

# Hon Margaret Wilson

## Minister of Labour



2 July 2003

## Media Statement

### Health and safety appointments

Labour Minister Margaret Wilson today announced the make-up of the new National Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Committee who will provide expert independent advice on major occupational safety and health issues direct to government.

The Committee will be chaired by Professor Neil Pearce, Director of the Centre for Public Health Research at Massey University, Wellington. He has been appointed for a three-year term.

Committee members, who will serve two to three year terms, are Dr Evan Dryson, Professor Anne-Marie Feyer, Professor Philippa Gander, and Mr Selwyn McCracken.

Margaret Wilson said the committee membership represented an excellent balance of research and professional expertise covering as it did most areas of occupational health and safety.

The committee's first task would be to develop a research agenda to inform the government's research initiatives and provide direction to the wider research community, she said.

"At present the research infrastructure for occupational health and safety in this country is fragmented, with expertise spread across a diverse range of universities and departments. Although the Department of Labour seeks expert advice on health and safety issues, until now there has been no advisory body of experts to provide an independent assessment direct to government."

Research, particularly in regard to emerging health issues, would be an invaluable guide for future government policy in the health and safety area, Margaret Wilson said.

The Committee will hold its first meeting in August and is expected to meet up to five times a year.

## Appointments

- **Chair – Professor Neil Pearce:** Professor and Director, Centre for Public Health Research, Massey University. *Particular interests in epidemiological methods, asthma, chronic diseases including cancer and the association of social class with mortality.*
- **Dr Evan Dryson:** practising occupational medicine specialist, lecturer and president Australasian College of Medicine – Faculty of Occupational Medicine. *Contracted part-time to OSH as a departmental medical practitioner in Auckland region.*
- **Professor Anne-Marie Feyer:** Director, Health Risk Management Practice, PriceWaterhouse Coopers, Sydney. *Professorial appointment in the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, University of Otago, an expert in occupational injury epidemiology.*
- **Professor Philippa Gander:** Director, Sleep/Wake Research Centre, Massey University, Wellington. *Specialist in circadian physiology, interests in occupational fatigue, shift work and sleep research. Has previously worked for NASA on fatigue countermeasures in aviation.*
- **Mr Selwyn McCracken:** Completing a PhD funded by the Health Research Council focusing on improved construction industry health and safety through surveillance system development. *Of Maori descent, Mr McCracken has links to the Ngai Tahu Maori Health Research Unit, University of Otago and has published on the epidemiology of work-related fatal injuries involving Maori.*