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Mr. Naresh Gupta, Sr. Vice President
& Head-Industrial Services,
IRCLASS Systems And Solutions Pvt. Ltd. (ISSPL)



The World Leader in
Thermal Imaging Cameras

Ensuring 'A' Class Quality of Projects

IRCLASS Systems And Solutions

Indian Register of Shipping is recognized for its technical competence and experience in the maritime sector for more than 40 years. IRCLASS Systems And Solutions Pvt. Ltd. promoted by Indian Register of Shipping, provides Inspection Services since 1980. This expertise along with excellent safety record has enabled it to diversify into Third Party Inspection and Certification Services under IRCLASS Systems And Solutions Pvt. Ltd. IRCLASS helps its clients to find solutions to complexities associated with Quality, Health, Safety & Environment during CAPEX & OPEX stages of the entire project lifecycle starting from Planning, Designing, Procurement, Manufacturing, Construction, Testing, Commissioning & Operation. It has a network of 48 global offices - 24 in India and 24 outside India. Mr. Naresh Gupta, Senior Vice President & Head-Industrial Services gives a ringside view of IRCLASS and its capabilities and achievements in an interview with Mr. P.K. Balasubramanian. Excerpts:



Mr. Naresh Gupta
Sr. Vice President &
Head-Industrial Services,
IRCLASS Systems And Solutions
Private Limited (ISSPL)

[Mr. Naresh Gupta holds a Bachelor of Technology in Mechanical Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay. He is an 'Approved Valuer' and Life Member of the Institution of Valuers of India. He is also a 'Chartered Engineer' from Institution of Engineers India. He represents Inspection Bodies at National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB) Board.

Mr. Gupta began his career in 1983, working as Graduate Engineer Trainee, and then as Assistant Manager - Marketing (Special Projects) at Larsen & Toubro Limited in Mumbai. In 1991, he joined Caprihans India Limited as Senior Manager - Projects & Corporate Planning. He was promoted as General Manager in 1995, in charge of defining and implementing long-term business plans for the Group. In 1998 he joined Dodsall Limited, Mumbai, as General Manager - Business Development. His last assignment before joining ISSPL was with Bureau Veritas as Regional Chief Executive, South Asia Region for Industry & Facilities Division.]



Q. Could you give an overview of IRS?

Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) is an international ship classification society. The not-for-profit entity was founded in 1975. IRS is a member of the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS).

Q. IRCLASS is a well-known name in third party inspection and certification. What precisely is your niche?

IRCLASS Systems and Solutions Pvt.

Ltd. (ISSPL) is an organization promoted by Indian Register of Shipping. The two companies, IRS and ISSPL form the brand IRCLASS, which provides survey, inspection and certification services to the maritime and industrial sectors. IRCLASS is committed to promoting safe and environment-friendly engineering practices through its services to the business community.

Q. How would you describe the activities of your Industrial Services Division?

IRS Industrial Services were started in 1980 and Certification Services in 1985. Our Industrial Services are accredited to



ISO 17020 as type 'A' inspection body by NABCB, while our Systems Certification Services are accredited to ISO 17021 by NABCB. Our GML Services are accredited to ISO 17025 by NABL while our Training Services are accredited to NABET for training courses.

Our service portfolio covers Design Review / Appraisal, Third Party/Second Party Inspections, Expediting, Vendor Assessment / Capability Audits, Welders Qualification as per ASME, Material Testing, Instrumentation Calibration & Failure Analysis, Periodic / Statutory Inspection of Tanks / Vessels, Calibration, Detail Project Report, acting as Independent, Owner's / Lender's Engineer, Project Management Assistance, Field Quality Assurance, Quantity Verification & Certification, Construction Site Safety Coordination & Surveillance, Risk & Safety, Qualitative & Quantitative Risk Assessment, Condition assessment / Monitoring, RLA & FFS Analysis, Fire & Electrical Safety Audits, Energy & HVAC Audits, Failure Analysis, etc. We also impart training in Fire & Electrical Safety, Awareness on Condition Assessment / Monitoring, Renewable Energy and Non-Destructive Testing.

