

## INDUSTRY SUPPORTS MINISTERS WARNING

The Quarry Products Association of Northern Ireland, the representative body for the road building and roads maintenance industry, has voiced their strong support for Regional Development Minister, Connor Murphy, in his warning to Executive Colleagues over the funding made available for maintaining our roads network.

The Minister's warning came after the publication of the Snaith Report, prepared for Roads Service by Professor Martin Snaith, showed that the backlog of roads maintenance waiting to be carried out across the 25,000km of roads in the North now stands at £700 million. The report recommends that current spending of some £74 million needs to rise to £108 million per year, to ensure we have safe and efficient roads.

Gordon Best, Regional Director of QPANI, said " We welcome the publication of this independent report from Professor Snaith, who is a leading authority on structural maintenance and road condition assessment, and strongly urge Executive Ministers to take heed of Connor Murphy's warning over levels of maintenance funding". Mr Best added "Our members are acutely aware of the financial constraints the Executive is under at the present time but the warning by the Minister that roads maintenance funding be given a higher priority must be taken on board. Over the past few years we have spent too much money filling potholes and basically papering over the cracks on our roads. This is a practice that is unsustainable and cannot continue or it will mean significant extra cost in future, significantly impacting on the potential growth and development of our economy. We must give the resurfacing of roads a higher priority over the next few years, in order to reduce the high level of spends on filling potholes. Our roads network is quite literally the veins and arteries through which the lifeblood of our economy flows.

Notes for the Editor

The Quarry Products Association NI represents approximately 95% of companies involved in the supply of quarry products to the Construction Industry in Northern Ireland. Our Association draws its membership from companies engaged in providing primary aggregates, the processing of recycled and secondary materials, the production of downstream products such as asphalt, lime mortar, ready-mixed concrete, precast concrete and road surfacing contracting. The Quarry Products Sector now employs over 3500 people across Northern Ireland and has a turnover of some £500 million.

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