




WKC

Onwards and Upwards!
Celebrating 10 years of excellence



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Introduction



Tristan Coleman
Co-founder and Director

In May 2019, as we started our landmark 10th year of operations at WKC, we decided to publish a series of 10-year anniversary articles on our website.

Within these articles we have told some of the more personal and intimate stories behind the evolution of the business, going beyond the usual glossy brochures, websites and marketing materials that people normally see. It is, after all, the collection of individual and often personal stories that form a permanent and indelible mark on the personality and evolution of any organisation.

After receiving lots of positive feedback on the 10-year anniversary articles, we decided to turn them into this 10-year anniversary book. Our 10-year book now acts as a permanent reminder of all of the countless hours of effort it has taken to make the business a success, and reminds us of the importance of each individual's contribution to all that we have achieved.

We hope you enjoy these insights into the WKC story.
Onwards and Upwards!



Ian James
Co-founder and Director

It has been a really enjoyable and worthwhile process pulling our 10-year anniversary book together. We are so proud of all the individuals who have each contributed to our unique and successful story over the last 10 years. We have certainly put a few miles on the clock over the last decade, but wow, what a ride!

Too often we have let big milestones and landmarks slip past without pausing for reflection and celebrating our successes, but this book is our way of creating a permanent record that can be reflected on for many years to come. More importantly, marking our first 10 years in this way provides us with even more motivation to make the next decade just as exciting, successful and worthwhile.

We are so fortunate to not only get to work with amazing people all over the world, but to be making a real difference to protect and enhance the natural environment around us, contributing to a healthier, more diverse and sustainable future.



Stuart Lee
Non-Executive Director

Reading through this 10-year book reminds me of how I became involved as an investor and non-executive Director in WKC a decade ago. When I was first presented with the business plan that Ian and Tristan had put together, I was, like any responsible investor, somewhat sceptical. But ultimately, I was reassured by their belief in themselves, their track-record, and their overall strategy. Looking back now I am amazed at how accurate their projections were, and in fact, in so many ways our achievements have far exceeded those early aspirations!

Well done to the WKC team for pulling this book together. The many hours that have been put into retelling these stories is well worth it! Analogous to the WKC story itself, the final product is much greater than the sum of its individual parts! And of course well done to each member of the WKC team, past and present, for contributing in their own personal way to this truly special success story.



Beana Coetsee
Marketing Manager

In spite of the hard work, it has been so much fun interviewing staff members, retelling old stories, and digging through personal and company archives for old photos. Deciding which stories and pictures to include was sometimes not easy – many were best left until ‘after hours’ and so these were left on the editing room floor (for now)!

I would like to thank all the contributors for digging deep into their photo collections, which often gave us a peek into your personal lives as well, and agreeing to let us publish them, and of course for taking the time out of their busy day jobs to put together their pieces. It is truly an honour to be part of the ‘WKC Family’ and the inspiring journey thus far!

There is no doubt the final product was well worth the effort.

A True Abu Dhabi Success Story

Tristan Coleman and Ian James, WKC's Co-founders and Directors, describe how the first seeds of the business were sown in London, and the central role that Abu Dhabi has played - and continues to play - in the development of the business.

From Humble Beginnings

By **Tristan Coleman – Co-founder and Director**

■ An unlikely starting point, but perhaps the best place to start the WKC story is on a night out in a South West London pub! I had negotiated a transfer with my then company, URS Corporation (now AECOM), to transfer from their fantastic Wimbledon office to their up and coming business in Doha, Qatar, being led by their very talented new manager. It was in this bar that I happened to have a brief conversation with my soon to be partner in crime, Ian James, about my impending move to the Arabian Gulf. Ian had recently transferred to Abu Dhabi to help develop URS' EIA practice and asked me, quite casually, why I hadn't considered moving to Abu Dhabi instead. Now at that time I didn't really know much about

either Doha or Abu Dhabi, but it planted a seed in my mind that eventually resulted in me changing my transfer plans. Some months later I found myself sharing a small office with Ian on Istaqlal Street, Abu Dhabi and working on some really exciting projects in the region and having a fundamental role in building their EIA, air quality and noise practice. It was during these months that we first started talking about one day having our own business and with it having the autonomy to focus on some of the specialist areas that particularly interested us.

Our plans (well, more like day dreams!) were put on hold after both Ian and I joined the internationally renowned environment and sustainability consultancy firm, ERM. The autonomy that we had enjoyed to some extent at URS and dreamed of in our own future

business venture, was very much granted to us by ERM. We also had the added challenge of building the entire office from the ground up in terms of the administrative infrastructure, the technical team, a client list. Of course, fundamental to this was the financial and technical support given to us by ERM HQ based in London.

“Perhaps the best place to start the WKC story is on a night out in a South West London pub!”



Rob Gubiani surveying mangrove trees in Abu Dhabi, 2016



Marc Blanche in Tanzania,
near Lake Victoria, 2012

Third Time Lucky

The same ideas that Ian and I had previously had about running our own business resurfaced, and soon we realised that continuing to work in a large corporate environment was not going to allow us to



Ian on that fortuitous night out in Wimbledon, 2004



Tristan turning up for work in Abu Dhabi, 2005

expand on those ideas and put them into practice. Ian left ERM and moved with his family to South Africa in 2008; when I decided to resign in 2009 to join Ian on the freelancing circuit, with our new found freedom we had taken a very big step towards founding WKC. Very quickly our partnership as two freelancers

wasn't sufficient for us to access certain opportunities that we wanted to bid for, and so within a few short weeks, in early 2009 we made the final leap into forming a new consultancy firm. We knocked up a business plan, obtained some initial funding, rolled our sleeves up and the rest is history!



Ashley Meyer in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2018

Still Going Strong!

By Ian James - Co-founder and Director

Over the decade that followed we have added new services, offices, grown an enviable team of professionals in three different continents and are lucky to work within a truly global network of colleagues, clients and friends.

“We have had multiple acquisition offers over the years, which, while being very flattering, have brought into focus the fact that the best is yet to come!”