Q. Which are the industry segments you serve and who are your major clients?

Broadly, the sectors we serve include Oil & Gas, Power, Process, General Engineering, Energy & Utilities, Buildings & Infrastructure, Ports & Materials Handling, Government & Defence, etc. In Oil & Gas, we serve the upstream, mid-stream and downstream segments. In ONGC Mumbai, we are associated with the life extension of well platforms Project 1 & 2 involving modification/re-vamping of well platforms. These were started in Aug 2016 and are still on-going. In L & T Hydrocarbon project, we were involved in 3rd party inspection of Bassein development process platform



The Glass House at Kundwada (Lakeside) in Davangere constructed for Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Ltd. IRCLASS scope of work was third party inspection of civil, steel & glass façade construction which was completed in 3 years. The total steel used was 120 T.

in 15 countries. It went on from Feb 16 to Dec. 17.

In Oil & Gas Midstream, we are currently involved in 3rd party inspection of 48" subsea crude and product pipeline and 5 SPMs at Dangote, Nigeria. This was started in Jan 18 and is still ongoing. We have also done projects for HPCL during 2015-17. This was 3rd party inspection of rerouting of black oil pipeline (Mumbai-Pune-Solapur pipeline). We also accomplished an assignment for Scott & Wilson involving inspection of 9.6 km of submarine pipeline diversion works under Colombo port expansion project during 2009-2012. Coming to Downstream, we have done several projects for Dangote Refinery, Nigeria (on-going); Optech Engineering, Tanzania; BPCL, Essar, Uhde India, etc. to name a few. At Optech it is design review and stage-wise inspection of 5,000 m³ LPG storage horton-spheres. The BPCL project involved 3rd party inspection of hydrant refueling systems of 7 km ATF pipeline, while at Essar, it was TPI of pressure vessels at vendors' place for the Vadinar Refinery Expansion Project. For Uhde India, it was design review & site QA/QC of floating roof tank for ammonia storage at -35 deg. C.

Q. Could you give brief details of your contribution to the Power Sector?

In Power, we are involved in all sourc-

es including thermal, nuclear, solar, wind and hydro-electric. We have an on-going contract with BHEL Trichy for TPI of boiler & structural components. Similarly, we do TPI of components, equipment and raw materials for Malwa TPP Phase II project for L&T Power. Shriram EPC, Reliance Infra, Ideal Energy & Projects are our customers from this segment. From the nuclear power, we serve BARC, IoT Infrastructure, L & T, Hindustan Dorr Oliver, ITER and Punj Lloyd. For ITER we do TPI of component cooling water system, chilled water system and heat rejection system. For Punj Lloyd we do TPI of mechanical, electrical, instrumentation, piping & structural steel items. We have a number of assignments from the renewable energy segment. Vikram Solar, Mahindra Susten, Azure, Sterling & Wilson, McNally Bharat, Energon Solar, Adani Power, Reliance Sun Technique, Siemens Gamesa, Vestas, etc. are some of our customers. We are also involved in Power transmission & distribution. At PGCIL, Bangalore we do site QA/QC for 400 kv DC transmission lines. For Mundra Port, we did inspection of transformers, cables, panels & switch-gear at manufacturers' end.

Q. You also have a prominent presence in Buildings & Infrastructure. Right?

You are right. Building & Infrastructure is a very important segment for us.

The spectrum covers roads & bridges, residential & commercial complexes, airports, irrigation, ports & waterways. The scope of our work includes QA/QC of buildings & bridges. Some of our customers in this category are Afcons, JNPT, PCMC-Pune, DDA Delhi, CIDCO, MMRDA, ONGC Bhavan-Dehradun, Reliance Corporate Park-Ghansoli, DUDC-Davangere, Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation, HCC-Bogibeel Double Decker Bridge, Mumbai International Airport, Cochin Shipyard, IWAI, various ports in India, etc.

Q. Do you also serve strategic sectors like defence?

Yes of course. We are working through Bharat Dynamics and are engaged in inspection of electrical & electronic items as well as booster & sustainer liners for Akash Missiles. We are also involved in inspection of rocket motor casing for program 'AD' which is ongoing from 2014.

We are involved in warship material inspection at various vendors in India for GRSE, Kolkata. And at Mazagon Dock, Mumbai we do site QA/QC during submarine fabrication. We also interact with DRDO on loading system projects.

