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Media Release

For immediate release



Leading Swim Identity Endorses Drowning Prevention Strategy

Well-known swim school identity Hilton Brown becomes the 50th operator registered for Swim For Life.

Swim For Life promotes the message that every New Zealand child by the age of twelve should be able to swim 200 metres confidently and competently with associated survival skills and water safety knowledge.

The initiative was developed due to the high drowning rate in this country (twice the rate per capita than Australia) and the lack of swimming and survival skills of children entering college. Schools have not been required to teach children to learn to swim since the mid-1980s. Learning to swim is included in the Health and Physical Education Curriculum as an optional activity.

Hilton Brown, one of the largest swim school operators in New Zealand, started his business in 1973 when he set up a learn to swim programme at the Cameron Pool in Mt. Roskill, Auckland, which continues to this day.

In 1991 the swim school opened at Onehunga War Memorial Pools followed by Olympic Pools in Newmarket and more recently has expanded to include an Albany site.

Brown, himself a NZ Commonwealth Games swimming representative, has been named "Coach of the Year" three times by the NZ Swim Coaches and Teachers Association. He has been coach of NZ swimming teams to Commonwealth Games and World Championships.

"I am pleased that Hilton Brown Swimming can work closely with key water safety stakeholders to promote the importance of learning to swim and survive." he says, "I encourage the industry to get behind Swim For Life and display the logo with pride."

Water Safety New Zealand Executive Director Alan Muir says Hilton Brown's support of the initiative highlights the strength and relevance of Swim For Life's purpose to the swim instruction/teaching sector.

"This is an important time for the initiative. To have a significant industry personality like Hilton add the weight of his support behind Swim For Life shows the water safety sector, government, and communities that we are heading in the right direction."

...Ends...

IMAGE: Photograph of Hilton Brown signing Swim For Life agreement.

<http://www.watersafety.org.nz/sfl.asp>

For more information or interview contact:

Matt Claridge

Project Manager

Phone: (04) 801 9600

Mobile: (027) 478 1836

Email: matt@watersafety.org.nz

Hilton Brown

Mobile: (027) 474 3541

Email: hilton.brown@xtra.co.nz