

## 2023 NEW ZEALAND RAINBOW EXCELLENCE AWARDS : MEDIA RELEASE

27 September 2023, Auckland

### NZ Defence Force leads on rainbow front

The 2023 New Zealand Rainbow Excellence Awards was held this evening in Auckland with the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) taking home the Partners Life Supreme Award, along with the All-Accor Progress Award.

Awards director and judging convenor, Martin King, says the NZ Rainbow Excellence Awards, now in their fifth year, celebrate workplace leadership, innovation and best practice by organisations committed to rainbow diversity and inclusion.

Chief of the New Zealand Defence Force Air Marshal Kevin Short said he was proud of the strides the organisation has made and that the win acknowledged how far the NZDF had come. Less than 30 years ago, Aotearoa New Zealand was not a safe harbour for rainbow communities, including those serving within the Defence Force.

“We want our rainbow communities to feel welcome, safe and valued. This award symbolises how far we have come as an inclusive Defence Force that recognises the strengths that a diverse and inclusive workforce brings..”

The win by NZDF recognises their commitment to staying the course and remaining steadfast on their commitments for being a force for all New Zealanders. NZDF have continued to make incremental shifts on their systems, policies, training, and practices building on their previous award-winning programmes. In 2014, NZDF was recognised as the most inclusive force in the world in a global survey, achieved rainbow tick certification in 2019, publishing their rainbow inclusion strategy in 2020, and cemented their commitment through taking the Pride Pledge in 2021 with an increasing focus on training and education across camps and bases.

Martin King says that all the finalists and winners at this year’s award ceremony are making a difference and it’s not just our large organisations. This year saw a wide range of new entrants from organisations of all shapes, sizes and sectors.

“We’ve come a long way and have seen incredible progress even in the last 5 years of awards” says Martin King. “We’re still working hard every day to combat injustice, discrimination and exclusion, but we hope organisations who were finalists and winners inspire others to follow in their footsteps”.

### Complete list of all category winners

Organisation Name	Category
-------------------	----------

Craig West, Country Lead, Downer New Zealand	The Newmarket Business Association Executive Leadership Award	Winner
Kendall Farmer, Les Mills International	The Chorus Ambassadorship Award	Winner
TVNZ	The Rainbow Tick Training and Development Award	Winner
Foodstuffs North Island	The Pride Pledge Innovation Award	Winner
MBIE (Ministry for Business Innovation and Employment)	The Simpson Grierson Impact Award	Winner
Wellington Zoo	The Z Energy SME Rainbow Inclusivity Award	Winner
Powerco	The ASB Emerging Award	Winner
Les Mills International	The Pride Pledge Representation in Marketing Award	Winner
Wellington Zoo	The Rainbow Tick Non-Commercial Sector Award	Winner
The New Zealand Defence Force	The All-Accor Progress Award	Winner
Les Mills International	The SkyCity Community and Advocacy Award	Winner
New Zealand Defence Force	Partners Life Supreme Award	Winner
Wellington Zoo Les Mills International Downer New Zealand		2 <sup>nd</sup> Place 3 <sup>rd</sup> Place 4 <sup>th</sup> Place

Contact

Martin King

Awards Director

021558607

[martin@pridepledge.co.nz](mailto:martin@pridepledge.co.nz)