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Media Release

For immediate release



Japanese To Set Up Replica Of Water Safety New Zealand

A delegation of Japanese from the Blue Sea & Green Land Foundation . Japan (B&G) are in New Zealand this week to attend the New Zealand Water Safety Conference 'Charting the Future' and also to formalise a partnership with Water Safety New Zealand (WSNZ).

WSNZ General Manager Matt Claridge said the Japanese have previously visited New Zealand and witnessed the work of WSNZ and many of its members. They have now asked that WSNZ assist them to establish Water Safety Japan (WSJ). WSJ will focus on the proposed Japanese initiative, 'Water Accident Zero Campaign' at a national level to prevent water-related accidents and promote water safety based activities.

While in New Zealand the B&G delegation will formally sign an agreement with WSNZ who will assist them in setting strategic direction and goals for both the immediate and long term future. Mr Claridge commented that this request to assist illustrates the recognition of New Zealand's expertise internationally in all facets of water safety. The scale of the Japanese proposal is huge compared to New Zealand due to the population of Japan. Already B&G have established 400 marine centres and another 300 marine clubs.

The signing of the agreement and photo opportunities will take place at the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club, Oriental Bay, Wellington at 6:00pm on Tuesday 24 November 2009.

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This year Water Safety New Zealand (WSNZ) celebrates 60 years of promoting and delivering water safety education to Kiwis. WSNZ has 36 member organisations, including the Accident



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Compensation Corporation, Surf Life Saving New Zealand, New Zealand Police and Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation. Its mission is to, through water safety education, prevent injury and drowning.

WSNZ and its members have achieved considerable success since 1949. In fact, during the past 29 years, drowning deaths have reduced by 43 percent. However, there is still work to be done. Drowning is the third highest cause of accidental death in New Zealand (behind road vehicle crashes and accidental falls). This year alone, 87 people have drowned. Drowning affects people regardless of their age, ethnicity, gender or socio-economic background. There are steps that can be taken to prevent drowning . learning to swim and water safety knowledge are just some of the basics. To find out more, visit www.watersafety.org.nz or phone 04 801 9600.

