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MEDIA RELEASE

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MOUNTAIN SAFETY COUNCIL WELCOMES REPORT ON ADVENTURE TOURISM SAFETY

New Zealand Mountain Safety Council Chief Executive Darryl Carpenter welcomed the recommendations of the Department of Labour's Report into Adventure Tourism Safety.

The Report found no fundamental problem in the sector's ability to develop appropriate safety systems, but did identify areas for improvement.

"New Zealand Mountain Safety Council is committed to working with the Minister, Department of Labour and outdoor sector partners to implement measures that will enhance safety outcomes for outdoor participants.

"We endorse the recommendation to introduce a registration scheme for the adventure and outdoor commercial sectors that requires up-front and ongoing external safety audits of an operator's safety management provisions. We see registration as an integral part of a comprehensive approach to risk management in the outdoors.

"The inherent risks in outdoor activities are best managed through a whole systems approach that includes setting and updating relevant standards, appropriate risk management processes, consistent operational excellence, staff training and qualifications and audit and review processes.

"The Report recommended the Minister partner with an industry-led entity to strengthen the safety management framework for the sectors. We believe Mountain Safety Council is well-qualified and well-placed to partner the Minister to achieve that objective. We welcome the opportunity to support the Minister and implement the Report's recommendations, drawing on our expertise in safety promotion, technical advice and risk management.

"The Report also recognised the value of the Mountain Safety Council's National Incident Database as a framework for enhanced and expanded information collection on outdoor activities. The Council is happy to work with the Minister and Department of Labour to expand coverage and participation in the National Incident Database.

"Mountain Safety Council is responsible for safe participation in land-based activities and undertakes a range of outdoor safety initiatives, including:

- Managing the National Incident Database in which participating organisations record outdoor safety incidents
- Joint establishment and implementation of New Zealand Outdoor Registration Board along with Skills Active ITO, New Zealand Outdoor Instructors Association and other sector partners.
- Coordinating the national public avalanche safety programme
- Developing outdoor safety standards in partnership with industry partners

- Providing training and education in outdoor safety and risk management
- Supporting other agencies to promote safe participation in the outdoors
- Community and volunteer leadership development, with national youth organisations such as Girl Guides and Scouts
- Developing outcome focused management system for the sector with overall view to increasing safe participation
- Facilitating sector representative technical advisory committees

“Mountain Safety Council gave expert advice to the Department of Labour for the Report on the requirements for improving safety across the outdoor sector. It was one of seven national organisations with expertise in industry standards, guidelines and qualifications that gave input into the Report,” he said.

ENDS

Contact:

Darryl Carpenter
Chief Executive
NZ Mountain Safety Council

Phone (04) 385-7162 ext 222

Mobile 027 489 8866

darryl.carpenter@mountainsafety.org.nz