

# High level framework for oral examination requirements

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**EXTRACTIVES CERTIFICATES  
OF COMPETENCE**

August 2025



**Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa**  
New Zealand Government

**WORKSAFE**  
Mahi Haumarū Aotearoa

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## **What is the purpose of the panel of examiners?**

The BoE delegate a panel of examiners, who come from industry, to conduct the oral examinations.

The Panels' purpose is to assess applicants for Certificates of Competence (CoCs) by way of oral examination. The examination assesses whether the applicant can apply operational practice in the subject areas covered by the requirements set for the relevant CoC for which they are applying.

Panels consider whether the applicant can apply what they have learnt from their studies to the job, rather than just demonstrate an ability to remember information. The examination therefore checks not only whether the applicant understands the relevant legislation but also how it is applied in day-to-day operations.

After the oral examination the Panel make recommendations to the New Zealand Mining Board of Examiners (the BoE) whether the applicant have the satisfactory competence to gain a CoC.

The BoE decides whether an applicant is competent to hold a CoC.

The BoE issue all CoC's.

## **How does the oral exam fit into the application process?**

Once you have submitted a complete application and paid the required fee, your application will be reviewed by the BoE secretariat and BoE members to ensure you have met the criteria specified in the Health and Safety at Work (Mining Operations and Quarrying Operations- Prescribed Competency Requirements for Certificates of Competence) Safe Work Instrument 2025 (the SWI).

The criteria includes specified unit standards and evidence of appropriate experience at an operation in the form of a logbook.

Once the competency requirements have been confirmed you will then be invited to sit an oral exam.

The exams are scheduled throughout the year, and each exam is set up to ensure that the panel of examiners have sufficient knowledge of the CoC that the applicant is being examined for.

## **Expectations of the Board for all CoC holders**

CoC holders hold statutory responsibilities. Every CoC holder must have the required knowledge and be able to apply that knowledge in practical situations.

The Board therefore has high expectations of CoC holders. It will not issue anyone with a CoC to hold statutory responsibilities unless it is satisfied that the person is able to perform their duties and maintain health and safety in their area of responsibility.

## Commitment and preparation

Holding a statutory responsibility involves:

- a commitment to take on your health and safety responsibility as the holder of a CoC.
- being aware of the environment in a workplace situation as it relates to the category of the CoC you are being examined for.
- being ready and able to act in an unplanned event, incident or emergency.
- being able to lead/manage a team and being able to communicate effectively with team members.
- communicating with, and giving the correct information and instructions to visitors, contractors and anyone else in a way that they can understand.
- the responsibility to ensure worker participation in delivery of health and safety outcomes.

## Do I have to do an examination?

All applicants for a CoC or additional competency must sit an oral examination.

- Site senior executive
- First-class mine manager
- First-class coal mine manager
- A-grade opencast coal mine manager
- B-grade opencast coal mine manager
- A-grade quarry manager
- B-grade quarry manager
- A-grade alluvial mine manager
- B-grade alluvial mine manager
- A-grade tunnel manager
- B-grade tunnel manager
- A-grade metalliferous mine manager
- B-grade metalliferous mine manager
- Coal mine deputy
- Electrical superintendent
- Mechanical superintendent
- Ventilation officer
- Winding engine driver
- Coal mine underviewer
- Mine surveyor
- Additional competency for explosives
- Additional competency for work underground
- Additional competency for coal extraction

**Note:** Additional competencies are relevant to a CoC. They are not a standalone CoC. You must first hold a CoC before being issued the CoC with additional competencies. Each additional competency may require the applicant to sit a separate oral examination.

