

OKA's doing better than ok

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One minute it was boldly taking Western Australian off-road vehicle manufacturing knowledge to the world and the next, seemingly, [OKA Motor Company](#) was gone.

But despite appearances to the contrary, OKA is alive and well.

And, unlike other WA-born companies taken over by Malaysian interests – Eagle Aircraft, Wave-Master International, and truck body building company Howard Porter – the involvement of a Malaysian businessman in OKA helped ensure its success.

OKA executive director [Arthur Gold](#) said that since its listed days the company had left its Welshpool premises and consolidated operations in Bibra Lake.

That move from Welshpool fed a lot of the speculation that the company had gone forever.

Mr Gold said that, in hindsight, he would have made more of an effort to let people know the company had moved, given the old site was in an area well travelled by those who were typical OKA customers.

Not that the confusion over OKA's existence has hurt its sales.

Mr Gold said the company had more orders than it could fill and was not looking for more work.

Those orders are coming from around the world.

“The hardest part of my job, considering these vehicles sell for about \$150,000 a throw, is to tell someone they can't buy a vehicle because we have too many orders,” Mr Gold told WA Business News.

OKA has 96 vehicle orders for the United Arab Emirates dating back to its listed days that it is yet to fill.

The company plans to grow its workforce from 16 to 54 by the middle of next year, which will allow it to grow its production from 100 vehicles a year to about 250 a year.

Mr Gold said the company did not plan to grow production beyond that because of the “paperwork” involved in producing a vehicle.

OKA started in 1986 with a plan to create a durable off-road vehicle.

In the early days the company pursued the mining market, with some forays into the military sector.

These days its main market is the campervan and tour bus market.

Mr Gold said if it had not been for the involvement of Malaysian businessman Paari Vell OKA may not have survived.

Mr Vell bought OKA out from the listed entity and re-established it as a private company in WA.