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**Media Release**  
For immediate release



## **WATER SAFETY AWARDS 2010**

**CATEGORY: PREVENTION**

**WINNER: SIR EDMUND HILLARY OUTDOOR PURSUITS CENTRE**

The Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Pursuits Centre (OPC) was today presented with Prevention Award at the annual Water Safety Awards today in Wellington.

The prevention award acknowledges a programme, initiative or campaign (including an intervention, event, activity or experience), which has led to the direct or indirect prevention of injury and/or drowning.

In April 2008, seven people lost their lives in the Mangatepopo canyoning tragedy at OPC. The response by OPC to reviews, coronial inquests and department of labour prosecutions has been thorough.

Matt Claridge, General Manager, Water Safety New Zealand explains why OPC are worthy winners of the Prevention Award, "OPC has been open and honest in all processes since the tragedy including taking the approach of sharing as much as possible with the outdoors industry. OPC has built a new safety management system, training management system and crisis management system which interact to produce a comprehensive approach to safety. The direct goal of these systems has been to target prevention of future incidents at OPC and to help prevent incidents in any other organisation."

Accepting the Award on behalf of OPC was Kip Mandeano, Centre Manager at OPC Tongariro, "We are grateful for the Award and our hope is that by sharing what we

have learnt and the processes we have now implemented with other outdoor adventure deliverers this kind of tragic incident will not be repeated.”

Image: Kip Mandeano accepts the Water Safety Prevention Award for 2010 from Alan Warner QSO, Chair Water Safety New Zealand Board.

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***For more information or interview contact:***

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**WATER SAFETY NEW ZEALAND**

Formed in 1949, WSNZ is the national organisation responsible for water safety education in New Zealand.

WSNZ targets drowning prevention and water safety in communities through education. WSNZ oversees proven, proactive and preventative education interventions. In addition, WSNZ prioritizes leadership, collaboration and enabling the water safety sector with resourcing, research, planning and communication.

WSNZ is the lead agency for the Swim and Survive sector in New Zealand. The Swim For Life initiative is the major project for WSNZ. WSNZ seeks to address a dramatic decline in swimming ability of our youth. The Swim For Life initiative is an overarching, national project established to:

- Provide all children with access to the water;
- Facilitate the delivery of quality swim and survive programmes in primary schools;
- Provide the foundations for the development of a culture that produces generations of New Zealand families that are water safe.