



## **New Marine Travel Lift for the Bay of Islands**

A new 50-tonne specialist marine travel lift has been purchased from the United States and has commenced operations at Ashby's Boatyard in the Bay of Islands.

The \$350,000 investment substantially increases the size of boats capable of being handled at the Far North Holdings Ltd-owned boatyard and hardstand facilities at Opuā.

The new travel lift replaces a 31-tonne lift which has serviced the boatyard for close to 15 years. The old lift has been sold to private interests in Tahiti. When first purchased second-hand by former boatyard owner Jim Ashby in 1995, the lift-out facility was the first specialist marine travel lift to be brought into operation in the Bay of Islands. It replaced a gantry crane and portable cradle system.

The boatyard operation was purchased by Far North Holdings Ltd in 2003 and now lifts in excess of 900 vessels a year.

Company chairman Tony Norman says the new lift is a continuation of the policy to maintain a high level of investment in infrastructure in the Bay of Islands to encourage private sector investment in associated marine servicing activities.

"The former travel lift is 20 years old and has carried out thousands of hours of lifting work. It has moved an estimated 12,500 vessels sourced from within New Zealand and from destinations offshore. Its age, and more importantly the fact that boats are getting larger and heavier, lead to the new investment.

"The new travel lift purchased from the manufacturers in Wisconsin USA should provide for boaties needs well into the future. Apart from the obvious increase in size and lifting capacity, the new machine also has a number of improved operational and safety features," Mr Norman says.

"Developing the maritime servicing sector in the Bay of Islands is a key focus for the company. We want to deliver world class facilities and services at Opuā and the new travel lift is another step forward.

(more)

(2)

"The markets we are servicing continue to grow and we need to keep pace with the challenge. In addition to supporting local needs the new travel lift enhances services to the international cruising yachts that use the Bay of Islands as their preferred port of entry to New Zealand," he says.

The company had already made a number of recent improvements at the boatyard including new ablutions, new cradles, a BBQ deck, waiting berth, improved power reticulation, dust extraction equipment and improved security arrangements.

---

Further inquiries to:-

Tony Norman PH 021 421052 or Chris Galbraith PH 09 4025659