We have remained true to our core ideas; focussed on technical niche areas within the broader umbrella of consultancy services, expanded without over-expanding, and are particularly proud to have been able to retain our core management team, some joining us in our first year of operations! As we hit our 10th anniversary we have pulled approximately \$20M USD of revenues out of the markets



in which we operate, each year remaining profitable, and we have diversified our client base, sectors and geography. We've worked in more than 40 countries around the world, picked up multiple industry awards and our revenues are continuing to grow. We have had multiple acquisition offers over the years, which, while being very flattering, have brought into focus the fact that the best is yet to come!

In 2015 we were especially proud to be able to open an office in London, not too far from where our journey began in that South West London pub! We remain truly grateful for the central role that the Abu Dhabi has had in shaping our business, and providing a solid platform from which to expand the company internationally. Ian and I are both proud to still call the UAE our 'home from home'.



Reptile relocation project, Abu Dhabi, 2017

What's in a Name?

Tristan Coleman, Co-founder and Director, describes where the 'WKC' name comes from, a question asked countless times over the years, and shares some previously unseen early company logo ideas.

As one of the founders of WKC, one of the questions I get asked most often is, "where does the name 'WKC' come from?"

When Ian James and I decided to set up a new consultancy business back in 2009 we were perhaps slower than most entrepreneurs in deciding upon a name for our new company.

"Informal nicknames such as 'Red6', 'Teets' and 'Lou & Andy' were simply not going to cut it!"

There was a brief period in which we were essentially two collaborating free-lance consultants, and I must have lost count

of the number of ways that we informally referred to our 'partnership' during this time. As we consolidated our work activities into a recognisable company it became clear that we were going to have to decide upon a 'proper' name for the business. Informal nicknames such as 'Red6', 'Teets' and 'Lou & Andy' were simply not going to cut it!

We briefly traded under our first UAE sponsors' name, 'Tatweer' (the Arabic word for 'development'). But after having to change sponsors quite early on in our journey, creating our own identity then became even more critical.

Without any background in marketing, branding, and certainly without a budget to retain professional help, we came up with the very simple criteria of a) wanting something 'professional' sounding, and b) something that would be generic enough to allow us expand

into other services and sectors as the company grew.

We thought about using some combination of our names, 'Coleman James' for example, but Ian was adamant that we couldn't have a name that people would associate with a brand of mustard (for those not so familiar, Colman's is an old and very famous English brand of mustard and other sauces!).

Somehow, we came up with the idea of using our wives' maiden names. They seemed as good as any other and by then we had to come up with something pretty quickly! So that is how 'Karlsson-Ward' and then 'Ward-Karlsson' came about. We then modified the name to remove the less common, Scandinavian spelling of 'Karlsson', combined the two names, and added the most generic way to describe what we do (i.e. consulting), which gave us; 'WardKarlson Consulting'.



Lead ecologist, Donald Afan in
Jebel Ali Nature Reserve, Dubai, 2020



WKC staff proudly showing off the company logo before embarking on the Durban Adventure Race, South Africa , 2014

In 2012, looking to simplify our name, we started to abbreviate 'WardKarlson Consulting' to 'WKC Group' (or just 'WKC'). We got a professional in to help us with some simple branding and were fortunate to be able to purchase the 'wkcgroup.com' domain name. Nowadays all of our domestic operating companies use some variation of 'WKC' in their name, while our international trading and holding company retains the original 'WardKarlson Consulting' name.



Kovania Padayachee in the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2017

So, in a nutshell, this is how we got from high school-style nicknames to the 'WKC' brand in use today, narrowly avoiding being mistaken for a brand of mustard along the way!



Still showing off the company logo after the Adventure Race!

WKC Success Story; A View from Within



Richard Palmer, WKC Partner and UK Manager, shares some insights into his own personal journey in the company and, as WKC's first Abu Dhabi employee, offers some interesting perspectives on the growth of the company.

I first visited the UAE in 2006 after being sent by a former employer to carry out a noise study for the Abu Dhabi Airport Expansion project. My first impressions of Abu Dhabi were of a compact, clean city with a kaleidoscope of cultures and people living and working together. Abu Dhabi was and remains a dynamic and global city; a great place to do business and to develop your career.

The trip had left such an impression on me that in 2007 my wife and I made the decision to leave our London base and relocate to Abu Dhabi to pursue our careers and start a family.

I joined WKC's Abu Dhabi office in 2010 just weeks after it had been founded. I had worked with the founders previously and had complete faith in our combined abilities to implement

their vision for a new and innovative, technically focussed consultancy business. I was particularly drawn to the freedom and flexibility I would be given to grow and nurture a noise team; what would become one of WKC's key offerings alongside our other highly specialist consultancy services.

“Abu Dhabi was and remains a dynamic and global city; a great place to do business and to develop your career.”

Right from the outset the nature and size of projects we have worked on has been incredible. We certainly didn't lack ambition or confidence in our abilities to compete with the world's best.

These projects would see me travel to some interesting places over the following years including South Korea, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Japan, Spain, Indonesia, Thailand and Pakistan. Right from the outset the nature and size of projects we have worked on has been incredible. We certainly didn't lack ambition or confidence in our abilities to compete with the world's best. These projects would see me travel to some interesting places over the following years including South Korea, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Japan, Spain, Indonesia, Thailand and Pakistan.



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PEOPLE

Richard John Palmer

Occupation: Environmental engineer
Nationality: British
Age: 34

Rich, along with JM Laven-ture, have been a force to be reckoned with in local adventure races. After winning the Musandam Adventure Race and Wadi Adventure Race 3 group category, they would like to raise more awareness about outdoor activities and get more people involved, so more challenges are definitely in the pipeline.

What attracted you to the great outdoors?

I have my parents to thank for this. I was brought up in the rural landscape of South East England, and our summer holidays involved camping and hiking in the national parks of UK, from the Lake District to the Yorkshire Dales to the moors in Devon and Somerset. It's been ingrained on my psyche from an early age.

