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Air New Zealand supercharges its way to win New Zealand's top sustainability award

Air New Zealand has been named the overall Supreme winner of the 2016 NZI Sustainable Business Network Awards.

Judges said the company had demonstrated true corporate leadership in sustainability since launching its Sustainability Framework a year ago.

The framework sets out social, environmental and environmental goals, priorities and targets for six areas: Our Communities, Our People, Carbon, Nature and Science, Tourism, and Trade and Enterprise.

Action items included the bold move to transition its existing car fleet to electric vehicles (EVs), saving 65,000 litres in fuel each year. The judges were impressed that Air New Zealand did not wait for a pending announcement on a government subsidy for EVs but instead has forged ahead with its plans.

Furthermore, the company challenged other New Zealand corporates to follow suit, which stimulated CEO-level sustainability conversations throughout the country.

Air New Zealand recently formed an alliance with Mercury, supported by Westpac, to launch an initiative to encourage the uptake of EVs in corporate fleets in New Zealand. So far more than 30 organisations have pledged to transition at least 30% of their corporate fleets to electric in the next three years. This total private sector commitment of more than 1,450 vehicles will increase the number of EVs on New Zealand roads by more than

75%. Along with the significantly lower running costs of electricity, this could remove almost three million kilograms of carbon emissions annually.

Sustainability permeates Air New Zealand's business from the purchase of fuel efficient aircrafts to recycling and repurposing old uniforms, diversity workplace programmes, identification of Te Reo speakers on board aircraft and environmental programmes to preserve New Zealand's natural environment. Furthermore, Air New Zealand's sustainability framework is guided by an international panel of experts that challenge and advise the airline. All the airline's initiatives can be found [here](#).

Rachel Brown, Sustainable Business Network (SBN) Chief Executive says over the past year there had been a significant upswing in the number of businesses taking a systematically sustainable approach.

"Air New Zealand's very public commitment has had a big impact on the speed and uptake of sustainability from business.

"As one of the nation's biggest burners of carbon, it is setting a fantastic example of how it is possible to set big aspirations to operate in a sustainable manner. It has called on an internationally-renowned group of experts to push it on its strategy and delivery. The scale of the challenge is huge but it is determined to succeed.

"Air New Zealand's integrated company-wide approach means it is now being recognised as the nation's greatest contributor to sustainability."

This year's NZI Sustainable Business Network Awards recognised 22 other organisations' and leaders' sustainability efforts at tonight's awards.

Travis Atkinson, Executive General Manager of NZI, which is principal partner of the Sustainable Business Network, says: "As an organisation that provides business insurance for a growing New Zealand, being sustainable is at the heart of the way we do business, so we salute the SBN for helping New Zealand businesses change the way they think and reshape how profit is made."

The NZI Sustainable Business Network Awards, which are now in their 14th year, celebrate the contribution organisations and individuals are making to transforming New Zealand to a more sustainable nation. They focus on four transformation areas that are key to the future direction of sustainability in New Zealand: Renewables, Community, Mega Efficiency and Restorative. The supreme award, NZI Greatest Contribution to a Sustainable New Zealand, is awarded to a business that has performed outstandingly well in all aspects of sustainability.

NZI Sustainable Business Network Awards 2016 results:

Sustainability Champion

Winner – Barry Coates, Green Party, formerly Oxfam and The University of Auckland

Commendation – Gareth Morgan, The Morgan Foundation

***Cadence Communications* Communicating Sustainability**

Winner – Better NZ Trust

EcoPro Cleaning Co Community Innovation

Winner – Ecotricity
Commendation – Kiwibank and Banqer
Commendation – Little Yellow Bird

Airbnb Community Impact

Winner – Sustainability Trust
Commendation – Good Neighbour Trust

Ricoh Mega Efficiency Innovation

Winner – Ecotricity
Commendation – Energy and Technical Services
Commendation – Method Recycling

Auckland Council Mega Efficiency Impact

Winner – Kiwi Experience
Commendation – Fulton Hogan/Tauranga Airport Authority

Renewables Innovation

Winner – NZ Bus
Commendation – Scion
Commendation – Flick

Renewables Impact

Winner – Air New Zealand
Commendation – ChargeNet

Yealands Family Wines Restorative Innovation

Winner – Ekos
Commendation – Junk Run

Restorative Impact

Winner – Ceres Organics
Commendation – We Compost
Commendation – ZingBokashi

EECA Business Energy Management

Winner – NZ Bus
Commendation – Fonterra Edendale site

NZI Greatest Contribution to a Sustainable New Zealand

Winner – Air New Zealand
Commendation – Ceres Organics

-ENDS-

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