

# CHOICE Awards shine spotlight on the best

## Top performing goods & services named in 3rd annual event

- Miele cleans up with best vacuum cleaner
- Fisher & Paykel chills out with best fridge
- Suncorp shines with best home, contents & car insurance
- Breville's Fast Slow Cooker wins testers' award
- Scam buster and snake oil nemesis named Consumer Champion

CHOICE has announced the winners of its third annual CHOICE Awards, recognising the people, products, services and brands that improve the everyday lives of consumers.<sup>1</sup>

“Contrasting with our annual Shonky Awards, that name and shame some of the worst goods and services, the CHOICE Awards applaud innovation, excellent customer service, product reliability and, in the case of the Consumer Champion, fearless advocacy on behalf of Australian consumers,” says CHOICE CEO, Nick Stace.

The Best Vacuum Cleaner Brand Award has been won by Miele. CHOICE lab testers looked at results from our vacuum cleaner tests for the past three years as well as CHOICE's annual product reliability surveys, and found that Miele rated highest, even after several years of home use.

CHOICE's Best Fridge Brand Award has been won by Fisher & Paykel. Using lab data as well as CHOICE's reliability survey that includes members' feedback, the brand has consistently ticked the boxes from temperature control and options to running costs.

The 2012 CHOICE Award for Best Insurer - Home, Contents and Car, has been awarded to Suncorp.

“CHOICE has been critical of insurance companies, even awarding the entire industry a Shonky Award last year. It's therefore very pleasing to see an insurer that has a very high customer satisfaction rating. Our reviewers also found Suncorp's Classic and Platinum home and contents policies can make the difference between financial catastrophe and recovery when things go wrong.

“Additionally, Suncorp's comprehensive car insurance scored well against the judging criteria that include car hire offers, total replacement and results of our recent market-wide survey,” says Mr Stace.

CHOICE's Best Travel Money Card Award recognises a financial product that gives travellers real savings as well as extra benefits and services. The award has been won by the GE Money 28 Degrees MasterCard.

“Pre-paid travel cards have the advantage of locking in an exchange rate at the time of purchase, but we found the fee-free GE Money 28 Degrees MasterCard costs travellers the least if used correctly,” says Mr Stace.

The inaugural Testers' Choice Award recognises an outstanding product or appliance from all tests carried out in CHOICE's labs in the past year. This year's award has been won by the Breville Fast Slow Cooker.

“With four appliances in one, our lab testers call this product a ‘one-pot wonder’, because it means people don't have to buy specialised separate cooking appliances. We believe that its price of around \$200 also gives consumers real savings,” says Mr Stace.

CHOICE has introduced the Game Changer Award to reward innovation that benefits consumers. The car share industry has been recognised this year because it fills a gap in the market, benefiting consumers and the environment at the same time.

“Even though the award has gone to the entire industry, we identified GoGet, which operates in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide, as an outstanding example of a car share company providing a cost effective and secure alternative to car ownership or rental.

“Car ownership is becoming less practical for many people in major cities, so share schemes are an attractive alternative,” says Mr Stace.

The Consumer Champion Award for 2012 has been won by long time consumer advocate Dr Ken Harvey, currently Adjunct Associate Professor in the School of Public Health at La Trobe University. Dr Harvey has campaigned since the 1970s to improve regulations for the use and promotion of therapeutic goods.

“Ken put himself in the firing line when he took on SensaSlim over its weight-loss product scam last year. The company sued Ken and the drawn out legal process came at great personal expense. Supporters assisted Ken cover his legal costs and his stand against SensaSlim was subsequently vindicated when he won the case.

“Because of Dr Ken Harvey’s fearless campaigning, SensaSlim was delisted and the company’s principals prosecuted. That’s a true victory for consumers,” says Mr Stace.

<sup>1</sup>The full list of 2012 CHOICE Award winners:

- Best vacuum cleaner brand - Miele
- Best fridge brand - Fisher & Paykel
- Best home and contents and car insurer - Suncorp
- Best travel money card - GE Money 28 Degrees MasterCard
- Testers’ Choice - Breville Fast Slow Cooker
- Consumer Champion - Dr Ken Harvey
- Game Changer Award - The car share industry

Winners in each category were determined by CHOICE with the judging carried out by a panel of experts and, for the Game Changer Award, CHOICE staff.

Read more and view videos of the winners from the [2012 CHOICE Awards](#).

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