



Board governance initiative takes out top national health and safety award

AUCKLAND, New Zealand, Wednesday 21 June 2023

An annual three-day Ora Runanga in which the directors and executive team of Silver Fern Farms personally engage with workers from each of its sites has taken overall honours at this year's New Zealand Workplace Health and Safety Awards.

The awards were presented at a gala dinner at the Cordis in Auckland last night, attended by a record 730 people.

The awards, which began in 2005, are organised by Thomson Reuters, publisher of Safeguard magazine, and proudly supported by WorkSafe New Zealand and ACC.

Peter Bateman, convenor of the five-person judging panel and editor of Safeguard, said the Ora Runanga enables the company's directors and executive team to learn in depth directly from workers about the challenges they face and the opportunities available for improvement.

"Under health and safety legislation, directors and executives are obliged to educate themselves about how work is really done and the sometimes unexpected risks faced by workers and contractors. The Ora Runanga has already established itself as an annual highlight which enables the best ideas for improvement to be identified and funding for them approved. It's a model other firms in high risk sectors could usefully study."

The winners are:

The WorkSafe New Zealand/ACC best overall contribution to improving workplace health and safety in New Zealand

Silver Fern Farms

Winner of the Governance category and finalist in the Engagement category.

SAFETY (sponsored by Dentons Kensington Swan)

Calder Stewart

Designed and built a lifting frame to lift full loads of construction steel safely to the ground without anyone having to climb up onto a truck trailer and risk a fall or being struck by a swinging load.

HEALTH (sponsored by WorkSafe New Zealand)

Naylor Love Waikato/Bay of Plenty

A seismic project in a concrete carpark building would have exposed workers to multiple health risks for weeks. A custom-designed drilling rig eliminated those risks as well as falls from height and allowed the job to proceed twice as quickly.

WELLBEING (sponsored by Vitae)

Countdown

A significant Covid-driven rise in mental health issues saw many more staff trained in peer assistance and mental health first aid, clinical psychologists made available 24/7, and psychosocial risk recognised as the top organisational risk.

ENGAGEMENT (sponsored by NZ Safety Blackwoods)

Auckland Council

Many health & safety reps (HSRs) were confused about their role. A group of 16 reps led activities to raise the profile of HSRs. A rep now sits on the executive's H&S committee, roles are clarified, and reps designed their own induction pack and comms channel.

INNOVATION (sponsored by Anthony Harper)

New Zealand Defence Force and Aeropath

The risk of mid-air collision at low level in uncontrolled airspace has risen with the use of commercial drones. Developed Flight Adviser, a free, crowd-sourced online system to identify strike hazards in real time and reduce potential airspace conflicts.

SAFETY-II (Sponsored by HSE Global)

March Cato

It's previous 'Just Culture' approach found people to be the problem after incidents. Learning teams built trust and revealed why people didn't always follow procedures. Safety rules no longer made by managers. Workers co-design improvements.

COLLABORATION (Sponsored by IMPAC)

Ports of Auckland

Worked with stevedoring companies and a union to formulate agreed port-wide safety rules and to adapt an Australian code of practice for stevedoring for use at POAL, with some 200 points for discussion, resulting in the Auckland COP for Stevedoring.

GOVERNANCE (Sponsored by Simpson Grierson)

Silver Fern Farms

Created an annual three-day Ora Runanga bringing H&S reps from each site to spend time with the board and executive team and have unfiltered discussions on H&S achievements and challenges at each site, resulting in new initiatives to be funded.

LEADERSHIP (Sponsored by ACC)

Port Industry Association

A foundation member of the Port Health & Safety Leadership Group, the PIA has been a key player in the development of the Port Sector Insights and Action Plan, including work on fatigue management and developing an ACOP for Stevedoring Operations.

PRACTITIONER (Sponsored by NZISM)

Vanessa Matakatea, Ports of Auckland

Built unprecedented trust and collaboration across departments to ensure all voices are heard. Led development of a new critical risk framework and safety leaders programme.

EMERGING PRACTITIONER (Sponsored by edenfx HSE Recruitment)

Eva Greensill, Auckland City Mission

Reviewed risks, improved incident reporting around vicarious trauma, upskilled staff, led H&S training, built relationships to generate achievable and sustainable solutions.

REPRESENTATIVE (Sponsored by Vero Liability)

Peter Pomale, Link Alliance

A Mates connector who led the development of the Alliance's 5 safety principles, advocates for those who have English as a second language, builds relationships.

MENTAL HEALTH CHAMPION (Sponsored by Site Safe)

David South, Naylor Love

Elicited greater open wellbeing talk by introducing round-table lunch discussions. Wrote and recorded an influential song about speaking up on mental health.

LEADER (Sponsored by Business Leaders' Health & Safety Forum)

Captain David Morgan, Air New Zealand

Championed development of a Safety Academy for leaders, ensures voice of H&S reps is heard at executive/board level, focuses on building capability of people at all levels.

JUDGES' COMMENDATION AWARD (Sponsored by ecoPortal)

ConneXu 2020 Trust

Found its disabled partners had no input into health & safety. There was huge response from people who wished to join the H&S committee, which is now 50-50 staff and disabled partners. The Trust's disabled partners now drive its H&S framework.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS (Sponsored by Countdown)

Dr Chris Peace, Victoria University of Wellington Te Herenga Waka

Recognised for his work in championing risk management as a serious topic, as a contributor to standards development, as an academic researcher, and as a teacher and mentor to postgraduate students of health & safety.

Anna Osborne and Sonya Rockhouse

Having lost a husband and son respectively at Pike River, they are recognised for using their experience to raise awareness of the need for higher safety and regulatory standards, greater justice in the system, and better treatment of the survivors of mass tragedies and their whānau.

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About Thomson Reuters

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