



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

GOVERNOR OF VICTORIA EXPORT AWARDS

Tuesday 17 September 2024

Acknowledgments

Tim Pallas, Acting Premier, Treasurer, Minister for Economic Growth and Minister for Industrial Relations

Danni Jarrett, CEO, Global Victoria

Members of the Consular Corps

Distinguished guests

I begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the unceded lands on which this House stands – the Wurundjeri and Bunurong people – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present.

The first Governor of Victoria Export Awards took place in 1979, under Governor Sir Henry Winneke.

It was a groundbreaking concept, but it initially favoured established companies over emerging businesses.

For example, companies like Repco and CSL took out some of the top prizes at the inaugural ceremony.

But just a year later, these awards began to shift focus, laying the foundation for what we see today.

Among the winners in 1980 was a lesser-known venture, which was proud just to have earned a certificate.

After all, the business partners had only recently moved on from working out of a rundown, retrofitted bakery.

The surfing company Rip Curl may be a household name now, but back then, it was far from it.

Having started with no experience in making surfboards or wetsuits – Rip Curl's passion quickly sparked a cult following.

Fellow export award recipients that year, such as Unigate and Ford, were perhaps surprised to share the stage with surfers from country Victoria.

Yet, Rip Curl's success was an early example of the innovative spirit that these awards were designed to celebrate.

And with stores across Europe, North America, and Asia, Rip Curl has certainly moved beyond its early days as a lone shopfront in the quiet beach town of Torquay.

Tonight, we continue this legacy in acknowledging not only those with strong established foundations but also those at the cutting-edge of Victoria's economic success.

The award categories vary greatly, from creative industries to resources and energy, and even international health – among many others.

Naturally, the competition for tonight's awards is high – which is a reflection of Victoria's status as a leading centre of innovation and exports in Australia.

The breadth of our capabilities as a State is truly impressive, and it is always a pleasure to learn about new exciting local ventures.

When I hosted these awards for the first-time last year, the Emerging Exporter Award was won by a company named Booby Tape International.

Just a few months later, while I was on an Official Visit to India, we were able to reconnect at the Cosmoprof trade show in Mumbai.

The company was part of Victoria's first official delegation to Cosmoprof India – made possible by the support of Global Victoria.

It is fantastic to see how this business capitalised on its recognition at these awards and continued its expansion into significant export markets.

It's clear that the awards that Rip Curl attended more than 40 years ago are as relevant to each and every nominee here tonight as they were back then.

Without these breakthroughs – and persistence – we wouldn't be where we are today.

Whether you win or not – I want to express my gratitude to each of you for your invaluable contributions to Victoria's ongoing success.

I'd like to acknowledge all Victorian companies who applied for the 2024 Governor of Victoria Export Awards – through new ways, new ideas, and new techniques, you are changing lives around the world.

And just as the pioneers of the past paved the way for tonight's achievements – you are laying the foundation for the next generation of Victorian innovation.

Best of luck to those who will be representing our State at the Australian Export Awards later this year.

I now invite the Acting Premier to address us.