

Sealaska mum on shuffle

Sealaska Corporation's new president Sam Demmert reserved comment on circumstances surrounding the removal last week of John Borbridge, Jr. as the region's president.

Borbridge was dismissed by a 12 to 6 vote of the corporation's board along with general counsel Donald Beighle and finance director Ronald Gamero during executive session July 14.

Reached by the Tundra Times at press time, Demmert, who has taken leave as president of Yak-tat-Kwaan (Yakutat) corporation, stated, "I think it is best at this point to reserve comment for our board chairman."

Sealaska board chairman Byron Mallott was reportedly enroute to Juneau Tuesday evening and could not be reached.

According to the brief statement issued by Sealaska, Borbridge remains on the board of directors of Alaska's largest regional Native corporation in numbers of shareholders.

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Close observers of Sealaska activities have noted that Bordbridge's influence in establishing corporate policy has been on the wane since he was replaced as board chairman by Mallott two years ago.

Some reports have indicated the replacement of Bordbridge may be more directly related to developments in a lawsuit involving Sealaska and former management of Alaska Brick Company, a diversified building products firm and ocean-going barge line.

After acquiring Alaska Brick for more than \$6 million in 1977, and then spending an additional \$3 million to increase the firm's concrete production capability, Sealaska reported an operating loss of nearly one-quarter million dollars in its 1977 annual report.

The loss was partially blamed on "unplanned changes" in some key management positions.

Mallott confirmed that Sealaska agreed to a \$1.8 million out-of-court settlement in a lawsuit stemming from the management shuffle.

Bordbridge has not been available for comment.