

SPAR Australia

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PRESS RELEASE

2008 SPAR STARS Awards break new ground

SPAR Australia's new Retail Excellence Awards Programme recognised more than a hundred winners in the SPAR network on Saturday 4 October at a Gala Dinner and Awards ceremony at Jupiters Casino on the Gold Coast.

The SPAR Awards are a key tool in assisting the network of close to 80 SPAR retailers and another 75 5 Star retailers to deliver the high level of service and consumer satisfaction that the SPAR brand is famous for throughout the world.

Featuring Channel Seven's popular personality Tom Williams as Master of Ceremonies, the prestigious Gala Awards night attracted close to 400 attendees.

This year's inaugural SPAR STARS programme has seen the introduction of 11 new award categories to keep in line with increasing consumer expectations and legislative changes in the retail food sector.

Using new, detailed assessment criteria and processes, the new Operational awards were developed to recognise excellence in areas such as Store Presentation, Marketing, Food Safety and Legal Compliance.

General Manager of Retail Operations, Travis Cunnane, said these new awards meant that SPAR was able to congratulate an unprecedented number of retailers for their performance throughout the year.

"We were overwhelmed with just how many retailers were able to qualify for these awards; in all five categories, we had an average of nearly 20 winners in each category," said Mr Cunnane.

"These tremendous results are testament to the hard work and dedication our retailers put into their stores to ensure excellence in all areas."

As per previous years, the evening's highlight was the presentation of the highly-coveted Store of the Year awards, this year featuring new, more challenging assessment criteria. These awards are presented to individual stores in the network that have gone above and beyond in every way.

The 2008 Store of Year Award winners were:

SPAR Supermarket of the Year – SPAR Boonah
SPAR Express Store of the Year – SPAR Express River Heads
5 Star Store of the Year – 5 Star Supermarket Warren

Mr Cunnane said that for the second year in a row, SPAR presented the most prestigious award, the *SPAR Award for Excellence*, to an individual who has demonstrated 'their outstanding commitment, leadership and passion to the ideals of the SPAR philosophy'.

"This year's winner was John Stone of SPAR Boonah. Not only did his store win the SPAR Supermarket of the year, but they also walked away with awards from all five Operational categories," Mr Cunnane said.

"John's commitment to SPAR has been outstanding. He continues to assist SPAR by meeting with new and potential retailers to win new business and working with Regional Business Managers to improve store performance throughout the network.

"His store has also become the first SPAR training store as part of the SPAR Training Academy; an invaluable tool for new retailers and yet another demonstration of John's passion for the brand."

The SPAR brand is a global success boasting around 15,160 stores in 34 countries. SPAR is an acronym that means "Save" in Europe and last year, SPAR stores, all 100 per cent locally owned, injected almost \$300 million into Australia's retail economy.

Worldwide, the SPAR group serves millions of customers every day and supports local communities all over the world by sponsoring local sporting clubs, charities and community events.

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