

The GM Safety Forum members are executives dedicated to safety and wellbeing. They promote positive change in workplaces across New Zealand. This group includes our steering members, who offer guidance, expertise, and leadership to help shape the Forum's direction.



Jo van den Berg

Biography:

Jo leads Safety & Wellbeing at Foodstuffs North Island, where she focuses on fostering a culture of care and creating a workplace where people feel safe, supported, and able to thrive. She takes a practical, people-first approach, working alongside teams to build resilience and help them thrive.

Selected Highlights

- Jo also chairs our skills development working group, which aims to support members in strengthening their executive health and safety capabilities. Through this work, helping to grow a network of strategic health and safety leaders across New Zealand.



Chris Jones

Biography:

Chris Jones is Director Global Health, Safety & Wellbeing for Fonterra, where he shapes and enables strategic direction, governance, and technical HSW support across Fonterra's global footprint. Before Fonterra, Chris was Chief Safety & Wellbeing Officer at the Department of Corrections and, prior to that, led the Strategy, Guidance & Standards, and Work-Related Health groups at WorkSafe New Zealand. Chris started his career in health promotion and organisational wellbeing/psychosocial safety, two areas of continued interest.

Selected Highlights

- Development and publication of formal report setting out current state, and recommendations to improve, health and safety governance within New Zealand
- In partnership with the Institute of Directors, WorkSafe New Zealand, and Business Leaders Health & Safety Forum, developed and published 2024 'Health & Safety Governance Good Practice Guide', increasingly seen as international best practice.
- In partnership with Business Leaders Health and Safety Forum, Institute of Directors, Maritime New Zealand, and WorkSafe New Zealand, currently developing addendum to 2024 Good Practice Guide specifically targeted to the role of Chief Executive Officers of large, complex PCBUs.





Wendi Bains

Biography

Wendi Bains is the Chief Safety & Sustainability Officer with Fletcher Building Ltd, overseeing the sustainability and safety strategies for over 14000 employees and contractors across 25 Business Units and multiple industry sectors such as quarrying, concrete, building products manufacturing, distribution, roading and construction. Wendi takes a strategic and cultural approach to leadership which has delivered results: 90% reduction in serious injuries; 50% reduction in all injuries; 21% reduction in carbon emissions and 87% diversion of waste.



Rob Mair

Biography

Rob Mair is the General Manager Health, Safety and Wellbeing at the Port of Auckland. Rob previously spent five years working at the City Rail Link project, latterly as the Health and Safety Director for the Link Alliance. He is originally from the UK and has 25 years of experience in a range of senior safety management roles including at London Underground and across London's transport sector, spanning operations, infrastructure management and project delivery. Rob is the GM Steering Group lead for the development of best practice guidance for the management of critical risks.



Mike O'Brien

Biography

People are at the forefront of what I do, driving my commitment to creating meaningful change across New Zealand. With experience spanning operations, executive leadership, and governance across industries, I bring a practical, ground-up understanding of organisations. This has shaped my focus on advancing workplace health, safety, and wellbeing, and fostering strong leadership. I am driven to elevate leadership thinking and ensure every worker returns home safely to their family.





Max Riley

Biography

Max Riley is the Head of Enterprise Business Resilience at Chorus, leading critical functions including Safety, Quality, Business Continuity, Worker Welfare, Contract Management, and Operational Records Assurance & Integrity. With over 25 years of experience across New Zealand and Australia, Max has held senior leadership roles in health, safety and resilience. Before Chorus, Max spent five years with Vodafone NZ/OneNZ. A founding member of the GM Forum, Max is passionate about strengthening organizational resilience and governance. He also serves as an external advisor to the NZ Police Executive Health & Safety Committee, contributing strategic insights at the highest level.

