

**MEDIA RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
NOVEMBER 2014**

Award winning fishing show a hit with safety conscious youngsters

Funny man Mark de Lacy, aka the Minstrel, has earned the **outstanding contribution** award for his work in teaching vital water safety messages to more than 250,000 youngsters nationwide. The award is one of several announced today at the 2014 Sealord New Zealand Water Safety Awards.

Mark de Lacy presents safety lessons as part of the Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing show targeted at primary age children. Since 2009 more than 840 schools have enjoyed the songs, comedy and storytelling that Mark and his wife Chris deliver.

This interactive show is a joint project between Mark and the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council.

Council spokesperson, Ed Beetham, is pleased the award has been given to Mark in recognition of the work he does to keep kids safe on the water.

“We are surrounded by the sea so it’s important kids know how to be safe when in, on or around the water. The Council appreciates Mark’s effort in teaching such crucial lessons to our kids in such an engaging way.

“Even more pleasing is the feedback from family and friends. These kids are going home and urging others to do the right thing, such as wearing lifejackets and taking safety equipment including flares and radios, if going boating or fishing.”

Hiwi the Kiwi Goes Fishing has been such a successful project that both Mark and the New Zealand Sport Fishing Council have committed to continue their association over the next few years.

Water Safety New Zealand has also confirmed its ongoing support for the project because it continues to reach communities not traditionally engaged in water safety education.

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