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Current Issue

AustCham Westpac ACBA:2014 Winners announced



Winners have been announced at the AustCham Westpac Australia China Business Awards 2014. The winners of this year's 2014 AustCham Westpac Australia China Business Awards have been announced at a gala event dinner in Shanghai.

These prestigious awards, now running into their 21st year, celebrate the success of Australian businesses operating in Greater China.

The awards are the initiative of AustCham Greater China, incorporating the Australian Chambers of Commerce in Mainland China and Hong Kong. Westpac has been the title sponsor since 2010.

Westpac's Head of Greater China, Mr. Andrew Whitford, said the bank had been supporting its customers in China for over 40 years and in that time, had witnessed some great success stories of Australian companies thriving in China.

"As a leading Australian bank we understand the importance of celebrating these success stories and this is one way we can recognise the companies that are leading the way in China through their innovations," Mr Whitford said.

AustCham received almost 100 applicants for this year's awards.

Reflecting the diversity of Australian businesses operating in Greater China, finalists represented a broad range of sectors from architecture and design, construction, logistics, education and training, primary industries and healthcare.

Craig Aldous, Elders' General Manager for China, and a judge on this year's AustCham Westpac Australia China Business Awards judging panel, praised the finalists for their innovative approaches to business.

"It was a tremendous experience for me to read the stories of so many quality companies that are achieving outstanding results in China and being truly innovative in their approach to business," Mr Aldous said.

WINNERS OF THE AUSTCHAM WESTPAC ACBA 2014

THE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR BUSINESS SERVICES SPONSORED BY QANTAS

Winner: Transtar International Freight

Founded in 1986, Transtar is a Melbourne-based privately owned international logistics company, specialising in the provision of end-to-end logistics solutions for Australian importers and exporters doing business with Asia. Transtar also has extensive experience in the European and American markets.

Transtar's core business activities include international import and export freight forwarding via sea and air, licensed customs clearance broking, export documentation, and third party logistics services. Transtar has a network of 14 offices located throughout Asia, Australia, New Zealand and Europe, and boasts locations in nine of the top 11 container ports of the world.



*Pictured above: Annie Meyer, Transtar Director and Asia CEO pictured with Transtar's Asia team.

Since 2007, Melbourne-based Transtar has been actively expanding its Asian business. Its Asian bases include a regional head office in Hong Kong and Mainland offices in Shanghai, Shenzhen, Qingdao, Ningbo, Xingang (Tianjin) and Wuhan. It also has offices in Bangkok and Singapore.

Annie Meyer, Transtar Director and Asia CEO has played an integral role assisting the business in establishing its Asian operations since being appointed to her current role in 2007. Based out of Transtar's regional head quarters in Hong Kong, Ms Meyer has been responsible for all business development in Asia and has lead an aggressive expansion plan throughout the region which now includes nine offices and a team of over 100 people. A highlight of her leadership has been the identification and promotion of talented women throughout the company, with all of Transtar's China branches being managed by women.

The ACBA 2014 judging panel praised Transtar for its tremendous growth over the past five years and its well-planned and well-executed expansion strategy in Asia. Its innovative approach, taking advantage of logistics opportunities during the global financial crisis and a strategy over the last four years to eliminate as many third parties from its business as possible – by managing all the cargo movements from factory right through to the customer, distribution centre or the customer's customer – have been key to the business's success.

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THE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR CONSTRUCTION & DESIGN SPONSORED BY HUAWEI

Winner: PLACE Design Group

PLACE Design Group is a leading international planning, design and environment consultancy with offices in Australia, China and South-East Asia. Through its global offices, PLACE Design Group is committed to delivering commercially and environmentally sustainable planning and design solutions, underpinned by world-best practice, new urbanism and place-making principles.

Established in 2001 by a small team of professionals in Australia, it has since grown to a team of 180 and remains an employee- owned firm.

Since 2011, PLACE Design Group has worked on strengthening its commitment to the China market with the relocation of a number of senior design staff from its Australian offices to head up offices in Shenzhen and Chengdu. It also has offices in Shanghai and Beijing.

The Chengdu office in particular, which opened in 2011, and is headed up by former Brisbane-based senior designer Clint Wood, was chosen to service the business's expanded growth plans in China's second tier cities. Chengdu was chosen for its proximity to the rapidly growing south western Chinese markets and is known by the Chinese as the most liveable city in China.

"We had always wanted to go west. Chengdu has always been on the map as the fourth point on the square of China," Mr Wood told Australia China Connections in 2013.

"We want to be close to our clients. We have the confidence to do it because we have been in China a long time and we understand the market."

PLACE Design Group has a committed China strategy, which includes basing the business on a regional model – so that no branch in China is more senior than another. This organisational structure allows the business to transfer information and knowledge across countries, teams and projects allowing clients to benefit from an international pool of talent and experience.



**Pictured right: PLACE Design Group's Bund Brilliance in Chengdu.*

"Having been in China for over 12 years we believe our commitment to Australia- China business relations is integral to the development of our consultancy," said Mark Burgess, Director of PLACE Design Group and Principal for the Shanghai office at the ACBA finalists breakfast in April.

"We look forward to the continued growth and development of our industry here."

PLACE Design Group was commended by the judging panel for its strong compliancy, steady growth in China and its long-term vision.

Finalists:

BlueScope Buildings Asia
WorleyParsons China
Greater Group

THE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR MANUFACTURING SPONSORED BY HAYS

Winner: Boral

Boral With around 3,500 employees, Boral is the leading manufacturer and supplier of plasterboard-based wall, ceiling lining systems and accessories in Asia, Australasia and the Middle East.

Boral is the leading multi-country plasterboard producer in the Asia region and has 21 manufacturing sites in Asia, including China, Thailand, Indonesia, South Korea, Vietnam, India, Malaysia, the Philippines and Oman. In addition to plasterboard manufacturing plants, the business also has ceiling tile plants, metal roll forming lines and facilities for the production of jointing compounds and industrial plasters as well as a Gypsum mine in Oman.

Boral was commended by the judging panel for its approach to employee relations, its commitment to providing a safe working environment for employees and its very high safety standards and records.

It was also praised for a great environmental aspect embedded in its operations, good strategy and innovations.

Boral stood out for its recycling and environmental commitments, and outstanding safety record, and the way in which the company has identified a need in the market and built on that by differentiating itself in the market