

New Zealand Green Building Council



Government mandates
Green Star NZ

PRIME MINISTER HELEN Clark has mandated the green building rating tool Green Star NZ by committing new government office space to its endorsement.

“From 1 July, all new A-grade office buildings being constructed to house government staff in central business districts must have a minimum five-star Green Star NZ rating, which represents New Zealand excellence. A Green Star NZ four-star rating is required for B grade office buildings signifying best practice standard,” the Prime Minister said at the Property Council of New Zealand Awards on 29 June.

The stance is the strongest support yet the Government has shown for the initiative the industry has already taken with the formation of the New Zealand Green Building Council and its introduction of Green Star NZ.

Jane Henley, chief executive officer of the New Zealand Green Building Council, welcomes the move.

“The government endorsement of Green Star NZ sends a strong message to the industry that third party voluntary industry standards have their place and complement compliance requirements,” she says. “Green Star NZ was designed by industry to meet the needs of both government and industry and it is through this type of partnership that green building will become standard practice over time.”

Henley says, “The industry has really taken a lead in New Zealand, in line with strong international trends towards green building, especially as the business case for green building is becoming more attractive by making sound economic, social, as well as environmental, sense.”

With a growing international commitment to the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, government-led improvement in the efficiency of building design and operation is viewed as a necessity.

In January of this year, the White House issued an executive order known as the ‘High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Memorandum’. As a result, many state governments across the United States are committing to the targets set by LEED (Leadership in Energy Efficient Design), the environmental rating system which is the US equivalent to Green Star.

The Green Star NZ building rating tool has been adapted from the successful Green Building Australia, Green Star system. It sets a standard for industry best practice by evaluating building projects against eight environmental impact categories such as energy, water, indoor environment quality, and materials.



Above: Jane Henley and Prime Minister Helen Clarke

Within each category, points are awarded for energy efficient initiatives before an environmental weighting factor is applied and an overall score is calculated, determining the project’s Green Star NZ rating. Every project submitted to the NZ Green Building Council for certification is also assessed by independent assessors for third party verification.

The Prime Minister’s address also acknowledged the important role the building and construction industry has to play in New Zealand becoming a truly sustainable nation. ■

For more information, please email enquiries@nzgbc.org.nz.