Examiners' comments – the questions in this section were designed to evaluate a candidate's understanding of risk manage principles and the types of risk management processes that you would expect to see at a larger quarry/mine operation. It included a section on the design and application of 'bow tie' risk assessments. Some candidates lost marks in the 'bow tie' section as the underlying principles were not understood.

#### **Section 6 – Focus area 3.3 (total 20 marks)**

Highest mark: 20

Average mark: 16.4

Lowest mark: 12

Examiners' comments – candidates were given a maintenance scenario and were asked to describe and implement expected controls to manage high risk activities, including confined space, working at height and hot work activities. Several candidates got low marks in this section due to their inability to describe confined space controls.

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## Oral examination

Exam date: 6 November 2024

Number of candidates: 8

Number deemed competent: 5

Examiners' comments:

This year's oral exam covered four (4) of the five (5) focus areas contained in Domain 4 (as below). The fifth Focus area 4.3 "Communicate actions and necessary information in a timely, clear and effective manner in response to risks" was incorporated into the marking criteria of the other questions.

Focus Area 4.1 – Situational and operational leadership to ensure the health and safety of mining operations.

Focus Area 4.2 – Act decisively to manage emergency situations and to control hazardous situations.

Focus Area 4.4 – Carry out required consultation with others across the mine's operations.

Focus Area 4.5 – Systematic and structured approach to management and problem solving in the workplace.

The questions were designed to assess a candidate's ability to manage scenarios that would typically fall under the jurisdiction of a Tier 1 quarry manager.

The panel found five (5) candidates 'competent' and three (3) 'not yet competent'.

Feedback to the 'not yet competent' candidates included:

1. candidates would benefit from further exposure to facilitation of safety management document reviews, where they can practise the processes involved in assembling a relevant team on site and scoping a review while facilitating this process.
2. candidates would benefit from exposure to how performance management strategies work in dealing with poor safety culture on site and the setting of goals or KPI's for supervisors and leading hands.
3. candidates would benefit from further mentoring and being part of leadership groups that are involved in activities such as project management, change management and dealing with difficult safety situations.

As per other years, the panel is always wanting candidates to answer questions in the 1st person, as if they were the quarry manager. Answers that rely on risk assessments and the use of subject matter experts will come under scrutiny, with candidates asked to explain technical content.

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## Post oral examination

Exam date: 8 May 2025

Number of candidates: 3

Number deemed competent: 3

Examiners' comments:

This year's resit exam covered the same four (4) competencies that were assessed in the original oral exam. All three (3) candidates were successful and it was obvious to the panel that each candidate had taken on board the feedback from their first unsuccessful oral attempt and had upskilled in the areas where they had previously been found deficient.

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