

PRESS RELEASE

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KAIKŌURA EARTHQUAKE RECOVERY WINS GLOBAL PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD FOR ENGINEERING

The rebuilding of Kaikōura's road and rail networks, following the earthquake in 2016, has won the Institution of Civil Engineers' (ICE) 2018 People's Choice Award.

The annual competition recognises civil engineering projects that have made a positive impact for their local communities and the final winner was decided by a global public vote.

The 7.8 magnitude earthquake on 14 November 2016 caused damage to 194 kilometres of road and 150 kilometres of rail around Kaikōura. On the Main North Line railway, 950 rail sites and 20 tunnels were damaged, with large sections of the line pushed into the sea.

The project *Kaikōura earthquake recovery: moving mountains to reconnect communities*, a partnership between the NZ Transport Agency and KiwiRail, restored rail and road links to Kaikōura and neighbouring communities that had been isolated by the earthquake. The rail line was open to freight trains just ten months after tracks had been thrown into the sea, with the harbour back in operation exactly a year after the earthquake. State Highway 1 (SH1) was open to motorists again after one year, one month, and one day. By December 2017, 1,700 people had worked more than two million hours to rebuild the road and railway.

Seán Harris, ICE Director of Membership, said:

"The Kaikōura earthquake recovery project is a worthy winner of the 2018 ICE People's Choice Award and I am pleased to see the public recognise how the project directly transformed people's quality of life. More than just a re-opening of road and rail systems, the project reconnected families and friends, and allowed businesses to welcome back tourism.

"One of many inspiring submissions this year, the project stands out globally as not only one of the finest examples of outstanding technical achievement but also highlights the importance of civil engineering in enabling social and economic progress."

Steve Mutton, Chair of the North Canterbury Transport Infrastructure Recovery (NCTIR) Board, NZ Transport Agency, said:

"The team worked hard, under extremely difficult conditions, to rebuild and create a safe highway and rail line to reconnect Kaikōura and critical South Island transport links, as well as benefiting the wider surrounding communities also still recovering from the effects of the

earthquake. It was a collective effort that resulted in engineering excellence, and every crew member should feel proud of themselves.”

Todd Moyle, Acting Chief Executive of KiwiRail, said:

“We’re very thankful for everyone who voted for our project – this is well deserved recognition of the hard work, dedication and determination of the thousands of people who so quickly rebuilt the rail line and roads, reconnecting communities and restoring critical New Zealand freight networks.”

Previously only open to projects in the UK, this year’s ICE People’s Choice Award included international projects for the first time to mark the ICE’s bicentenary. Nearly 70,000 people voted for their favourite civil engineering project, with the Kaikōura earthquake recovery project winning against competitors such as the Hyderabad Metro Rail project in India, the Harbour area treatment scheme in Hong Kong, and the Queensferry Crossing in Scotland.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

Additional quote:

Brian Kirtlan, NCTIR Project Director, said:

“For many of our people this will be their project of a lifetime, tough but extremely rewarding to deliver solutions to help the affected communities. This People’s Choice award is due recognition of the pride many New Zealanders felt when the transport networks were reconnected just a year after so much devastation.”

About the Institution of Civil Engineers:

The Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE) is a leading source of professional expertise in transport, water supply and treatment, flood management, waste and energy. It has more than 92,000 members, 25% of whom are based overseas. ICE’s vision is to place civil engineering at the heart of society, delivering sustainable development through knowledge, skills and professional expertise.

In 2018, ICE has reached a rare milestone – a bicentenary.

ICE 200 is a perfect chance to celebrate the institution’s longevity, recognise the profession of civil engineering and most importantly the thousands of members who make the institution what it is. ICE is using the bicentenary as an opportunity to remind the general public that civil engineers transform their lives for the better and safeguard the future for their families. In doing so, the Institution also hopes to encourage young people to see civil engineering as a creative, rewarding and highly enjoyable career.

Events have been taking place throughout 2018 and information is available on the [ICE website](#).

More information:

More information on the *Kaikōura earthquake recovery: moving mountains to reconnect communities* project can be found at: www.ice.org.uk/what-is-civil-engineering/what-do-civil-engineers-do/moving-mountains-to-reconnect-communities