How long have you known your race partner JM?

I first met JM in a fitness class in Abu Dhabi in 2009. We were both gunning it and I think our competitive natures came through with each of us trying to outdo the other. By the end of the class it was obvious I was the better athlete, but JM wasn't bad either!

What makes adventure racing more exciting and challenging?

Adventure racing adds a factor of the unknown. In most events, you can map out a course in your head and know where you want to be at a certain point. However, with adventure racing, you also have to be ready

for the challenges the great outdoors throws in your way, be it the weather, physical obstacles or simply an error in navigation. I love the outdoors and if I can challenge myself physically in that environment, even better. The great thing about a multi-disciplinary sport is that you get to experience the outdoors from a different view point, like sitting in a kayak with bioluminescent plankton splashing up over your paddles or flying down a mountain side on your bike with a field of donkeys as your spectators.

How was the Musandam Adventure Race experience?

Unlike the year before, when torrential rain had obliterated the field, it was a mechanical bike malfunction that almost ended it for us. When we went to fit in JM's front wheel it was proving a little more challenging and after 50 minutes of messing around with it, we realised we had a fundamental decision to make: do we press on knowing we would have serious mobility issues or call it a day? To be honest it was a fine line, but the good thing about doing it as a team is you always have someone else to motivate you, and you don't want to be the person to let the team down.

How about the WAR3?

It was 10km, so in terms of adventure racing it's a baby, however it packs a lot of fun! The great thing is Wadi Adventure is a playground for outdoor enthusiasts and fitness buffs and it showed with the great range of people and abilities present. We ended up just going for it and although we are not the strongest swimmers, we managed to pull through on some of the other stages of the race. It was a lot of fun and we are looking forward to the next instalment.

These are tough races, how do you push yourself and each other when met with obstacles?

An old SAS motto is "train hard, fight easy." We apply the same type of attitude to racing. Many a time during training have I felt like stopping, but it's the attitude you adopt during training that pushes you on during the actual race.

What's the best and worst part of working in teams?

Working in a team means you've always got someone to motivate you or to work out a problem with. On the flip side, you've got to be comfortable with living in each other's pockets on multiple-day events and not be adverse to other people's body odour!



How do you train for a competition?

Adventure racing is multi-disciplinary and you work the muscles in different ways from one discipline to the next, so I try and apply this to my training programme by incorporating as many different types of activity as possible from running and swimming to CrossFit classes and bike interval training. Prior to the Musadam Race we did a lot of hill training at Al Wathba Endurance Village. I have two young girls now so I have to be pretty regimental when I train. I tend to keep to early morning, which is fine as after having two kids you forget what lie-ins are all about!

Do you have any advice for those wanting to get into adventure races and the outdoors, also training during the summer?

There are plenty of outdoor events in the region to suit all levels, therefore I would suggest taking on one of these either as a team or a relay team and see if you like it. As for training during the summer, swimming is great for muscular strength and cardio and there's the added advantage that you can keep cool. There are some great free swimming programmes on the internet.



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During Richard's time in Abu Dhabi, he's taken part in many adventure races...



Richard with some team members in Abu Dhabi

We have gradually broadened our market and the range of noise services that we offer to a point where WKC now has one of the strongest reputations for acoustic services in the Middle East, Africa and beyond. We have supported numerous clients in a broad range of sectors – renewables, oil and gas, transportation, to

name but a few – from environmental noise modelling and monitoring through to acoustic fatigue studies, building acoustics and PA system audibility.

Having spent some of my early consultancy years in London working on various urban

regeneration developments, I used these skills to diversify WKC’s environmental impact assessment (EIA) service from predominantly oil & gas projects to include large-scale master plan projects. We have since built a multi-disciplinary team able to support clients from pre-concept design all the way through to detailed design and construction.

“WKC now has one of the strongest reputations for acoustic services in the Middle East, Africa and beyond.”

These developments, often in highly desirable but environmentally sensitive locations, enable us to draw upon our full suite of specialist environmental services in order to identify the possible environmental constraints and opportunities a site may offer. We are now undertaking Strategic Environmental Assessments on a regional level, providing support to policy makers as well as private sector development teams.

After 12 fantastic years in Abu Dhabi I will soon be leaving my position as WKC's UAE manager and will return to London with the exciting prospect of taking over WKC's UK operations. As well as building upon our recent success in the UK market, I will be providing an important link between our UK clients and Middle East Projects.

While our strategy has evolved over the years, necessarily adapting to a growing business with new services, markets and clients, our

mission has remained remarkably consistent; to support developments that make our lives richer, healthier and more secure, while ensuring our environment remains protected for future generations to enjoy. We aim to be the first choice for those looking to engage an innovative, technically focussed environmental consultancy firm to help them achieve their development goals.

I would like to wish all of my WKC colleagues a happy 10th anniversary, and I look forward to

the next decade with the same optimism and excitement I started with. I remain thankful for getting to work with great people in interesting places all over the world, and perhaps above all, despite the demanding field we work in, having fun!

Please do not hesitate to contact Richard if you wish to find out more about WKC's noise services, our master planning EIA services, or our broader UK-based capabilities at Richard.Palmer@wkcgroup.com



Richard and the London WKC team, 2020



Richard congratulating a raffle winner at a WKC-sponsored networking event in Abu Dhabi

Pride of Africa

Marc Blanché, WKC Partner and Africa Manager, tells his story from his arrival in the business 10 years ago, how he has helped shape the business in Africa and beyond, through to what prospects excite Marc the most about the next 10 years.

I started my environmental consultancy career working for a well-known multinational engineering company in Durban, South Africa, specializing in mining and metropolitan infrastructure projects. My focus was predominantly on assisting with the delivery of environmental impact assessments (EIA's). Having exposure to a variety of specialist fields during the execution of these projects, I decided that I wanted to gain experience in a technical discipline.



