

Inframax profit tops \$500k

INFRAMAX Construction Ltd (ICL) has recorded a profit for the second straight year.

After recording a \$1.37million operating loss in 2011/2012, the Waitomo District Council-owned roading contractor registered a post-tax \$266,600 profit in 2012/13.

That's increased in the 2013/14 financial year to \$551,399.

Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna says the result is "outstanding".

"I noted after the 2012/13 profit result, that Inframax had turned the corner and the company was definitely heading in the right direction.

"That effort has continued into the 2013/14 financial year and the board and management have turned ICL into a very viable and competitive company with a bright trading future.

"I congratulate the board, management and most importantly the ICL staff on the respective roles they have played in the turnaround of the company's performance. This is a very satisfying outcome."

SIMPLE & SMART

Inframax employs more than 150 staff and was formed in 1999 after a merger between Te Kuiti-based Waitomo Civil Construction and New

Plymouth's Northgate Construction.

Mr Hanna credits the recent profit increase to "greater efficiencies and simple, smart contracting".

"In 2010, council replaced the entire existing board of ICL with one that possessed the right skills and our decision to fully back them was the right one to make," he says.

"The very sound working relationship that has developed at both the board and senior management level has underpinned the Inframax recovery."

Mr Hanna says the board has gone "above and beyond" to deliver what is best for the company.

"Our thanks go to our three directors Eric Tait (chairman), Craig Rowlandson and Earl Rattray. They are passionate about the future of ICL and work very well together as a team offering a range of skills that complement each other perfectly.

"To chief executive Chris Hayward and his management team and every person in the ICL team, thank you for all your efforts in achieving this end of year result."

FOCUS

To continue the upward trend, Mr Tait says ICL will continue to focus



ON THE UP: Inframax Construction Ltd (ICL) chairman Eric Tait (left) and Waitomo mayor Brian Hanna announced last week that the district council-owned entity had increased its profits during the 2013/2014 financial year.

on best business practice, customer service, health and safety and staff wellbeing.

"These areas are the focus for all involved, from staff to the board chairman," he says.

"We also have to continue to control costs of labour and fuel will increase through the drop in the New Zealand dollar.

"We don't need flashy gear but we need to be astute and look at the opportunities in front of us."

For the past four years, the ICL investment has been recorded at a zero value in council's books, but a recent independent valuation commissioned by WDC confirmed a company net of debt value in the range of \$2.6-\$3.8 million.

AGM attendees vote to keep tourism group

DESPITE a declining role in promoting North King Country tourist hotspots, Destination Waitomo (DW) co-chairman Bruce Tobeck says the volunteer organisation still has an important role to play.

DW administers the official travel and tourism website for the Waitomo and Otorohanga districts providing information about attractions, accommodation and restaurants from Mokau to Kawhia.

But with the stability of Waikato's official tourism website Hamilton & Waikato Tourism and the emergence of community development group Tere Waitomo Inc, Mr Tobeck says some of DW's roles have begun to "diminish".

And although a committee meeting was held in July, to consider the organisation's purpose moving forward, a decision was made at last week's annual meeting that it was "essential" to continue operating.

"We believe Destination Waitomo is still very important as an organisation to lobby on behalf of local tourism operators with local councils and to act as a go-between for the operators here and the Hamilton-Waikato Regional Tourism Office," says Mr Tobeck.

"We also have to maintain and update our very active website

featuring a photo gallery which members of the nationwide media can access if they want photos to promote the area.

"So everyone that is currently involved strongly believes Destination Waitomo is still a very useful vehicle for local tourism operators and that is where we will now focus our efforts."

RETURNING COMMITTEE

Also announced at the AGM was existing committee members Mr Tobeck and Nick Andreef (co-chairs), Lorrene Te Kanawa, Elizabeth Cowan, Celina Yapp and Gordon Hewitson will stay on for another year.

Mr Tobeck says the committee welcomes any support or new ideas that benefit the local community.

"If there is something we think is worthwhile following through in terms of marketing or joint ventures with the Hamilton-Waikato Regional Tourism Office then we will definitely act on it," he says.

"But right now, from a Destination Waitomo and tourism operators' point of view, we are looking forward to a very busy summer season."

For more information, visit [Destination Waitomo's website - waitomo.org.nz](http://DestinationWaitomo.org.nz)



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