## Oral examination structure

- Panels usually consist of three members including a Chair. A member of the Board's secretariat is also present to assist with note taking and administration. Sometimes observers will be present for purposes such as moderation. In such cases, the applicant will be notified by the Board.
- The panel aims to assess an applicant's ability to appropriately respond to workplace-based scenarios.
- An applicant will be asked to demonstrate the application of the skills and/or knowledge relevant for the CoC. This means the panel will expect the applicant to talk about:
  - the situation they have been presented with
  - the action(s) they will take, using what they have learnt and putting it into practice why they have taken the action(s).
  - follow up questions will be asked to ensure applicants respond to all parts of the question.
- The selected scenarios will cover the competencies set out below, as relevant for the CoC.
- The selected scenarios will cover a range of topics within each competency, as relevant for the CoC.
- Applicants should allow 1-2 hours for the examination.
  - It is important that when answering the panels questions, that the applicant answer the questions, as if they are already in the role they are being examined for.

## Assessment guidelines

To get a CoC, candidates must be assessed as being competent in all four competencies:

- operating and safety systems
- legislation
- emergency management
- leadership.

Panels assess candidates based on the roles and responsibilities of the CoC applied for.

## Competency requirements

| COMPETENCIES                 | TOPICS  |
|------------------------------|---|
| Operating and safety systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exploration/site investigation</li> <li>- Slope stability</li> <li>- Operational planning</li> <li>- Temporary works/preparatory works</li> <li>- Operating methods</li> <li>- Processing</li> <li>- Services</li> <li>- Plant and equipment</li> <li>- Guarding</li> <li>- Maintenance</li> <li>- Instrumentation and monitoring</li> <li>- Ground or strata management</li> <li>- Roads and vehicle operations</li> <li>- Fire or explosion prevention</li> <li>- Mechanical engineering</li> <li>- Electrical engineering</li> <li>- Ventilation management</li> <li>- Worker Health management</li> <li>- Gas management</li> <li>- Outburst management</li> <li>- Spontaneous combustion</li> <li>- Inrush and inundation management</li> <li>- Flammable dust management</li> <li>- Explosives</li> <li>- Environmental management</li> <li>- Emplacement stability</li> <li>- Ponds and dams</li> <li>- Stockpiling</li> <li>- Waste dumps</li> <li>- Hyperbarics</li> <li>- Mine surveying</li> <li>- Winding engines</li> <li>- Segment management</li> <li>- Safety management</li> <li>- Risk management</li> </ul> |
| Legislation                  | <p>Relevant Acts, regulations, approved codes of practice, standards, and guidelines, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health and Safety at Work Act, 2015 (HSWA)</li> <li>- Health and Safety at Work (Mining Operations and Quarrying Operations) Regulations, 2016</li> <li>- Approved codes of practice, such as the Health and Safety at Operational Mines, Alluvial Mines and Quarries Good Practice Guidelines, issued pursuant to the HSWA</li> <li>- Health and Safety at Work (Hazardous Substances Regulations 2017)</li> <li>- Regulations, 2016 and associated Regulations</li> <li>- Electrical Safety regulations 2010</li> <li>- Mines Rescue Act 2013.</li> </ul> <p>Relevant local or territorial authority requirements or conditions.</p> <p>Any new, amended, or replacement Acts, regulations, approved codes of practice, standards, guidelines, or authority requirements or conditions to take precedence for oral examination purposes.</p>  |
| Emergency management         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Emergency plans</li> <li>- Preparedness and response</li> <li>- Roles and responsibilities</li> <li>- Recovery and testing</li> </ul>  |
| Leadership                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health and well-being</li> <li>- People development and management</li> <li>- Communication</li> <li>- Contractor management</li> <li>- Worker participation</li> <li>- Planning and organising</li> <li>- Problem-solving and decision- making</li> </ul>   |

