

Media Release
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Car rental companies to get mileage out of Qualmark™ endorsement

Two rental car companies are driving up industry standards by becoming the first businesses of their kind to achieve the Qualmark endorsement – New Zealand tourism’s official mark of quality.

Affinity Car Rental and National Car Rental, both based in Christchurch, are also among some of the first transport companies to achieve the “visitor transport” endorsement, as part of the quality endorsement system for tourism businesses launched by Qualmark in October last year. Until now all companies entering the endorsement programme have been “visitor activities”.

Under the endorsement scheme, tourism operators keen to become Qualmark™ assured are assessed against standard generic criteria based around customer expectations in six core quality areas. In addition, some businesses must also undergo assessment against additional criteria specific to their sector.

The rental car system is among the latest tourism sector criteria being developed by Qualmark, in conjunction with the rental car sector and the Rental Vehicle Association of New Zealand (RVANZ). The criteria put particular emphasis on the age/mileage of vehicles and maintenance programmes to identify professional and trustworthy operators.

Managing director of Affinity Car Rental, Bryn McGoldrick, says the introduction of the visitor transport endorsement programme is particularly important since deregulation of the car rental industry.

“Since deregulation there has been no consumer watch dog nor any standards specific to the industry to measure the level of professionalism and safety standards employed,” says Mr McGoldrick.

“Qualmark’s move to provide a national quality programme will raise the standards of the entire industry as well as provide a level of confidence for retail and wholesale travel trade, visitor centres and ultimately international and domestic travellers.”

Qualmark chief executive Fiona Luhrs, estimates around 90 percent of visitor activity businesses and 60 percent of visitor transport businesses throughout New Zealand can now be assessed with criteria suitable for their business type.

“The industry’s goal is to provide a quality assurance framework for every type of tourism business and we’ve made tremendous progress with sector groups towards this goal,” says Ms Luhrs.

Other sector criteria to be finalised recently include off-road vehicles and nature tourism.

The Qualmark™ endorsement programme sits alongside Qualmark’s accommodation star grade programme, providing a comprehensive quality assurance system to help international and domestic travellers identify professional and trustworthy businesses so they can book and buy with confidence.

For more information visit www.qualmark.co.nz.

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