

27 February 2013

**The Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA)
announces the launch of Categories in the NTIA
for
New Zealand Travel Agents
To enter in the 2013 NTIA.**

The Australian Federation of Travel Agents has today confirmed that four categories will be extended to New Zealand as a part of the expanded 2013 AFTA National Travel Industry Awards.

The four categories will be:

Best Travel Agency Retail – Single Location
Best Travel Agency Retail – Multi Location
Best Travel Agency Corporate – Single Location
Best Travel Agency Corporate – Multi Location.

These 4 categories have been chosen for this first year as an acknowledgement of agency owners and the diversification of the New Zealand market.

Many New Zealand travel agents have strong bonds with their colleagues in Australia and with the blessing of the Travel Agents Association of New Zealand (TAANZ); AFTA has expanded the program for the 2013 NTIA.

“AFTA and TAANZ have a long history of working together and it is only with the blessing of TAANZ that AFTA has agreed to offer these categories this year” said Jayson Westbury Chief Executive AFTA.

“Our friendship with New Zealand is greatly valued and on a recent visit to a TAANZ board meeting this topic was agreed, I am pleased to advised that this concept has been also endorsed by the board of AFTA” said Westbury

Bringing NTIA to New Zealand via these 4 categories will give the industry a real opportunity to take a test drive with national awards and AFTA is delighted that it will be able to assist the New Zealand travel industry by tapping into the system, procedures and reputation that the AFTA NTIA enjoys.

The 4 New Zealand categories will be contested in the same way as the Australian version with nominations, voting and judging all to take place. Dates for this will be advised within the next week.

All of the sponsors of the AFTA NTIA will also benefit from the process as they will gain the exposure to the New Zealand travel market.

Air New Zealand will be the local sponsor of the 4 categories providing some on the ground support and assistance during the processes with nominations set to open online on Monday 4th March 2013.

All the details will be available at www.afta.com.au including the nomination criteria and category requirements. All four categories will be judged.

“This is a terrific example of AFTA and TAANZ and the broader New Zealand travel industry working together to celebrate success and excellence in the New Zealand travel agency community and we are most pleased to be involved” Westbury Said.

The AFTA NTIA (New Zealand categories) will be open to everyone in the New Zealand travel agency community.

“TAANZ welcomes the announcement by AFTA to bring their NTIA to New Zealand and we will be encouraging all of our members to participate” said Andrew Olsen Chief Executive Officer TAANZ.

“This gives the New Zealand travel agency owners an opportunity to be awarded via a proven industry awards model and I wish everyone who gets involved all the very best” Olsen said.

Nomination, Voting and judging information will be providing via a link which will be open from Monday 4th March 2013 at the www.afta.com.au website.

For any advance enquires email ntia@afta.com.au

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Notes to editor: below.

The Australian Federation of Travel Agents (AFTA) is the peak body in Australia representing the retail travel industry. Founded in 1957, AFTA represents the majority of travel agents in Australia and includes all of the major travel agency groups.

AFTA's role is to uphold the interests of members in matters relating to the operation of all travel agencies in Australia. In broad terms these issues are ones that are not addressed by agent chain or corporate entities on behalf of their members, and are ones that involve the industry as a whole.

The AFTA National Travel Industry Awards (AFTA NTIA) acknowledge the best of the best in the Australian travel industry – with categories covering travel agencies and individual consultants, as well as the various suppliers which support them and their businesses. It also awards in 4 categories New Zealand winners

These awards are essential in providing encouragement and recognition to the businesses and personnel who demonstrate outstanding service, marketing excellence and business acumen to the travel industry.

The 2013 - AFTA NTIA Gala Dinner will be held on Saturday 20th July at the Hordern Pavilion, Moore Park.

Contact:

Any enquiries may be directed to AFTA's Event Manager, Alex Cook on 02 9287 9900 or alex@afta.com.au