



MEDIA RELEASE

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Australian Freight Industry Award winners honoured in virtual extravaganza

The Victorian Transport Association and members of the Australian freight and logistics industry honoured the winners of the 2020 Australian Freight Industry Awards during a 90-minute virtual awards presentation broadcast from The Pullman hotel in Melbourne last night.

Venue capacity restrictions meant the annual event that typically sees upwards of 700 guests gathering for a black-tie extravaganza could not proceed in its usual form, so the VTA presented an online celebration that honoured seven individuals and organisations from a variety of categories.

The winners were:

- **Peter Smith**, SCT Logistics,
Personality of the Year Award – sponsored by CMV Truck & Bus;
- **Debra O'Donnell**, Precise Pallet Management,
Female Leadership Award – sponsored by Viva Energy Australia;
- **Annastasia Denigan**, Cement Australia,
Young Achiever of the Year Award – sponsored by Daimler;
- **Alex Fraser Group**,
Sustainable Environment Award – sponsored by National Transport Insurance;
- **JOST Australia**,
Application of Technology Award – sponsored by Transport Certification Australia;
- **Delta Group**,
Best Practice Safety Award – sponsored by Gallagher; and
- **Nationwide Group**,
Investment in People Award – sponsored by Logical Staffing Solutions.

VTA CEO Peter Anderson, with the assistance of representatives of category sponsors, announced the finalists and winners, who accepted their award from the comfort of their own homes thanks to livestreaming technology that connected them to a studio set up at The Pullman to broadcast the production.

“This year’s awards have occurred against the backdrop of unprecedented circumstances, with coronavirus forcing businesses and communities to make huge sacrifices and adjustments to adapt to this strange, new COVID Normal,” Anderson said.

“Presenting these awards in this virtual format is certainly something I never expected to experience, but our ability to do so is a testament to how our industry just gets on with things, and support our customers, suppliers and each other.

“I couldn’t be prouder of the way transport operators have rallied to keep Australia moving throughout the pandemic, ensuring households and communities have had ample supplies of food, medicine, fuel and other essential goods during the uncertainty of lockdowns.

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“Congratulations to our winners and finalists and we look forward to presenting this year’s winners with their trophies on the very near future,” he said.

VTA President Mike Lean also participated in the awards presentation.

“On behalf of the Australian freight industry, the many members of the assessment panels and the VTA Executive Council, I’d like to congratulate our finalists and winners and thank the more than 40 individuals and organisations that took time to prepare entries,” Lean said.

“In such tumultuous times, we never expected to receive a record number of nominations, and that we did is a credit to the passion our members have for these awards and recognising our industry’s many achievements and contributions.

“And of course, a big thanks to our major event supporters TWUSUPER and VIVA Energy Australia for sponsoring tonight’s award presentation, which would not have been possible without their support,” Lean said.

The Australian Freight Industry Awards presentation are renowned for the phenomenal entertainment that has wowed guests for 31 years. A pandemic and gathering restrictions weren’t about to stop the VTA from maintaining this tradition so event organisers arranged for the hit Australian rock band **Boom Crash Opera** to play their hits “The Best Thing” and “Get Out of the House” live from the studio.

Past AFIA entertainer **Daryl Braithwaite** also featured in the line-up with a special recording of his new hit “Love Songs” broadcast during the production.

Peter Anderson confirmed next year’s 32nd presentation of the awards would return to Melbourne’s Crown Palladium on September 4th, 2021.

“We look forward to delivering another AFIA extravaganza in person next year and the opportunity for our industry to get together in person to celebrate our remarkable achievements,” he said.

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