



Holden confirms NZ chief to lead local marketing after Harland exits

GM Holden confirms departure of executive director of marketing, Mark Harland, and announces a leadership restructure

NADIA CAMERON (CMO) 10 APRIL, 2018 12:10

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GM Holden has confirmed its New Zealand managing director will take up the ANZ marketing reins following the departure of Mark Harland from the automotive business.

Harland left GM Holden this week after spending a little over a year ago as its executive director of marketing. He had originally joined General Motors in 1987 and worked across Europe, the US, China and Singapore, leading as marketing and customer experience director of the GM Vehicle Sales Service and Marketing leadership team.

Harland is being replaced by current GM Holden and Isuzu Trucks New Zealand chief, Kristian Aquilina, who will now assume responsibility across all three roles.



Kristian Aquilina

The news comes amid reports that the brand experienced one of its worst local sales months in 20 years in February, [according to an article posted on Wheels magazine](#). The statement is based on preliminary sale data for new car sales, published by VFacts.

Harland joined the automotive company in 2016. During his tenure, he's credited with striking relationships with Surf Life Saving Australia and Mardi Gras and oversaw Holden's naming rights sponsorship of the NRL Holden State of Origin and inaugural NRL Holden Women's Premiership league.

"Mark brought a fresh perspective to Holden during a different period of transition," said Holden chairman and MD, Mark Bernhard, in a statement. "We thank him for his passion and wish him well on his future endeavours."

Aquilina has been with the General Motors group for more than 20 years, working across sales, marketing, product management and government relationships. He was appointed NZ chief in 2015.

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"Under Kristian's leadership the Holden brand and sales have continued to strengthen in New Zealand," Bernhard said. "Kristian's understanding of product, marketing, customers and the Australian motoring landscape is second to none. We are looking forward to Kristian advancing the Holden business in Australia."

Bernhard also stressed the group's belief that sales were going to improve.

"We're passionate about our future and confident that our sales will improve. Marketing is a key part to ensuring this," he said.

Aquilina also recognised the significant time of transformation for the GM Holden business. "We're establishing a new nameplate in Equinox and relaunching an Australian icon in the all-new Commodore," he commented.

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"Plus with our extensive SUV offering and Colorado, we've got exceptional products in all the right segments. I'm passionate about Holden and our products - they are the best we've ever had. My job is to bring people on the journey with us."

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