

Media release
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Tourism Holdings and VTNZ set world class emission standards

Tourism Holdings Ltd (THL) – New Zealand’s premier tourism operator and the largest motorhome rental supplier – has taken the lead in meeting tough new exhaust emission standards set by VTNZ.

The new emission test, launched by the Prime Minister Helen Clark in Auckland this afternoon, sets a world class benchmark for vehicle exhaust emission standards.

VTNZ, New Zealand’s leading vehicle testing company, has developed their own fully independent vehicle emission test.

The VTNZ Five Star benchmark far exceeds the equivalent European emission standards.

The THL fleet is the first fleet of vehicles to be independently tested in this way.

Early results show nearly all of the 1,500 motorhomes in the THL rental fleet (which includes the Maui, Britz, Backpacker and Explore More brands) get over the Five Star bar.

THL’s Chief Executive Officer Trevor Hall said the partnership with VTNZ was part of THL’s commitment as an environmentally conscious organisation to do something about reducing New Zealand’s harmful emissions and is timely given the announcement of the Government’s tourism strategy this week.

“We welcome the strategy’s focus on sustainability, environmental protection and enhancement.”

“Preserving New Zealand’s beautiful, untouched landscape is vital to THL’s business and to the wider tourism industry. We are committed to ensuring our business has the smallest environmental impact possible on that landscape.”

"We are delighted to be working with VTNZ to lift the bar in reducing our environmental footprint by ensuring our vehicles meet these tough new emissions standards," Mr Hall said.

"We asked VTNZ to come up with a world class emissions standard and as an industry leader we will ensure that our fleet continues to meet it."

VTNZ – which carries out well over a million vehicle safety and warrant of fitness checks a year – said it welcomed the request from THL to develop a robust and independent vehicle emissions test.

VTNZ says the emissions test is internationally benchmarked and the Five Star test rating creates the toughest standard currently available, far exceeding equivalent European testing regimes.

Chief Executive Mike Walsh said VTNZ intends to offer the emissions test to all its 2.5 million customers in the near future.

"The testing protocols developed for THL has been a useful pilot programme for VTNZ and the tough new standards we've set will ensure that motorists whose vehicles pass our Five Star standard can rest assured that their vehicles are as fuel efficient as possible, as well as having low harmful emissions," Mr Walsh said.

"As the largest vehicle testing company in New Zealand, emission testing is a natural extension of our primary role in checking cars for their Warrant of Fitness. We believe more and more of our customers will want hard evidence of their vehicles' fuel efficiency and, of course, their environmental impact."

VTNZ purchased European equipment to carry out the tests at THL branches and has been carrying out the tests in Auckland and Christchurch in its pilot programme.

Vehicles that meet or exceed the Three Star or Five Star standards will receive an emissions windscreen label and bumper sticker to denote that they are "low emitting" vehicles.