



James Greaney Celebrating 25 Years of Service

James Greaney celebrates 25 exciting and successful years working at the coal face of a constantly evolving industry that has gone through many changes in many countries around the world. James tells us about his incredible journey, that has taken him to nearly every continent, and the many challenges he has faced and the many successes he has experienced.

James, 25 years! Tell us how it all started. You must have some great memories to look back on?

It's hard to believe where 25 years have gone. There have been so many great memories along the way. Many journeys to overseas locations, getting married, establishing a family, setting up an office in the US, and dealing with so many cultures. I have had the support of my colleagues, and my beautiful wife and family. Without their help, I could not have reached such highs and achieved so much.

I remember the first day joining SEL, back in 1995, meeting with Mr. Shanahan Senior and Junior at the "White House" in Monkstown, Dublin, Ireland. I was initially hired as the Lead Engineer on the construction of four power plants for GE in the UAE. I was briefed on the HSE goals, the company proposal and the key personnel in the company who I would work alongside.

You have travelled extensively as Shanahan expanded around the Globe but also at home in Ireland. How did that evolve?

In 1997, I moved back to head office to take up a role as Manager for International Projects. This was also the year I got married to my wife, whom I had met in Abu Dhabi. My role was to promote our services and develop our relationship with MHI Japan. I remember learning about the four projects in China with Westinghouse, Dandong, Dalian, Ligang, and Yangzhou. This was part of my training to be a Sales Engineer. Within six months, I made my first trip to Takasago, the home of MHI's global gas turbine facility, to meet our customers and discuss our role on the AES MT Stuart project in Australia. It was a month-long trip, during which I travelled with MHI to Sydney, Brisbane, and Townsville. I formed a great bond with our colleagues from Japan, that continues to this day.

In 1999, I moved to the US to set up our operations in Orlando, Florida. This was a time when GE was producing 300 gas turbines each year. I remember attending our first POWERGEN conference in New Orleans and handing out all my business cards. There was such a demand for power at that time. Within six months, we had 70 engineers working in North America.

I have had many great achievements with SEL over my 25 years. Perhaps our most significant achievement was building the 400MW combined cycle gas turbine plant (CCGT) at Huntstown for MHI Japan and handing over the plant on time in September 2007. It was our first major construction contract, where we had responsibility for overall construction management of civil, mechanical and electrical and commissioning, along with full execution responsibility for all mechanical and electrical works (except for the tanks), and the air cooler condenser. We employed over 600 workers, along with a large group of subcontractors. It was an exciting time for us all, as we truly got to understand what it takes to plan, build, and commission a plant of this size.

Following our acquisition in 2009, we later took on the role of engineering, procurement and construction management for an 800MW CCGT plant in the Middle East, again with full responsibility for the in-country execution, engineering and plant commissioning. A challenging project, but one we delivered on time for the customer.

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The Medupi and Kusile projects in South Africa were big achievements over many years for Shanahan. Shanahan is still involved there.....

Yes indeed! Equally significant was our success in South Africa, where our company was hired to re-start the construction of the Medupi Project in 2011 (Boiler portion). I recall having to sacrifice a ticket for a Take That concert at Dublin's Croke Park, one I had planned with my family. I was probably more excited about the prospect of the Medupi challenge, given this was a 6 x 800MW coal plant with so much opportunity for us. It is hard to believe that we still have a significant presence on both the Medupi and Kusile projects, 8.5 years on from the day I arrived.

And the Philippines?

In 2018, I travelled to the Philippines with a core group of SEL Management to help our customer re-organise a Chinese EPC and find a path forward to achieve the earliest completion of this coal project. This was the second project in our history where we performed so well that the customer paid SEL an additional sum for our efforts to meet their goals.

What are you currently involved in, and your thoughts for the future?

My current challenge is a project we have in the UK, where we have taken on the lump-sum risk in a challenging environment. We have been working diligently to find a solution, and thankfully we have some of the best industry leaders on-site representing our company.

There have been so many changes to how we operate in our marketplace. However, the people remain the same, and relationships remain so vital to us all, both customer and employee. We continue to be a learning organisation and I thank you all for such great memories

What an incredible journey James has had so far! In the current Global climate which faces many issues, James will be sure to forge on through the many challenges ahead, bringing people together, uniting the highly skilled workforce and driving Shanahan to new heights.

Congratulations James on 25 incredible years. We are sure the next 25 will be even more rewarding and exciting for you!