Q. Which is the most unique project accomplished by you?

It is perhaps the Glass House constructed at Kundwada (Lakeside) in Davangere whose project owner is Karnataka Rural Infrastructure Development Ltd. The project took three years for completion (July 2015 to March 2018). Our scope of work was third party inspection of civil, steel & glass façade construction works at site.

The length of the structure is 94.24 m; width 55.82, dia. of central circle 36.64 and the height of the structure is 18 m. 58 Pile foundations were used. And the total quantity of steel used was 120 ton. The type of glass used was 12 mm

and 8 mm thick toughened glass. The facility is used for conducting agricultural exhibitions and for public use as garden/park.

Q. Which is the most outstanding project you have done?

It is the Chenab Bridge being constructed for the Northern Railway - the world's highest railway bridge. The project was started in 2005 and its expected completion is in Dec. 2019.

The key technical data of the bridge goes like this:

Deck height (above the river) : 359 m
Bridge length: 1,315 m including the 650 m long viaduct on the northern side
Arch span: 467 m
Arch length: 480 m

Our scope of work includes independent third party project quality monitoring of civil foundations and steel structures at both fabrication yards and project site.

Q. Your business is highly people oriented. Could you enlighten us on your people strength?

We have a large pool of qualified, experienced and dedicated people with proven engineering mettle - 360 of them. They are hand-picked from different streams and disciplines like mechanical, electrical, metallurgy, civil, structural engineering, instrumentation and so on and trained to fit our competency matrix.

Our qualification process is very stringent. They also acquire additional qualifications from AWS, API, ASNT, NACE, etc.

Q. What's the completion period of each project?

It is difficult to predict. It can be anywhere between a few weeks to a few months, depending on the volume and magnitude. To give you an example, The Chenab Bridge project, the world's

highest railway bridge started in 2005, is still going on. We expect to complete it by end-2019. But in every project we try to save time, money and avoid reworking.

Q. What must be the head count of inspection assignments you have completed so far for various industry segments?

We must have accomplished some 40,000 contracts, big and small, so far. And on an average we complete about 1,00,000 inspection interventions per year.

Q. What are the challenges involved in your line of business?

Fragmented Market, pressure on price, young engineers not coming forward for core industry sectors, market dynamics like the slowdown experienced in the power sector investments, etc. are some of the challenges we have to wade through. However, we are quite agile, flexible and trim fit and resourceful to face them. Such bottlenecks seldom affect us.

Q. These days everyone talks of 'Make in India'. What's your catalytic contribution to 'making in India' with inbuilt quality, reliability and safety?

We are commissioned to inspect, assess or monitor quality, compliance, reliability and safety in projects. And we commit this.

Q. How crucial is safety in buildings and construction?

Safety is of paramount importance in plant & equipment, buildings and construction. Material testing and failure analysis of equipment and utilities has become an absolute must. NDT, both conventional and advanced, has become necessary in many industries and applications. Pressure vessels are periodically inspected for safety. Of



The world's highest railway bridge (359 m above the river) under construction at Chenab. IRCLASS is involved in third party project quality monitoring of civil foundations and steel structures at both fabrication yard and project site. The project started in 2005 is expected to be completed in end-2019.

late, multinational banks, among others, have become precautionous of fire safety and electrical safety. We do safety audit in buildings and construction sites. Safety of workmen in construction sites is a great concern.

We also impart training in 'Safety during Construction' for the benefit of all concerned.

Q. How will the role of IRCLASS get redefined in the wake of the new fillip to economy and the impetus given to infrastructure development in the country?

We are quite upbeat about the present and the future market. People are be-

coming more and more concerned about quality, safety and reliability. Manufacturers too are quite conscious of the functional quality of the end-products which do conform to specifications. The only things we need to improve further are the finish & packaging.

Companies are assessing the condition of existing plants.

We find new constructions are more reliable. We play the regulatory part to ensure safety of LPG bullets and pressure vessels.

Q. Where will you be five years hence?

Five years hence our turnover should

grow three-fold. Our employee strength should also go up to about 1000 people.

We cannot grow with the existing products & services and markets. We have to look at new products and newer markets. We are a new entrant in the transmission line. Thermal power is losing its prominence. So we have made forays into renewable energy, especially solar.

We need to have more and more experts to handle specialized fields. In order to serve the discerning customer tomorrow, we need to continue high level of compliance, integrity and customer centricity. We have to gear up to meet these emerging challenges. ■