**TABLE 1:** Comptency requirements

## Key functions and responsibilities

| CoC   | Function  | COMPETENCY  |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|---|---|--|
|   |   | Operating and safety systems  | Legislation   | Emergency management  | Leadership   |
| SSE   | Development, implementation and maintenance of the safety management system to comply with regulations, including identifying principal hazards and having a principal hazard management plan and principal control plans | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- establish and maintain workplace management systems in relation to risk and health and safety</li> <li>- establish and maintain principal hazard management plan and principal control plans</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements</li> <li>- oversight of legislative compliance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- develop workplace emergency management system</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- manage and provide health and safety leadership at operations</li> <li>- appoint safety-critical role holders</li> <li>- engage and communicate orally and in writing with clients, internal staff, local bodies and government organisations, the government regulator, external specialists, and the public</li> </ul>  |
| First-class mine manager<br>First-class coal mine manager   | To control and manage all activities at the mine  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in-depth technical knowledge to plan and manage long-term operations</li> <li>- establish operating systems and processes</li> <li>- investigate and analyse incidents</li> <li>- oversight of and compliance with workplace management systems in relation to risk and health and safety responsible for monitoring, review, operationalising and resourcing</li> </ul>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements</li> <li>- oversight of legislative compliance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- oversight of and compliance with workplace emergency management system</li> <li>- responsible for monitoring, review, operationalising and resourcing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- manage and provide leadership in all areas of operations, including staff recruitment, performance and training</li> <li>- undertake and implement all aspects of long-term operational and strategic planning</li> <li>- initiate and manage projects</li> <li>- engage and communicate orally and in writing with clients, internal staff, local bodies and government organisations, the government regulator, external specialists, and the public</li> </ul> |
| A-grade opencast coal mine manager<br>A-grade quarry manager<br>A-grade tunnel manager<br>A-grade alluvial mine manager | To plan, coordinate and control activities at the site  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in-depth knowledge to plan and implement safe and productive operations (including scheduling, allocating resources)</li> <li>- develop standard operating procedures and other workplace documentation</li> <li>- plan and lead risk assessment procedures and workplace health and safety procedures</li> <li>- plan and lead workplace inspections and incident investigations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- plan and lead emergency management procedures</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supervise, lead and mentor staff and work teams</li> <li>- capable of working in an autonomous supervisory or management capacity</li> <li>- undertake and implement short- to medium-term operational planning</li> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul>   |

| CoC   | Function   | COMPETENCY  |   |   |  |
|---|--|---|---|---|--|
|   |  | Operating and safety systems  | Legislation   | Emergency management  | Leadership   |
| <b>A-grade metalliferous mine manager</b><br><b>Coal mine underviewer</b>   | <b>To plan, coordinate and control activities on his/her shift or site at the mine</b>                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in-depth knowledge to plan and implement safe and productive operations (including scheduling, allocating resources)</li> <li>- develop standard operating procedures and other workplace documentation</li> <li>- plan and coordinate risk assessment procedures and workplace health and safety procedures</li> <li>- plan and coordinate workplace inspections and incident investigations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- plan and coordinate emergency management procedures</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supervise work teams</li> <li>- task responsibility and decision making</li> <li>- undertake and implement short- to medium-term operational planning</li> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul>   |
| <b>B-grade opencast coal mine manager</b><br><b>B-grade quarry manager</b><br><b>B-grade alluvial mine manager</b><br><b>B-grade tunnel manager</b><br><b>B-grade metalliferous mine manager</b><br><b>Coal mine deputy</b> | <b>To coordinate and control activities on his/her shift at his/her assigned section of the site</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- interpret and implement operational plans in compliance with legislation and workplace policies and procedures</li> <li>- broad operational and theoretical knowledge</li> <li>- coordinate and apply risk assessment procedures and workplace health and safety) procedures</li> <li>- JSA for work tasks</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- knowledge of health and safety legislation</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implement processes and procedures</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide face-to-face leadership and guidance when organising their own and others' activities</li> <li>- some responsibility for the performance and safety of their (small) team</li> <li>- undertake and implement short-term operational planning for their team</li> <li>- communicate orally and in writing</li> <li>- complete record-keeping on a daily basis</li> </ul> |
| <b>Mechanical superintendent</b>  | <b>Plan and implement systems and controls for the safe management of mechanical plant and installations</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in depth knowledge of the safe management of mechanical plant and installations</li> <li>- plan and coordinate risk assessment procedures and workplace health and safety procedures</li> <li>- plan and coordinate workplace inspections and incident investigations</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply knowledge of relevant legislative and regulatory requirements</li> <li>- particular focus on the requirements for a mechanical engineering control plan</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implement processes and procedures</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supervise work teams</li> <li>- task responsibility and decision making</li> <li>- undertake and implement short- to medium-term operational planning</li> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul>   |



