

AUSTRALIA MEDIA RELEASE

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NORTHERN TERRITORY COMPANIES HONOURED AT AUSTRALIAN EXPORT AWARDS

Two Northern Territory companies were honoured for outstanding export achievement at the Australian Export Awards tonight, hosted by the Minister for Trade, the Hon Simon Crean MP.

Australian Skills Training (AST) won the Education and Training Award, sponsored by CPA Australia. A training provider based in Darwin, AST also has offices in Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Brunei. AST was praised by the Australian Export Award judges for its strong export marketing strategy, and its focus on developing a reputation for quality training and service.

The company has identified a niche market by modifying its Industrial and Technical Skills Training programs to suit customer needs: by varying the educational levels, language skills and cultural differences.

Alice Springs Helicopters won the Small Business Award, sponsored by the Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research.

The company has been exporting its services since 2003 and offers commercial and tourism charters. Local knowledge and the ability to operate at remotely located projects for extended periods means the company is widely used by film and photography crews as well as the mineral exploration industry.

The company is also the first, and currently the only, helicopter operator in Australia to achieve Advanced Eco-Certified touring accreditation. It has achieved this by using resources wisely, contributing to the conservation of the environment and helping local communities.

Congratulating the 12 National Winners, Minister Crean said that collectively, these companies have generated more than \$1.5 billion in export earnings and employed more than 2,400 people.

The Australian Export Awards are co-presented by Austrade and the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. Now in its 47th year of recognising export excellence, the Awards are one of the longest running and most prestigious business awards.

The Awards are run in collaboration with the States and Territories, who each conduct their own Export Awards program. State and Territory winners progress to the Australian Export Awards as finalists.

NOTE TO TV NEWS ROOMS: Full live multi-camera feed available from Tieline 5 from the Press Gallery at Parliament House, Canberra.

For a complete list of this year's Australian Export Award winners, go to www.exportawards.gov.au

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