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**Media release**

**NEW HASANZ CHAIR APPOINTED**

The Health and Safety Association of New Zealand (HASANZ) has appointed Mike O'Brien as its new Independent Chair.

HASANZ is the umbrella organisation for workplace health and safety professions and was established in September 2014 to raise professional standards to provide healthier and safer workplaces.

Mike O'Brien takes over from Craig Smith who has held the position for two years and was involved in recruiting his successor.

Until recently, O'Brien was head of CHEP New Zealand, a subsidiary of global supply chain Brambles. He has more than 20 years of executive leadership experience in manufacturing, consumer electronics, technology and supply chain companies in New Zealand and overseas. O'Brien is a steering group member of the NZ Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum and has twice been a finalist in the leadership category of the NZ Workplace Health and Safety Awards. He is a member of the Institute of Directors and has held governance roles across multiple organisations. He has an MBA from Auckland University.

"Mike brings a combination of business acumen and an active commitment to improving health and safety in New Zealand workplaces," says Craig Smith. "His skills in general management, governance, business transformation and positioning organisations for sustained profitability are an excellent fit for the next stage of HASANZ's growth."

At the end of July HASANZ will launch New Zealand's first online register of verified health and safety professionals to help businesses find reliable, quality health and safety advice and services.

"There's a real need for businesses to be able to access capable health and safety advisers easily," says Mike O'Brien. "HASANZ has an important role in linking different types of health and safety professionals to the business community, through the HASANZ Register, our workforce development forum and other initiatives. Working with our members and strategic partners, HASANZ can make impactful change at a system level and I look forward to supporting that to lift health and safety standards in New Zealand workplaces."

O'Brien takes up the position of HASANZ Independent Chair immediately.

**Ends**

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