| CoC                       | Function  | COMPETENCY   |   |  |  |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|--|--|
|                           |   | Operating and safety systems   | Legislation   | Emergency management   | Leadership   |
| Electrical superintendent | Plan and implement systems and controls for the safe management of electrical plant and installations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in depth knowledge of the safe management of electrical plant and installations</li> <li>- plan and coordinate risk assessment procedures and workplace health and safety) procedures</li> <li>- plan and coordinate workplace inspections and incident investigations</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply knowledge of relevant legislative and regulatory requirements</li> <li>- particular focus on the requirements an electrical engineering control plan and any requirements of regulations made under the Electricity Act 1992 relevant to the use of electricity at a mining operation</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- implement processes and procedures</li> </ul>                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supervise work teams</li> <li>- task responsibility and decision making</li> <li>- undertake and implement short- to medium-term operational planning</li> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul> |
| Mine surveyor             | To plan, coordinate and control surveying at the mine   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in depth knowledge of mine surveying techniques, geology, plans and datasets</li> <li>- obtain data relating to the history of workings</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements</li> <li>- particular focus on the requirements for plans of a mining operation</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the mine surveyor's roles and responsibilities in an emergency</li> </ul>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul>  |
| Ventilation officer       | Plan and implement systems and controls for the safe management of ventilation                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in depth knowledge of ventilation management</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements</li> <li>- particular focus on the requirements for a ventilation control plan</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the ventilation officer's roles and responsibilities in an emergency</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul>  |
| Winding engine driver     | To coordinate and control winding engine operations   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- winding engine operations, including related safety considerations</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the winding engine driver's roles and responsibilities in an emergency</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- task responsibility and decision making</li> </ul>  |

| CoC   | Function  | COMPETENCY  |  |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|---|--|
|   |   | Operating and safety systems  | Legislation  | Emergency management  | Leadership   |
| <b>Additional competency for explosives</b><br>A- and B-grade quarry Manager<br>A- and B-grade alluvial, A- and B-grade tunnel manager<br>A- and B-grade opencast coal mine manager | To plan, coordinate and control activities involving explosives at the site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in-depth knowledge to plan and implement safe use of explosives</li> <li>- develop standard operating procedures and other workplace documentation</li> <li>- plan and lead risk assessment procedures for use of explosives and workplace health and safety procedures</li> <li>- lead workplace incident investigations related to explosives</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements for explosives relevant to the CoC held</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- plan and lead emergency management procedures relating to explosives</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- supervise work teams</li> <li>- task responsibility and decision making</li> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul> |
| <b>Additional competency for work underground</b><br>Mine surveyor  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in depth knowledge of underground mine surveying techniques, geology, plans and datasets</li> <li>- obtain data relating to the history of all underground workings</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements at an underground mine or tunnel</li> </ul>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the mine surveyor's roles and responsibilities in an emergency at an underground operation</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Additional competency for coal extraction</b><br>Ventilation officer   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- apply in depth knowledge of ventilation management at an underground coal mine</li> <li>- understanding of spontaneous combustion and hazards associated with coal gases</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- able to apply knowledge of legislative and regulatory requirements at an underground coal mine</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the ventilation officer's roles and responsibilities in an emergency at a coal mine</li> <li>- Identification of emergency events</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- communicate with clients, internal staff and other stakeholders</li> </ul>  |

**TABLE 2:** Key functions and responsibilities

## Disclaimer

This publication provides general guidance. It is not possible for WorkSafe to address every situation that could occur in every workplace. This means that you will need to think about this guidance and how to apply it to your particular circumstances.

WorkSafe regularly reviews and revises guidance to ensure that it is up-to-date. If you are reading a printed copy of this guidance, please check [worksafe.govt.nz](http://worksafe.govt.nz) to confirm that your copy is the current version.

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