"That's a big engine!"
Marc in East Africa, 2018

At around this time I was introduced to Dr Ian James by one of my clients who, along with his co-founder Tristan Coleman, had recently set up WKC and was looking to attract specialists to come and work in their newly established South African office. Very fortunately for me, this office was to be based on my doorstep, in my hometown of Ballito, on the outskirts of Durban.

Perhaps what stood out more than anything else was the focus on technical competence that the founders envisaged for WKC. I had never been exposed to such a high technical benchmark, not only in terms of the environmental sciences, but also of the processes and systems that can give rise to environmental impacts. WKC has always been unique in its belief that without having a good, scientific understanding of the causes of environmental impacts, you cannot offer true 'consultancy' services.

"I had never been exposed to such a high technical benchmark, not only in terms of the environmental sciences, but also of the processes and systems that can give rise to environmental impacts."

I was also excited to be tasked with preparing a business plan for WKC's South African business as part of my job application! This was an early sign of the entrepreneurial spirit that runs through WKC, one which is encouraged at all levels of the business. When offered a position I jumped at the opportunity, excited at the prospect of helping shape and steer the business in the coming years while continuing to learn about a range of industries and refine my technical skills.

“This was an early sign of the entrepreneurial spirit that runs through WKC, one which is encouraged at all levels of the business.”

Of course, starting a new business in any market without a local track-record is daunting. But what we lacked in brand recognition was more than made up for in a belief in our abilities to provide great value to our clients.

WKC also brought with it an impressive international client base and a growing team of dedicated and talented professionals.

“But what we lacked in brand recognition was more than made up for in a belief in our abilities to provide great value to our clients.”

I was quickly thrown into the world of international consulting where the projects were massive in terms of capital value, and the delivery deadlines were always “fast track”! With this international experience as our foundation, we were able to carve out a share of the African market, providing support for the mining and power sectors amongst others. Our experience of working on large financed projects, particularly in the Middle East within the framework of the IFC General EHS Guidelines and Performance Standards, allowed us an advantage over our local competition.



Marc with a client at a landfill site in Namibia, 2015

Over the years I have been fortunate to work on and run projects all over the African continent including the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Libya, Egypt, Eritrea, Kenya, Rwanda, Zambia, Tanzania, Mozambique, Lesotho and of course South Africa.



Marc's armed guard in Nigeria, 2013

The fondest memories always seem to come from the field trips! Highlights include an armed convoy in Nigeria concerned about pirates operating along the Niger River, remote northern Tanzania, where the local hyena population caused havoc with our field equipment, animated customs officials in the DRC suspicious of our air quality sampling equipment, the beauty of Lake Kivu in Rwanda, eating Jollof rice on a tropical beach in Ghana, and of course all the people we get to meet and work with on these multidisciplinary teams.



Marc on the shores of Lake Kivu, Rwanda, 2018



Lunch in Ghana, 2017



Marc in Tanzania, 2012

It has been truly amazing to have taken a leading role in growing the South African business from its humble beginnings in our “cupboard under the stairs” office, to now having a permanent presence in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg.



Enjoying Refreshments with a colleague in DRC, 2019



Marc, together with his South African team, 2019

“I am excited to be involved in our push to implement the latest in cutting-edge, innovative technologies to help improve the execution and quality of our consultancy work”

I am also particularly proud to lead WKC’s graduate engineer program. I have seen so much amazing talent emerge here in South Africa, helping WKC deliver some of the worlds biggest and most complex environmental consultancy projects all over the world, and some of whom have even become leaders in their own right in various parts of the business.

As we commence the next 10-year phase of the WKC story, I am excited to be involved in our

push to implement the latest in cutting-edge, innovative technologies to help improve the execution and quality of our consultancy work while keeping our prices amongst the most competitive on the market. Machine-learning, artificial intelligence are phrases we are using more and more... watch this space!

I have no doubt that the next 10 years will be filled with even more interesting projects, growth and many more great memories!

From Ballito Barman to International Environmental Consultant

Shaun Pearce, Abu Dhabi Office Manager recalls how he went from mixing cocktails in his hometown in South Africa, to travelling the world advising a broad range of clients on important environmental issues in an amazingly short space of time. This is a story of good old-fashioned hard work, commitment, and understanding the importance of putting clients' needs first!

Working my way through high school and university as a barman taught me the value of hard work and keeping your customers happy. Those skills, as much as my academic background in mechanical engineering, would turn out to be vital in helping me progress my career.

After finishing my studies, I found employment first in the municipal waste and wastewater industry, and thereafter in the oil recycling industry. Unfortunately, redundancy necessitated another stint back behind the cocktail bar in Ballito.



Shaun Pearce behind the bar in Ballito, South Africa, 2007

“Working my way through high school and university as a barman taught me the value of hard work and keeping your customers happy.”



Interview day, 2012

During this period I was put in touch with an old school friend, Marc Blanche, who had recently joined a new consultancy start-up and was looking for some temporary help with acoustic and flow induced vibration work for a large,

international oil and gas project they were involved with. This sounded like a great chance to use some of my mechanical engineering skills and, realising that it could lead to other opportunities, I jumped at the opportunity.

It was a squelching hot summers day in January, with humidity off the charts, when I finally met with WKC's co-founder Dr Ian James in a local coffee shop along the seafront in Ballito. Dressed up in a full suit and tie, shoes polished, and barely able to breath with the heat, I felt somewhat over-dressed as Ian casually strolled in wearing his favourite Ballito-style beach gear.

Understanding the importance of preparation, I'd done lots of research into vibration fatigue related services, only to be wrong-footed (again!) by being asked whether I would consider a broader role in their environmental consultancy business. Environment? Pollution? What would a mechanical engineer do in an environmental consultancy business?

What separates WKC out from other environmental consultancy firms is, amongst other things, the strategy of recruiting candidates from engineering disciplines. Following that up with intense on-the-job training in the more technical aspects of the

environmental consultancy sector has proved to be a winning combination.

Ian's general approachability, but perhaps above all, his unwavering optimism about the exciting business they were creating left me keen to get started! The prospect of travelling the world to work on some of the world's largest oil and gas and mining sector developments was also something that I could barely imagine, but was assured that that is exactly what would await me should I rise to the opportunities put in front of me.

