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For immediate release

## **PowerNet and St John's Successful Community Partnership Extended to Include Otago**

PowerNet and St John are extending their successful community partnership supporting first aid training and health and safety in the south to include areas in Otago and the Catlins.

PowerNet Director, Tom Campbell, and St John Commercial and Partnerships Manager, South Island Region, Kent France, signed a new agreement this week (2 August) to continue the community partnership for a further three years. The sponsorship programme's initial three-year term ends this month.

With a goal to have a first aid trained responder in every Southland home and to raise awareness of health and safety, the programme has already brought significant benefits to Southland in its first three years.

These benefits include training 575 people in first aid across southern communities, St John personnel visiting 18,086 students in 137 schools to talk about first aid, and seven automated defibrillators being donated to sites across Southland and Otago. A significant portion of PowerNet's sponsorship also enabled St John to provide first aid and resuscitation courses to over 2,000 Southlanders at the Invercargill Training Hub.

"It's now fantastic to be able to expand our sponsorship of St John's work into parts of Otago and to continue partnering and supporting their great work for another three years," PowerNet Chief Executive, Jason Franklin said.

"Partnering with St John in its first-aid training in schools and organisations in Southland has been hugely rewarding, as have the opportunities to jointly promote health and safety in the community. We're really pleased to be able to extend the programme and create better opportunities for people in Otago communities to gain the life-saving knowledge and skills of first aid," Mr Franklin said.

PowerNet manages the OtagoNet electricity network which covers most of rural Otago. Areas that will now be included in the sponsorship include the Maniototo, parts of Central Otago, Balclutha and Milton. The sponsorship will also be extended in Southland to include the Catlins.

Mr France said the organisation was extremely grateful for the continued support of PowerNet. "St John has always been about working and giving back to the community, and thanks to the long-time support of PowerNet, St John has been able to continue promoting health and safety to the people in the region."

Last year PowerNet won the national Deloitte Energy Excellence Award community initiative of the year award for its community partnership with St John. PowerNet is New Zealand's fifth largest electricity asset management company, responsible for providing safe, efficient and reliable power across most of southern New Zealand.

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