

Media Release  
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## **Tall Poppy Business Award entry standards impress**

Entries into this year's Top Energy Tall Poppy Business Awards have now closed and the Award judges are busy making their deliberations.

To involve a wider spread of businesses in the Mid and Far North, Top Energy sponsored the Tall Poppy Business Awards on a region-wide basis this year, involving Business Associations from 5 districts; Kaitaia, Kaikohe, Kerikeri, Paihia and Kawakawa. And although Kerikeri entry numbers are down on last year's record level, the quality and diversity of entries from other areas more than makes up for this, according to Awards Sponsor Top Energy.

Says Top Energy Chief Executive, Roger de Bray, "What stands out this year is the quality of many of the entries and of course they are now more representative of business throughout the region. We've also seen entries come in from several recently established businesses and it's encouraging to see such a diversity of business interests emerging."

Categories for this year's Awards include Retail, Manufacturing & Primary, Tourism & Hospitality, Export, Technology/Innovation and Customer Service.

Award entries are being judged by a panel of three regional judges: [Chair] Heather Ayrton, (Coroner, JP and Kaikohe resident); Robin Shepherd (Top Energy Consumer Trust Deputy Chairman and Kaitaia resident); and John Halse (Business & Industry Development, Enterprise Northland and resident of Russell). The regional judges are assisted at district level by a 'local judge' nominated by individual Business Associations. Entries are judged under strict criteria, including business development, marketing, service levels, business growth and environmental, cultural & community sensitivities.

Category winners from each district judging round will go through to a regional Awards competition, where the most deserving category and Supreme Award winners will be chosen from across the region.

A formal Dinner/Dance Awards Evening is planned to announce Kerikeri district award winners on Saturday, 31 July 2004. Tickets are \$70.00 per person and are available through Trixie Newton World Travel, Kerikeri. A Wine & Cheese Evening is planned in Kaikohe, to

announce the Kaikohe district award winners on Friday, 6 August 2004. Tickets are \$10.00 per person and are available through Vicki Bartle at The Northern News, Kaikohe. END.

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