“What separates WKC out from other environmental consultancy firms is, amongst other things, the strategy of recruiting candidates from engineering disciplines.”

In February 2012 I joined WKC as an Environmental Engineer. I quickly found myself exploring the fundamentals of chemistry, being exposed to various specialist computer models and going back to engineering first principles to develop emissions inventories from basic engineering data. This is where I found my niche. Fluid mechanics was always a strong point and understanding these principals and applying them to emissions inventories, and air quality issues in general, is where I excelled technically.

In my first year I found myself on my first journey into the wider African continent (and my first ever international flight!). Marc and I



Snaps of Tanzania from the Trip, 2012

headed to Tanzania to undertaking air quality and noise surveys as for an internationally financed project. We found ourselves on a turbo-prop airplane on our way to Mwanza on the edge of Lake Victoria. Seeing the peak of Kilimanjaro breaking through the clouds mid-flight is something I'll never forget. Long drop toilets, bucket showers, breath-taking

views and lots of chaotic driving all added to the experience! Etched in my memory is the chipsi mayai, a local omelette made with chips inside, served with birds-eye chilli, having a cold beverage on the banks of Lake Victoria and eating a chicken dinner that was earlier that morning running around outside of our accommodation!



"I quickly found myself exploring the fundamentals of chemistry, being exposed to various specialist computer models and going back to engineering first principles."

Snaps of Tanzania from the Trip, 2012



Later that year I took a trip to Abu Dhabi to meet our UAE team; at that time still just four people led by WKC's co-founder, Tristan Coleman. The hard work I'd been putting in had obviously been paying off, since that visit led to an offer of a permanent move to the UAE to help with growth plans in the region. In January 2013, as a young bachelor I arrived in Abu Dhabi with my most prized possessions packed

into two suitcases. Seven years later, I am still proud to call the UAE home to myself, my wife and young son.

Since being in the UAE the diversity of projects I've worked on has been incredible; I've travelled to South Korea, taking care of major acoustics and vibration related studies while consuming too much BBQ and



kimchi, to Madrid working on refinery EIA's while over-indulging in Spanish tapas, to Saudi Arabia to visit the worlds' largest fully integrated aluminium smelter while enjoying Arabian coffees and dates, and to Eritrea for environmental surveying while filling up on taita (sorghum flatbread) and tshebi (stew), to name but a few.

“If you work hard for your colleagues and clients, have the confidence to apply some entrepreneurial flare to the business then the sky really is the limit!”



Dubai skyline

More locally I am fortunate to work with major companies such as Abu Dhabi's state-owned oil company, ADNOC, and having involvement in important local projects such as EXPO2020 and the Dubai Creek Harbour development.

The Abu Dhabi Office I once visited with the hope of having an international placement, I am proud to say, is now under my management.

In keeping with WKC's core values, if you work hard for your colleagues and clients, have the confidence to apply some entrepreneurial flare to the business then the sky really is the limit!

Looking back at WKC's successes during my eight years with the organisation, I can only see great things ahead. We are continually strengthening our current service offerings, as well as

diversifying into new areas and markets. Our ever-evolving, innovative approach to offering high quality advisory services will continue to place our specialist teams at the forefront of what we do both locally and more so, globally.

Please feel free to contact Shaun to find out about the range of services we provide from our Abu Dhabi office at +971 (0) 2 644 5224.



Shaun with his Abu Dhabi team, 2018

Growth of a Graduate

Ashley Meyer and Shivani Naidoo, WKC Senior Consultants, share their experiences with WKC's graduate training scheme, and now proven consultants in their own right, how they assist with the development of the next wave of up-and-coming talent.

Making a Difference

By Ashley Meyer, Senior Consultant – Durban

As a laid-back youth with long curly hair and half a shirt untucked, I seldom planned too far ahead. As my university application deadline approached, I recall paging through a university brochure from a faculty of 'Engineering, Built Environment and Information Technology'. I chanced upon the description of a B.Eng in Mechanical Engineering, and excited by the idea of delving into some challenging mathematics and physics (who wouldn't be?!), my decision was made. But like so many students, I didn't really have any idea where my studies would ultimately take me!

Brought on by unforgiving bouts of thermodynamics and numerical methods, I

soon realised that my long-term commitment to machine design was an oversight, especially since I hardly even knew how to use a hammer! However, I knuckled down to finish what I had started, without any serious intentions to work as a mechanical engineer.

Fortunately for me, nestled on the north coast of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa, WKC

