

## **Press Release.**

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### **The Dawn of a New Era in Workplace Safety.**

New Zealand Institute of Safety Management (NZISM) National Operations & Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Manager Neville Rockhouse has just returned from a highly successful public consultation programme covering the launch of the internationally accredited CPD programme for NZISM.

The CPD public consultation programme covered nine cities and ten two-hour presentations over five days, says Rockhouse who is also the Safety & Training Manager at Pike River Coal. "The Safety profession in New Zealand is about to enter into a new era with the introduction of a continuous professional development web-based model adopted from IOSH (Institute of Occupational Safety & Health) in the United Kingdom. This programme", says Rockhouse, "is aimed at registering OH&S practitioners as well as providing a professional career pathway for new people moving into the industry. After completing the NZ wide roadshow, where the overwhelming feeling was "just get on with it" we are set to introduce the programme early next year.

NZISM is New Zealand's leading professional body in health and safety and have started discussions on official accreditation for practitioners that would ensure that clients and employers have access to competent and sensible advice. There are far too many unqualified people managing this important function within the NZ workplace. "While many have experience, too few have any formal OH&S training or qualifications", according to Rockhouse.

NZISM is to provide a structure for CPD and will require all OH&S practitioners to adhere to strict professional learning criteria. "Those practitioners who are not registered or participating in CPD may find it difficult to work in future years", says Rockhouse.

"Our national injury statistics are not good and a fundamental change is required. The CPD programme will turn OH&S into a creditable profession backed up by a professional body with a creditable CPD programme that is accepted at an international level. This will be the first time in NZ that such a status has been reached". Rockhouse says "the industry is maturing and this is the right time".

Employers need to start to question who they are employing in OH&S roles to ensure that they are getting qualified and professional people.

Rockhouse says " OH&S is a key operational role and one that needs a raft of skills, knowledge and qualifications. Lives are at risk, quality of life and incapacity are life time outcomes of poor OH&S systems and management. More often than not, saying sorry is not good enough for employers operating in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

A West Coast Public Presentation is planned for Tuesday evening 15<sup>th</sup> September in Greymouth at the Ashley Hotel-starting at 6pm through to 8pm. If you are either working in or interested in the future of Health & Safety in New Zealand, you should attend. Please send an e-mail to confirm your place to [neviller@pike.co.nz](mailto:neviller@pike.co.nz)

Neville Rockhouse

National Operations & CPD Manager NZISM

03 769 8452.