

Safeguard Awards 2026: here are the finalists!

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, 7 May 2026

The finalists in the **New Zealand Workplace Health and Safety Awards** for 2026 have been decided. The winners will be announced at a gala dinner at the Viaduct Events Centre in Auckland on 23 June.

The awards are organised by Thomson Reuters, publisher of Safeguard magazine, and proudly supported by WorkSafe New Zealand and ACC.

A Lifetime Achievement award will be presented to enabler, innovator and influencer Mike O'Brien.

Since their inception in 2005 the awards have become established as the annual highlight for everyone involved in the prevention of work injury and ill-health.

Peter Bateman, Safeguard editor and convenor of the five-person judging panel, says most initiatives to improve health and safety remain known only within the organisations conducting them.

“Our job as judges is to identify the best of these initiatives and the people behind them and to help shine a light on their work so that others may be influenced to do the same – or better.”

The category finalists, in alphabetic order within category, are:

SAFETY (sponsored by Dentons)

- Air New Zealand
- Fonterra Darfield
- Lyttelton Port Company
- Naylor Love North

HEALTH (sponsored by HSI Donesafe)

- Air New Zealand
- Douglas Pharmaceuticals
- Fonterra Project Awhero
- NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

WELLBEING (sponsored by Vitae)

- Hōhepa Hawke's Bay
- Manaaki Tāngata I Victim Support
- Qube Ports NZ
- SkyCity Entertainment Group

ENGAGEMENT (sponsored by HSE Global)

- Air New Zealand
- HEB Construction
- March Cato
- New Zealand Police

INNOVATION (sponsored by Anthony Harper)

- Fonterra
- Leading Safety
- Link Alliance
- Woolworths New Zealand

SAFETY-II (sponsored by Learning Teams Inc)

- Auckland International Airport
- Fonterra
- HEB Construction

COLLABORATION (sponsored by IMPAC)

- Fonterra Te Awamutu + KiwiRail
- Harrison Grierson Consultants + Ballance Agri-Nutrients
- NZ Forestry High-Potential Incidents Group

GOVERNANCE (sponsored by SiteSafe)

- City Rail Link Ltd
- Government Health & Safety Lead
- NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi

LEADERSHIP (sponsored by ACC)

- BESIX Watpac
- Link Alliance
- Martinus Rail NZ
- Ministry for Primary Industries

PRACTITIONER (sponsored by NZISM)

- Alex Johnson, Manaaki Tāngata | Victim Support
- Jessie Bourke, Nāti Growth
- Madeline Hernon, Air New Zealand
- Sarah-Jane Whitehead, Metlifecare

EMERGING PRACTITIONER (sponsored by edenfx HSE Global People)

- Annalise Mulgrew, Downer
- Charlotte Sarsfield, BCD Group
- Hamish Byrnes, Chorus
- Zung Mai, Whānau Āwhina Plunket

REPRESENTATIVE

- Andre Sapiatzer, Northpower
- Annette Tata, Enviro NZ
- Sam Millar, WSP NZ

MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPION

- Erin Price, Cloudy Bay Vineyards
- Nadene Winchester, Dynamic Controls
- Trina Cornelius, FMG

LEADER (sponsored by Business Leaders' Health & Safety Forum)

- Ceri Rowland, Douglas Pharmaceuticals
- Lindy Nelson, Safer Farms
- Megan Elmiger, CentrePort Wellington
- Quintus Slabber, Hawkins

SPECIAL COMMENDATION AWARD (sponsored by ecoPortal)

Two special commendation awards will be announced at the gala dinner.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT (sponsored by Woolworths New Zealand)

A lifetime achievement award will be presented to Mike O'Brien for his efforts to champion innovation in health & safety through multiple industry bodies and for taking a big-picture view of where best to invest to improve New Zealand's health & safety ecosystem.

THE WORKSAFE NEW ZEALAND/ACC BEST OVERALL CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVING WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY IN NEW ZEALAND

This award will be made to one of the winners of the organisational categories.

Contact

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To book tickets for the gala dinner: www.safeguard.co.nz/awards