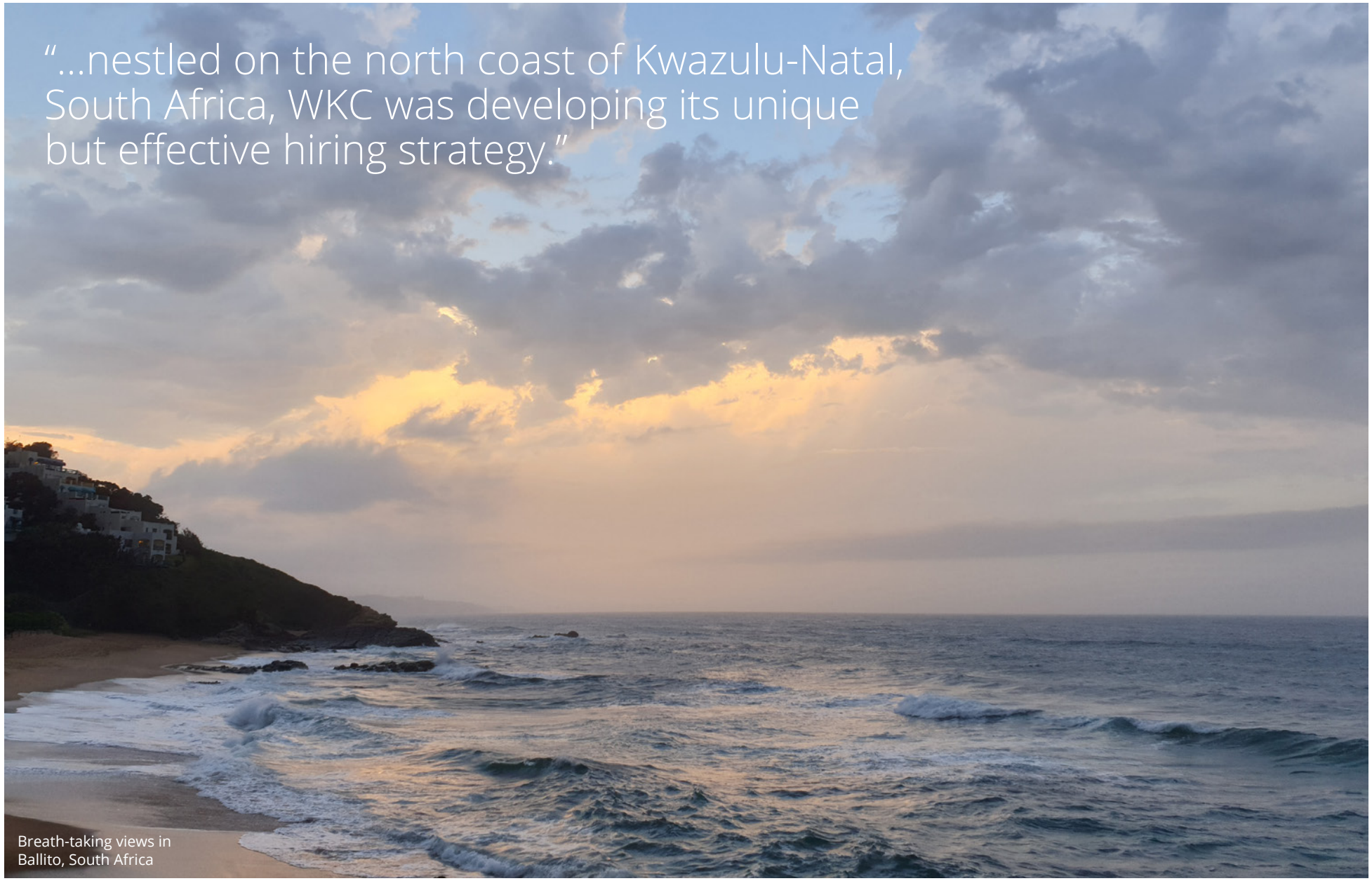


Ashley in his varsity days
"a laid-back kid with long curly hair"

"But like so many students, I didn't really have any idea where my studies would ultimately take me!"

was developing its unique but effective hiring strategy. They were hiring graduate engineers for their technical and general problem-solving abilities suited to some of the niche environmental services WKC offer. I saw an opportunity to put my degree to good use, whilst potentially feeling fulfilled in a role as an 'environmental scientist'.

“...nestled on the north coast of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa, WKC was developing its unique but effective hiring strategy.”



Breath-taking views in Ballito, South Africa

I flew to Durban from Pretoria for my interview in 2013. WKC flew me down for the day to meet the company co-founder and director, Dr Ian James, and WKC's international air quality service lead, Marc Blanché, in their Ballito office. Of course, like any new graduate heading to their first interview I was both nervous and excited. I was pleasantly surprised by both Marc and Ian's openness, sense of humour and knowledge. I even survived a science quiz from Ian (whom I later learnt to be one of the world's leading atmospheric chemists); I never knew that learning Avogadro's number would have been so useful!

“WKC's popular marine modelling service line presents yet another opportunity to learn new skills.”

I was offered the position of Graduate Environmental Engineer in 2013 shortly after the interview. As the first mechanical engineer hired in the South African office, I was assigned to support and eventually expand the noise/



Ashley (right) with Marc Blanché (centre) and Wade Draper (left), one of WKC's newest Graduates

acoustics service line. As part of my training I spent several weeks in the United Arab Emirates. From WKC's Abu Dhabi office, I received training from our noise and vibration service lead, Richard Palmer.

This is where the most intense and important education of my life kicked in! I learned about the fundamentals of noise and acoustics, becoming proficient in the internationally recognised noise modelling software, SoundPLAN, and also became fully equipped with the skills to assess the risk of acoustically induced failure in piping systems ('AIV' and 'FIV').

WKC's strategy of transferring skills between disciplines has cultivated a team of highly skilled and versatile consultants who have helped establish the company as a leading environmental consultancy. This culture has certainly influenced me; as well as establishing myself as a key part in WKC's noise and vibration work, I have also immersed myself in our important air modelling work. And I don't intend to stop there! WKC's popular marine modelling service line presents yet another opportunity to learn new skills and to establish myself as one of WKC's most valued, multidisciplinary environmental consultants.

From a Ballito Graduate to The City of Gold!

By Shivani Naidoo, Senior Consultant – Johannesburg

I joined WKC as a graduate environmental engineer in 2015 straight out of university with my chemical engineering degree. I was quickly thrown into the robust and all-encompassing graduate training scheme lead by Marc Blanchè and Ian James in WKC's Ballito office.



Shivani Naidoo, Senior Consultant – Johannesburg

This fantastic programme provides graduates with the knowledge and skills to undertake advanced air dispersion and noise modelling studies, amongst other technically focussed environmental services.

Combining WKC's training in inventory development, using specialist pollution modelling software packages and general reporting skills, with my academic background of industrial processes, process flow diagrams and piping and instrumentation diagrams I was developing a valuable skillset.

“This fantastic programme provides graduates with the knowledge and skills to undertake advanced air dispersion and noise modelling studies.”

When presented with the opportunity to shadow WKC Director Dr Ian James on my first environmental Permit Application Package (PAP) project in the Middle East, I could see that my training would be put to good use!

“I am so grateful to be part of this niche service for which WKC remains one of the leading consultants globally.”

