



Media release

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## **LEADR NZ applauds first option of mediation for potential SafeKiwi™ disputes**

LEADR NZ is pleased to be involved in the new SafeKiwi™ internet-based 'escrow' financial service, launched yesterday by Christchurch businessman Mike Pero.

An escrow account, like SafeKiwi™, is a legal arrangement in which one party deposits funds under the supervision of a neutral third party, until the terms of an agreement have been met and the funds can be released.

SafeKiwi™ ([www.safekiwi.co.nz](http://www.safekiwi.co.nz)) is marketing the service to companies, corporates, individuals and government departments and, in particular, expects the service to be popular with small businesses and sub-contractors. SafeKiwi™ will use the Public Trust as its custodian.

Carol Powell, chair of LEADR NZ, says she is delighted that SafeKiwi™ is promoting mediation as the first option for resolving disputes that may arise between parties to the service.

"It recognises that mediation can be a viable alternative to litigation and arbitration, and is increasingly seen as such," Ms Powell says.

"Mediation is a fast, low-cost, confidential process in which the parties to a dispute, with the help of a mediator, together identify disputed issues, develop options, consider alternatives and endeavour to reach an agreement."

The SafeKiwi™ website will direct parties who have a dispute to the LEADR NZ "find a mediator" service. Approximately 170 fully accredited mediators, spread throughout New Zealand, are listed on the LEADR NZ site.

Ms Powell says her members anticipate increased interest in their services because of the SafeKiwi™ association.

"It provides opportunities not only for individual members but also for the promotion and growth of mediation, and alternative dispute resolution, generally."

The not-for-profit LEADR NZ is New Zealand's leading dispute resolution organisation that undertakes the training, representation and accreditation of mediation professionals. For more about LEADR NZ, see [www.leadr.co.nz](http://www.leadr.co.nz)

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