

# Year's end mixed bag for Native corporations

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Doyon Ltd. had good news for shareholders attending an informational meeting in Anchorage earlier this month. According to Morris Thompson, president of the Fairbanks-based firm, Doyon

expects net earnings of about \$6.9 million, and an increase in dividend distribution since new shareholders were added in the last year. The new shareholders include children born after the 1971 Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, and eligible individuals who missed the initial enrollment.

Stockholders holding 100 shares will receive a check for \$185, while elders age 65 and older will receive \$370 under a special stock program approved by the Doyon board last year. The distribution represents a 16 percent increase over last year's dividends.

Thompson said one of the best developments for the corporation was that Doyon attained 100 percent ownership of Doyon Drilling, a successful oilfield subsidiary which contributes about \$4.5 million to the parent company. In addition to entering its second alliance partnership with BP Exploration on the North Slope, Doyon Drilling now has 54 percent shareholder hire, including four shareholders who hold the position of "driller," the top slot on a rig. Thompson said Doyon initially invested \$2 million in the subsidiary and has received \$4-6 million in return.

"1994 looks pretty solid for Doyon," said Thompson. "We have had 10 roustabout training programs and most of the graduates have taken positions on the drilling rigs."

Other Native corporations issued less rosy financial reports. Bethel-based Calista Corp. will post a nearly \$1 million loss for

1993, charged mostly to its subsidiary, Alaska Newspapers, Inc., a chain of rural newspapers. NANA Corp., based in Kotzebue, is reporting only its third loss in 20 years of operations. According to media sources, a \$1.8 million loss is being written off due to the one-time expense of shutting down several unprofitable ventures, and because low mineral prices affected the NANA-owned Red Dog zinc mine.

In addition to its earnings, Doyon had other good news to report. It became the first Native corporation to have its sale of net operating losses (NOLs) approved by the Internal Revenue Service. As a result, the corporation has:

- created a \$35 million permanent fund for shareholders;
- created a \$12 million fund for investment in new businesses, with tourism being an area of strong interest; and
- created an operating fund for day-to-day business activities.