

Manuscript for the National Logistics Awards 2022



Venue: Shangri La Colombo

Date: 2022.03.26

Professor Lalith Edirisinghe

Good evening,

Distinguished participants,

As the Chairman of Panel of Judges, my task was to direct my team, to select the best logistics performers, in Sri Lanka from the applications received by SLFFA.

For this challenging task, we have evaluated the applications, in line with NLA's primary objective of uplifting standards and service level, across all logistics service providers, by making each market player, more accountable.

The World Bank identifies six pillars, that affect logistics performance in a country namely,

1. Logistics quality and competence
2. Infrastructure
3. Customs
4. Tracking and tracing
5. International shipments, and
6. Timeliness.

Logistics quality and competence is a mirror reflection, of the logistics service providers in a country.

Accordingly, the Panel have investigated the received applications, by using a scientific method under ten evaluation criteria.

1. Professional Memberships
2. Awards and Recognitions
3. CSR, and Ethical Practices
4. Innovations and New products
5. Value-added Products and Services
6. Quality Certifications & Business Process Improvements
7. HR Policies and Practices
8. Gender equality and Employee retention.

9. Academic and Professional Qualifications
10. Occupational Health and Safety

We believe this would help the industry players, to review their performance objectively, and have a self-evaluation to identify the areas for improvement. SLFFA is planning to initiate individual discussion with each applicant based on reports submitted by PoJs in near future.

Usually, the most difficult task of a selection panel, is to visualize the statistically derived results, from a realistic perspective thus ensuring, majority acceptance in a specific industry or a community.

Accordingly, in addition to the standard process of scrutinizing the applications, a scientific committee was appointed, to carry out a “survey judgement verification”.

The main task of this Scientific Committee was to bridge any gaps between statistical scrutiny and the logistics industry’s common view. Thereby, to arrive at the final judgment in most fair, logical, transparent and welcoming manner.

The Scientific Committee is headed by Dr. Indra Mahakalanda, a Decision Scientist from University of Moratuwa. Other members of Scientific Committee include an Economist, Statistician, and a Mathematician.

Decision science is a merger of data science and behavioral science which is quite new in the Sri Lankan context.

The members of panel and I, hold an unbiased point of view, selecting the award winners, of the National Logistics Awards 2022.

This is my second experience in a National level, Logistics awards competition. And I take this opportunity to thank SLFFA, for the confidence they placed on me.

Based on my previous experience I had a pre concern about the attention and care usually given when compiling applications, particularly in the logistics sector.

Accordingly, SLFFA organized two workshops to explain the application process, and steps to follow when compiling the required supporting documents etc. However, we noted the quality of some applications needs to be improved further.

To highlight the importance of a complete application, PoJs suggested a special recognition for the outstanding submissions. Accordingly, three best applications will be honored in this ceremony.

Because our task does not end by announcing couple of winners at this ceremony, but to ensure this exercise leads to establishing a strong culture of high-quality and competence in logistics sector in Sri Lanka.

Logistics industry in Sri Lanka lacks an explicit governing structure or strong statutory leadership. We established a National Day for logistics in Sri Lanka last year, with a vision to amalgamate all statutory bodies, connected with Logistics industry and synergize this indispensable sector.

It would resolve some of burning problems in the country including the increasing cost of living. You will agree that logistics problems are, seen all over today, disrupting every person in the country.

The NLA provides all logisticians a fair and equal opportunity to display their forte and prove their contribution to the industry.

This will help the top performers, to win over the confidence of their customers, and encourage others, to move into the top tiers.

Dear applicants, we noted some of you would have scored even more, had you given due care when compiling your applications.

Because the PoJs could offer marks only for what you have claimed in the application, and not otherwise.

However, irrespective of the result, SLFFA highly appreciate those who came forward to join in this historical event.

The members of PoJs and the Scientific committee congratulate all the winners.

Yes, You made it - Well-done!

We invite the rest of the applicants, to make this exercise a good learning curve, and submit an inspiring application next time, while improving your business processes, leading to better results.

Let me conclude my speech with a Quote from Bill Gates,

I quote

“If you can’t make it good, at least make it look good.”

I unquote

Thank you