

# EARTH STABILITY

a company fulfilling promises

TIM ALLEN is a firm believer in delivering on his promises. It's something that's driven him throughout his civil engineering career, including one key goal he would achieve many years later than expected.

**“**In 1998 I received a Contractor's Federation scholarship. I was awarded \$5000 toward course costs for the New Zealand Certificate in Engineering (Civil) I was studying at Unitec,” says Tim.

“I went to Wellington to receive my award, and in my acceptance speech set myself the goal of running my own successful civil engineering business.”

It just took him slightly longer to achieve than he originally anticipated, yet after starting his civil and geotechnical engineering company, Earth Stability, in May 2012, he's now where he always thought he would be.

Earth Stability specialises in the maintenance, prevention and repair of slips, and offers a wide range of technologies to provide “stylish but cost-effective” solutions.

“Our goal is to be the ‘go to’ guys within the industry, with a reputation for solving our clients’ problems,” he says. “New Zealand's a small place and I didn't want my business to be ‘just another contractor’.

“I like to think we're forging our own area of expertise, and that we're open to collaborating with our competitors on future projects.”

Tim believes the range of experience he gained with previous employers prepared

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him well for starting his own business.

“I've worked for some exciting and incredibly successful companies over the past 15 years. So in many respects, they made it look too easy.”

And although Tim's helped manage everything from tunnelling under the Thames to a £4 billion expansion project at Heathrow Airport, he cherishes early workplace memories of contracting firm Terrene/Ministry of Works, where his father Bill Allen was a partner.

“I was the kid who'd get picked up from school in a truck with a digger on the back. During the holidays, I might ride in its cab behind the driver for eight or nine hours on site - which you definitely couldn't do now.”

But even after working for them all through college, Tim still wasn't sure if it was the right sector for him.

“I guess what sealed it was when I spent

nine months working in a warehouse. I realised I needed a formal qualification to get ahead.

“I thought about an engineering degree at university, but I chose the NZCE thanks to my early work experiences with my dad and his work partner.”

Because the three-year NZCE course had a practical experience component, Tim found it garnered a lot of respect overseas, particularly the UK.

“I used to raise a few eyebrows turning up in my ripped jeans, when engineers there wore trousers and a collar. But showing you aren't scared to get your hands dirty also proves you're passionate about the work, and committed to the industry,” he says.

This willingness to get stuck in has been carried over into his own company. He often takes on challenging projects that others won't, which stands his business

in good stead. Having an outstanding crew also helps.

“I wouldn't have a business without the right guys working for me. But I also accept that, one day, my skilled team might decide to branch out on their own,” he says.

Tim is philosophical about sharing skills within his chosen industry. He sees skills-sharing and collaboration as the key to his industry's success, and is keen to give more students the site experience he gained at their age.

“I hope that other small and medium sized companies will increasingly draw upon our respective strengths, share our skills, and get jobs done. We can all benefit from that.”

It's a great philosophy that will help see a new generation of skilled civil engineers come through the ranks, and fulfil their own career promises. 