This was my first major project as a professional consultant. Before I knew it, I was on a plane to South Korea to assist in the preparation of complex environmental permitting documentation for the huge, Maaden Ammonia II Project in Ras Al Khair industrial city, Saudi Arabia. Working long hours while enjoying the gracious hospitality of our Korean hosts, Ian and I were able to complete the project within an impressive three-week period to our clients' complete satisfaction.



Shivani (centre) with Dr. Ian James (second from right) during a trip to India, where they completed a PAP for a Yanbu Industrial City client

This project proved to be a stepping-stone to more fantastic projects, seeing me travel to India, the Far East and the Middle East, furthering my career in the process. I am so grateful to be part of this niche service for which WKC remains one of the leading consultants globally, having received praise multiple times for being able to meet high technical standards and seemingly impossible deadlines!

After starting out in WKC's Ballito office on their graduate programme, as reward for my hard work and dedication, I was given the opportunity to lead WKC's expansion into Johannesburg. From my office in Johannesburg, as well as working on a wide variety of international projects, I am also able to act as WKC's local contact for clients based in South Africa's fantastic 'City of Gold'.

"I was given the opportunity to lead WKC's expansion into Johannesburg."

Working at WKC has instilled much more confidence in myself and my abilities, not just technical, but now also my managerial skills – I am now contributing towards new graduates' careers! The senior management team invest a lot of time and effort into tailoring a great career path for all WKC graduates.

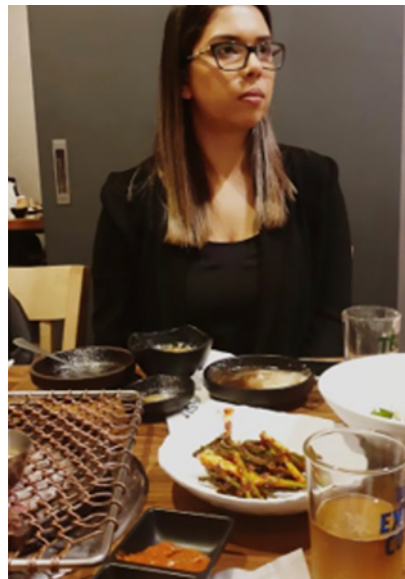
“The senior management team invest a lot of time and effort into tailoring a great career path for all WKC graduates.”



Shivani (right), Marc Blanche (centre) and Devania Govender – currently on the WKC Graduate scheme – in the Johannesburg office



Shivani enjoying some delicious Korean delicacies!



Seoul skyline

Fresh Talent, Renewed Optimism & New Horizons

Dr Ben Boardman, WKC Business Development Manager and most recent member of WKC's senior management team, answers some questions on his career to date, how he intends to bring his rich experience in HSE, particularly in the oil & gas sector, to good use at WKC.

Why WKC?

I have watched the growth of WKC in the UAE and elsewhere from its early days and have always been really impressed with what the business has achieved. In fact, I can't think of another start-up in this sector that has reached the level of growth, technical expertise and admirable reputation that WKC have.

I am really impressed at how much focus WKC puts on growth economies such as the Arabian Gulf and the African continent. The WKC senior management team, of which I am now proud to be a part, understand the importance of having 'boots-on-the-ground'. This is what clients want; international expertise, combined with local knowledge and nearby resources. Having lived on and off in the Gulf for more than 30 years, I

am fully behind WKC's strategy of investing in these exciting and dynamic economies, whilst at the same time maintaining strong links back to major economic hubs, such as London, where the history and cultural ties go back

"Having lived on and off in the Gulf for more than 30 years, I am fully behind WKC's strategy of investing in these exciting and dynamic economies..."

generations. Getting that balance is not easy, and I think WKC get it about as right as anyone.



Ben growing up in Dubai

Why Now?

When my young family and I decided to move back to London at the end of last year I realised that it was an excellent time for me to make a positive change in my career. I previously held a senior position working for a major oil and gas company in Abu Dhabi. This was a position that I thoroughly enjoyed, working with exceptional HSE professionals in the vibrant world of oil & gas. I felt that, given all the valuable lessons I had learnt over the years, I could add genuine value to client organisations in helping them achieve their HSE goals by offering consultancy and advisory services. WKC was the obvious choice for me and is the perfect company through which I can achieve that given their excellent track record, and talented and highly motivated multi-disciplinary team.

“... the opportunity to join WKC’s new central London office was one I was not going to miss.”



Ben (left), being welcomed to London by Tristan (Director and co-founder)

Joining WKC now is, I believe, great timing. WKC have completed their first decade of profitable operations, proving themselves many times over to be able to compete with anyone at the highest level. But there is still so much more we can achieve. This is still, after all, a young and up-and-coming company. The senior management team is relatively young, full of optimism and confidence, with the overriding feeling that we have only just started. So, for me the opportunity to join WKC's new central London office was one I was not going to miss.

Tell us about your previous role?

I was working for ADNOC Sour Gas, a joint venture between ADNOC and Occidental in Abu Dhabi, UAE, as the Health, Safety and Environment (HSE) Systems Manager. My ultimate responsibility was for the health, safety and wellbeing of thousands of employees and contractors working on one of the world's largest ultra-sour gas processing facilities. It is an USD 11 billion mega project, the first of its

kind in the region located in a remote part of the Arabian desert.

The scale of the project was enormous; when I joined, for example, the plant was under construction with a workforce of 43,000 contractors! 200,000 tons of steel were used for construction, 8,700 km of electrical cable and 1,400 km of process and utility piping were fitted. The Shah plant covers an area of 21 km² and processes over one billion cubic feet per day of ultra-sour gas. Over 500 million cubic

“My ultimate responsibility was for the health, safety and wellbeing of thousands of employees and contractors working on one of the world's largest ultra-sour gas processing facilities.”



Launch of Jubail Island Development, Abu Dhabi (photo: gulfnews.com)

feet of sweet gas and 11,000 tons of sulphur (5% of the world's daily sulphur production!) are produced at the facility every day.

I was responsible for the development, implementation and optimisation of a fit-for-purpose HSE Management System. Throughout all phases of construction, commissioning, operation and expansion, I provided HSE leadership, strategy, governance, advice and assurance, often reporting directly to the CEO.

