

NZOHS Presidents Report

2024/2025

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Members of NZOHS,

As my term as President of the New Zealand Occupational Hygiene Society draws to a close, I am honoured to present this final report summarizing our collective achievements, challenges, and growth over the past year. It has been a privilege to lead such a dedicated and dynamic group of individuals, and I am proud of the progress we have made together. This report serves not only as a record of our accomplishments, but also as a testament to the commitment and passion that define our society.

As you'll all be aware the key objectives of the society, as defined in our constitution, are:

- To further the practice, professionalism and recognition of Occupational Hygiene in New Zealand.
- Promote and maintain a high standard of ethics in the practice of occupational hygiene.
- Improve the calibre of practitioners of occupational hygiene within New Zealand by promoting and co-ordinating vocational training and by encouraging the further development of, and seeking to promote the status of, occupational hygiene as a profession throughout New Zealand.
- Improve, promote and develop the professional practice of occupational hygiene so as to improve and protect worker health and wellbeing throughout New Zealand.
- Promote the exchange of information about occupational hygiene among organisations and individuals nationally and internationally, e.g. through the organising of conferences and networking through websites;
- Collaborate and cooperate with other societies, national and international organisations in the promotion of occupational hygiene for the protection of work force.

One of my key goals as president was to increase the societies recognition on the international stage and share with other societies the world leading initiatives NZ has been undertaking in worker health protection. Our members have certainly delivered.

We had two members representing NZOHS at the IOHA/BOHS conference in Dublin, three at the Asian Network of Occupational Hygiene (ANOH) conference in Malaysia, and over 12 at the Australian Occupational Hygiene Society conference in Perth. Conference attendance within scientific disciplines is critical as it allows our members to grow NZOHS's influence on a global scale and benefits our membership by making connections with hygienists who then get invited to present at members meetings & conferences, as well as increasing our members knowledge of emerging worker health protection methods. These learnings are then passed onto our members through the advanced practice short courses the society is now running. Our members also continue to have strong influence in governance, with representatives within the IOHA board, ANOH board, and IOHA governance committee, IOHA Financials committee, and Community of Practice - Sensor Technologies, as well as numerous specialty and advisory groups within NZ.

To cement this international collaboration, we have been seeking to establish memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with both BOHS and AIHA (Currently we have MOUs with AIOH, FAMANZ, and HASANZ). Both of these discussions are progressing well and the MOU with BOHS is ready for final review and signing, which we hope to do at the next in person event. This MOU is particularly exciting as it provides BOHS support to NZOHS around setting up and establishing our own certification pathway, which is one of our societies long-term goals. It also allows us to more closely share resources and provides cross-membership recognition. Under this agreement several NZOHS members have been appointed to the ICertOH examination board which is helping to accelerate the speed at which those members seeking their ICertOH can sit their oral examination.

This past year has also seen us significantly increase our relationships and engagement with local media. As the authoritative body on worker health protection, it is important the media know who we are and therefore approach us for comment on important worker health issues. These relationships have allowed us to provide important perspectives and considerations for a number of recent topics of public interest, including the proposed ban on engineered stone, and the flour dust workplace exposure standard issue. As this engagement increases - it will be important for the society to adopt some of the learnings of AIOH and incorporate some media training for our authorised representatives.

Our membership continues to grow with 6 Fellow, 51 Full, and 26 Technician members, as well as 78 Associates. Additionally, 47 of these professional members are represented on the HASANZ Register.

It has continued to be a strong year of training with the society providing 7 OHTA trainings to 41 attendees (97.5% pass rate), three commitment courses to 42 attendees, as well as recertification of 24 C2F certified fit testers, and four specialist training courses to 35 members. These specialist training courses represent a significant amount of work by the professional development subcommittee with the aim of providing a series of advanced training courses that allow our members to continue their education pathway after the BOHS or OHTA intermediate modules. There are a number of exciting courses in the pipeline including Biological Monitoring and Health Monitoring, Heavy Metals, VOCs, and Working with Laboratories.

Since the cessation of the WorkSafe development fund funding - we have continued to strengthen our financial position and move towards a self-sustaining model. As detailed by Nick's treasurers report you will see that the society is in a good financial position with the current budgeting/financial model working well. Additionally, we have taken measures to ensure that our money works for us, through fixed term investments.

Councils concluding achievement of the year is the New Zealand Occupational Hygiene Society 2025 Work-Related Health Conference. In today's rapidly evolving workplace landscape, the health and well-being of workers are under increasing strain due to factors such as rising mental health concerns, the long-term effects of workplace exposures, technological disruptions, and shifting work environments. The theme "Challenges, Change, Solutions" aptly reflects the journey many organisations and professionals are navigating. *Challenges* acknowledge the complex and multifaceted issues affecting worker health - from burnout and chronic stress to occupational hazards and inequities in access to support. *Change* speaks to the transformations required in workplace culture, policy, and practice to address these issues head-on. And finally, *Solutions* emphasises the forward-looking, collaborative mindset needed to develop practical, evidence-based strategies that protect and promote worker health.

I would like to thank each member of the council for your unwavering commitment, collaborative spirit, and tireless work throughout this term. Whether through leading your working groups, offering valuable insights, or supporting one another behind the scenes, each of you has contributed meaningfully to the progress and success of our society. Thank you for your service and for making this council such a strong and inspiring team.

Finally, I would like to personally thank our administrative superstar, Kim. Kim is undoubtedly the face of the society and often members first point of contact. Her dedication, professionalism, and behind-the-scenes efforts have been absolutely invaluable throughout this term. From coordinating meetings and managing communications to ensuring the smooth operation of our initiatives, Kim has been a constant source of support and stability. Her attention to detail, responsiveness, and quiet leadership have made an

enormous difference, and much of what we've achieved this year would not have been possible without them. On behalf of the entire society, thank you for everything you do.

As I step down from this role, I want to express my heartfelt thanks to council, our working groups and sub-committees, our members, and all those who have supported the society throughout this term. Your enthusiasm, collaboration, and dedication have been the driving force behind everything we have achieved. I am especially grateful for the trust you placed in me to lead, and for the shared sense of purpose that has made this experience both rewarding and inspiring.

While no term is without its challenges, I believe we have navigated them with resilience and integrity. We have strengthened our foundation, introduced new initiatives, and laid the groundwork for future growth. I am confident that the society is in a strong position to continue evolving and thriving in the years to come.

I look forward to supporting the society in new ways, and I am excited to see where the next chapter will lead. Thank you for the opportunity to serve.



Dr Sage Robinson, COH

NZOHS President