

ASI green charter model helps inform NZ efforts

A special presentation on the other side of the Tasman during late 2011 at the New Zealand Fabricators Association Annual General Meeting on the ASI's Environmental Sustainability Charter (ESC) provided a practical approach to the onerous procedure-driven environmental management schemes considered previously, but ultimately rejected by members of Steel Construction New Zealand (SCNZ).

At the invitation of the SCNZ, ASI National Marketing Manager, **David Ryan** and Quality, Safety and Environment Manager, **Rick Green** of ASI Environmental Performance Award 2011 finalist, Manuele Engineers provided the smarts.

It attracted about 70 SCNZ members, about double the number who normally attend such events there.

SCNZ Manager, **Alistair Fussell** said the presentation, aimed to prepare NZ steel fabricators sector for the introduction of a green stewardship program there, but which ultimately hinges on the New Zealand Green Building Council (NZGBC) adopting a similar scheme to Australia as the basis for assessing and granting Green Star points, at this stage yet to be resolved.

"In 2008 we tried to introduce the British scheme to NZ, but this was far more onerous than the very good pragmatic system developed by David," Mr Fussell said.

"Currently the NZGBC is undecided in its desire to adopt the GBCA (Australian) scheme which includes a material credit for a Charter fabricator."

Mr Ryan was asked to explain the ESC's workings and Mr Green was invited to convey his personal experience of the Charter and readily donated his time on behalf of the South Australian fabricator to accommodate that.

Mr Fussell said that Mr Green had openly described the various challenges he faced and the many benefits from a business perspective including customer responses,



Manuele Engineers' **Vince Manuele** and NZ presenter, **Rick Green** accepting the business' High Commendation in September as an outstanding ESC member.

financial benefits, staff morale, culture and corporate image using a colourful and creative Powerpoint presentation.

"Both Dave and Rick were passionate, but also realistic about the Charter realising there had to be a business case for joining it," he said.

"Manuele Engineers certainly had been convinced of this and appeared to be making good progress in making improvements in their environmental footprint, and it was very helpful having the fabricator's perspective to complement David's developer one.

"Many of our members would view such a scheme as a huge time and cost commitment so they appreciated hearing from another fabricator what it meant in practice to be a Charter member.

"ISO 14001 is the ultimate goal but the Charter scheme represents an achievable approach that gets members moving in the right direction without stubbing their toes."

The underlying message that Mr Green conveyed is that committing to such a stewardship program is easier than many believe as he explained he came to the task without any formal qualifications in environmental management.

However he explained that his business and quality management qualifications and skills could be readily applied, pointing out that in a business sense it is about "accounting for sustainability".

He also pointed out that with green building so front of mind for society currently, not addressing it means being left behind.

"I thought my main task was getting staff behind environmental awareness, but I didn't have to due to environmental issues already being highly rated within the media and in the public eye, awareness at Manuele Engineers was already there," he said at the presentation.