



Scottish Council for  
Development and Industry

## PRESS RELEASE

### CENTENARY AWARD FOR SMELTER'S WORKFORCE

*18 September 2009*

One hundred years after aluminium production first started in the Highlands, the workforce at a Lochaber smelter has been given another reason to celebrate with a prestigious prize.

The Global Energy Group Award for Excellence in People Development was last night presented to Rio Tinto Alcan in Fort William as the business best demonstrating commitment to supporting, inspiring and developing people, personally and professionally, for the future.

The presentation was made by HSBC's Chief Executive Officer for Scotland, John Rendall, at the Scottish Council for Development and Industry's 10<sup>th</sup> Highlands and Islands Annual Dinner and Business Excellence Awards, which attracted 350 guests from around the region.

Chris Murray, the new Works Manager at Rio Tinto Alcan in Lochaber, said:

"This year Rio Tinto Alcan is celebrating 100 years of hydro power production and aluminium smelting in the Highlands.

"We employ over 170 people in the Fort William area and are fully committed to the on-going development of our workforce to ensure we have the latest skills and knowledge to drive improvements and efficiencies within the business.

"Our local training strategy has been incredibly successful. It includes a customised SVQ Award in Hydro Power and Aluminium Production, online safety training and practical training for our employees and locally contracted businesses. Promoting continuous improvement in all our operations and partnerships, including suppliers and local business, is an essential element of our day-to-day operations. And so we are delighted to receive formal recognition for our efforts with the prestigious Global Energy Group Award for Excellence in People Development."

Global Energy Group director, Iain MacGregor, said:

"We had a number of very impressive entries for this new award from across a wide range of sectors. They demonstrated the genuine commitment many companies in this area have to developing their greatest asset – their people.

"Judging was a tough process, but Rio Tinto Alcan emerged as clear winners in the end. We congratulate them, both on winning this award and on the impressive milestone of 100 years of aluminium production in the Highlands."



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The full winners list of winners was:

- Caledonian MacBrayne Award for Excellence in Tourism - Grenitote Travel, North Uist
- Crown Estate Award for Excellence in a Marine Business - The Underwater Centre, Fort William
- Global Energy Award for Excellence in People Development - Alcan Aluminium UK, Fort William
- Gordon & MacPhail Award for Excellence in Entrepreneurship - Freda Newton, Owner and Managing Director, Jacobite Cruises, Inverness
- HSBC Award for Excellence in International Business - Lossie Seafoods, Buckie
- Highlands and Islands Enterprise Award for Excellence in Research and Innovation – Blueshell Mussels, Shetland
- SEPA Award for Excellence in Environmental Sustainability - Touchwood Recycling, Uig, Skye
- SCDI Award for Highlands and Islands Young Engineers Club of the Year – Tarbert Academy, Argyll
- SCDI Highlands and Islands Chairman’s Award for Outstanding Business Achievement – Marine Harvest, Fort William

This year’s event was the 10<sup>th</sup> SCDI Highlands and Islands Annual Dinner and Business Excellence Awards and it was held at The Drumossie Hotel in Inverness. The evening was hosted by Fred MacAulay and after dinner entertainment was provided by Sandi Toksvig.

**ENDS**