

EU: Would you like to tell about yourself? (education, qualifications, experience)

James Rockall: I have 30 years of experience in the global energy sector. I began my career working for Shell International in positions in The Netherlands and Venezuela in project management and business development. Prior to joining the WLPGA in July 2003, I worked as a Director of the global energy group ALSTOM SA. In 2004 I became CEO of the WLPGA and in that time I have tripled the organisation in terms of membership and revenue. My educational background is in chemical engineering – I have a Master's degree with Honors from the University of Nottingham in the UK. I also have an MBA from the Institute of Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland.

EU: What is the motive behind setting up of WLPGA?

JR: The WLPGA was created in 1987 in Dublin, Ireland in response to a growing need from the global industry to have a coordinated voice on issues relevant to the sector. Initially designed around an annual event – the World LPG Forum, the WLPGA has grown now to be a fully fledged trade association representing the LPG sector on a range of issues. Our activities are both outward focused – e.g. working with governments for suitable regulatory environments and also inward – e.g. promoting operational and commercial good practices. We have grown to now represent over 300 organisations operating in more than 125 countries in the world.

EU: What is most important in your company's core values and vision?

JR: WLPGA addresses an enormous range of challenges and opportunities. The most important aspects of our activities are defined in our current three-year strategic plan and are: To advocate LPG as part of the solution to future energy challenges; the support efficient and responsible LPG business and to encourage innovation & support business growth.

EU: What do you enjoy the most about working in your organisation?

JR: LPG fuels the lives of half the planet - no other fuel can claim this. Importantly, LPG is a clean, low carbon fuel, so not only do we fuel lives, we improve lives and we provide comfort and quality of life across all income segments. Knowing this and understanding that my efforts and that of the WLPGA team are contributing to this every day is the most rewarding aspect of my work.

EU: What's the biggest challenge facing by LPG industry today?

JR: The LPG industry fuels the daily lives of half the planet but still represents just 2% of primary energy. Our biggest challenge is lack of awareness. In mature markets, energy decarbonisation is being pursued by policy makers and fossil fuels are being phased out. As one of the lowest carbon fossil fuels LPG should be part of the solution to a low carbon world. In developing markets LPG can contribute to cleaner air, lower health burdens and increased economic productivity. In all cases we need to have our voice heard against a backdrop of renewable energy solutions which in many cases are not sufficiently mature or practical.

EU: Would you like to share structure, working and chapters of WLPGA around the world?

JR: WLPGA is based in Paris, France with a team of 10. Within the team we have a focus on communications; events



The Covid-19 crisis makes global trade a challenge: James Rockall

Exclusive interview of CEO of World LPG Association

■ By Mustafa Tahir



and strategy. Our membership is organised in working groups to address the strategic issues, organised under three principal goals:

Advocacy; Business Improvement; Innovation and Growth. From a governance perspective, we have a Board of Directors, consisting of 11 individuals representing the global membership. We also have an Industry Council of 40 leading organisations that steer our strategy and allocation of funding. While we number some 300 organisations as members, any staff from member companies can be involved in working groups or have access to WLPGA intelligence or support. This makes the real reach of our activities incredibly broad, impacting many tens of thousands in the global LPG industry.

EU: Share your views about LPG industry in Pakistan especially potential and challenges?

JR: Pakistan has a per capita consumption of LPG of around 5.5kg per year, putting it at the low end of countries

in the region. For example India is at 18kg/yr; China is at 40kg/yr and Sri Lanka is at 21 kg/yr. This would indicate an opportunity for growth, particularly since Pakistan does not have an abundance of natural gas.

Over the past three years Pakistan has shown an LPG consumption growth of c. 5.5% compared to an average regional growth (Asia-Pacific) 8.5%. With these figures in mind, and given the average purchasing power in Pakistan compared to its neighbours, it is not unreasonable to imagine a doubling of the Pakistani LPG consumption. What are the barriers to any increase? Often these barriers are policy related. We have seen in many countries that encourage the use of LPG, perhaps with mandates or grants or specific policy support that LPG consumption can grow given the right policy environment. WLPGA has a multitude of case studies and policy examples that can be shared with the industry in Pakistan to identify how to grow the market in a safe and sustainable way.

EU: Any future plans, upcoming events and developments of WLPGA?

JR: The current Covid-19 crisis in the world makes traditional business meetings and events a challenge. However WLPGA continues to plan for the biggest ever gathering of the LPG industry in Dubai from Oct 31st – Nov 5th in the form of LPG Week.

This event will bring together the full LPG Value Chain under one roof for one week to debate and do business. In addition to events, WLPGA continues the implementation of its three-year plan, focusing on growing markets for cooking, for transport, for power generation and many other segments.

Finally a large effort is being made to demonstrate the credibility of sourcing up to half of global LPG demand from renewable sources by 2050 – something that will position LPG as a low or near-zero carbon fuel for the future. ■