

# Aide-Mémoire

## Meeting with the Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum

**Date due to MO:** 20 March 2024      **Action required by:** 21 March 2024

**Security level:** IN CONFIDENCE      **Health Report number:** H2024037709

**To:** Hon Matt Doocoy, Minister for Mental Health

**Consulted:** Health New Zealand:  Māori Health Authority:

### Contact for telephone discussion

Name	Position	Telephone
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**Details of meeting:** Thursday 21 March 2024, 4:30-5:15pm, 4.1R Executive Wing

**Purpose of meeting/proposal:** You are meeting with Francois Barton, Chief Executive of the Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum, to discuss the Forum's mental wellbeing initiatives.

**Comment:** **The role of the Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum**

The Business Leaders' Health and Safety Forum (the Forum) is a coalition of business and government leaders committed to improving the performance of workplace health and safety in New Zealand.

Their vision is "leaders building cultures that enable people and businesses to thrive".

The Forum was launched in 2010 by then Prime Minister Rt Hon John Key and now has more than 400 members from the private and public sectors (including the Director-General of Health).

The members represent 25% of the New Zealand workforce and 38% of the Deloitte Top 200 companies.

**Forum support for mentally healthy workplaces**

Since 2018, the Forum has worked to reshape the conversation about mental wellbeing at work from a sole focus on the mental wellbeing of the worker to a wider focus on mentally healthy workplaces and their design.

The Forum has developed a range of resources to support leaders and organisations, including a guide to mental health at work, case studies, evidence about mental health interventions for workplaces, and a guide to measuring mental wellbeing.

The Forum also recognises the important role of businesses in helping with responses to natural disasters, both through providing support for affected communities and by looking after their own people's safety and wellbeing. The Forum stood up support for its members during the North Island flooding in early 2023 and during Cyclone Gabrielle. A

project in the 2023/2024 year is investigating leadership mindsets and practices when leading organisations through major emergencies.

Another Forum initiative is a series of six webinars from May to November 2024 which will outline what mental wellbeing at work is, leaders' responsibilities, and opportunities.

The webinars are intended to support WorkSafe NZ's release later in 2024 of good practice guidelines for managing psychosocial risks at work. These guidelines will define and give examples of psychosocial risks, provide advice on managing these risks, and outline factors that influence mentally healthy work.

### **Health sector relationships to the Forum**

As referenced, the Director-General of Health is a member of the Forum. Health New Zealand's Mentally Well Commissioning team indicates that they do not have an interface with the Forum. But there is potential to collaborate with the Forum towards common goals.

The meeting is an opportunity to build an interface with the Forum, given its members can support your portfolio by influencing mental wellbeing across a wide range of workplaces.

The Forum will likely be interested in your key portfolio priorities objectives, such as the development of a new suicide prevention action plan that will be publicly consulted on this year.

This aide-mémoire discloses all relevant information.



Michael Woodside  
Acting Associate Deputy Director-General  
**Clinical, Community and Mental Health  
Directorate**

# Appendix: Talking points

- As the first Minister for Mental Health, I am looking across the organisations and workforces that support mental health, and thinking about how we can build progress collectively.
- My portfolio covers mental health, alcohol and drug use, gambling harm, suicide prevention and postvention. My priorities are to:
  - increase access to mental health and addiction services
  - strengthen our focus on prevention and early intervention
  - grow the mental health and addiction workforce.

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