Prior to working at ADNOC, I was a Principal Consultant where I led the Performance Assurance and Transaction Services team for the Middle East and gained extensive project experience across a range of sectors, clients and countries. During this time, I was seconded into the ADNOC Supreme Petroleum Council for two years and was the project manager responsible for standardising, coordinating and managing the HSE and Sustainability Reporting across all the ADNOC Group Companies.

What do you hope to achieve at WKC?

I have learned first-hand the demands that organisations face in meeting their HSE goals. I look forward to being able to draw from my



Ben (left) receiving a HSE Award with his colleagues at ADNOC Sour Gas

experiences, moulding and developing WKC's service offerings such that we can provide real value and cost-effective solutions to our clients.

I will intend to leverage WKC's position as an up-and-coming, high-tech, innovative, and agile consultancy firm to help develop new business relationships, develop new services and provide greater reach into new markets. Being based in WKC's new central London office is an ideal location from which to help further develop the business. I look forward to spending time back in the UAE where I have lived for most of my life and spent most of my career, as well as, travelling to other regions such as Africa, where WKC also have a strong presence. I look

forward to a fulfilling career with WKC, working again with old friends and doing great work that we both believe in and enjoy.

“Being based in WKC's new central London office is an ideal location from which to help further develop the business.”

Dubai's Homegrown Marine Modelling Expert

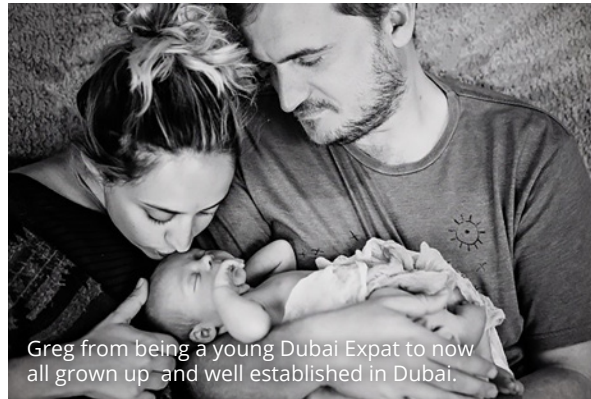
Greg Ashcroft, WKC Partner and Dubai Office Manager, shares some highlights of his time with WKC and gives some insights into what is still yet to come. Having grown up in Dubai, Greg talks about how satisfying it is for him to be able to utilise his oceanography and marine science skills to not only run one of the regions most successful consultancy teams, but also to give something back to the city he and his family call home.

How long have you been in the UAE for?

I first moved to Dubai when I was just eight years old. I spent much of my childhood in Dubai and consider it to be 'home', but not just in the usual 'ex-pat' sense of the word. The changes I have seen over the years are simply mind-blowing, and now I am especially proud to still be able to call the place home for me and my family, and to be contributing professionally to the amazing pace of development I see around me every day.



Greg playing in the Dubai desert during his childhood



Greg from being a young Dubai Expat to now all grown up and well established in Dubai.

I joined WKC back in 2011, when we were based in the Al Bateen area of Abu Dhabi. I first came to hear about the company through a fellow University of Leeds graduate who had heard of WKC and the work they were doing. I have an ecology background by education, and previously had some experience working in a landscape architecture firm in Dubai, but

hadn't had any real exposure to environmental consultancy work being undertaken by WKC. At my interview I remember Tristan (one of the WKC founders) telling me that I could forget

"... it was such an exciting time to be working in a company that had so much potential; a clear vision, talent, and a plan that would bring it all together."

any ideas I might have working on ecology projects since they had other priorities – and sure enough, it was some years later before I got involved in ecology consultancy work in a professional context!

When I joined the company, these really were ‘early days’ in the WKC story. But at the same time, it was such an exciting time to be working in a company that had so much potential; a clear vision, talent, and a plan that would bring it all together. Despite us being just four guys crammed into a tiny office, I loved being the underdog! We worked extra hard to get to compete on projects, but we celebrated every new project that we were awarded. The travel was tiring, but exciting. Some of the technical challenges we were paid to solve were extremely difficult, but I felt privileged to be part of the team trying to come up with real solutions. I look back with such fondness on those early days in WKC.

I still try and instil the same sense of excitement amongst the Dubai team that I am now fortunate to manage. For example, we include all of our team in important decisions and actively encourage them to put forward their ideas on how we can do things better and further develop the business. I also learnt

the importance of collaboration across our other offices – our ‘one team’ core value is so

important to continue giving us that extra edge and competitiveness.



Greg with some of his Dubai Ecology Team

When did you take over management of the Dubai office?

After representing the UAE from our Abu Dhabi office for a number of years, we set up the Dubai office in 2015 which, thankfully, slashed my commuting time, not to mention my carbon footprint! In 2017 I was lucky enough to be given the opportunity to take on an acting manager role, and shortly after that offered the position formally along with Partnership in the company. I have worked hard to build a team to best serve our clients, and am proud to boast one of, if not the best, terrestrial ecology and marine science consultancy practices in the region. We also have a number of general environmental management contracts on some of Dubai's (and the region's) most high profile projects under our control. Contributing to projects such as Expo 2020, Dubai Creek Harbour and others has been a particular highlight for a 'Dubai-boy' such as myself!



UAE Strategy meeting, 2020



Greg (middle), with Tristan Coleman (left) and Ian James (right), after being offered his promotion to Partnership

“I have worked hard to build a team to best serve our clients, and I am proud to boast one of, if not the, best terrestrial ecology and marine science consultancy practices in the region.”

Your Highlights so far?

In a more general sense, getting the UAE's most specialised, locally-based marine modelling capability set up in Dubai is something I am particularly pleased with. Our clients really appreciate having the team close by, not to mention the quality and value that we offer, from a team who understand the time pressures that such dynamic economies demand throughout the supply chain.

“The outcome was fantastic and very successful for WKC and the wider project team. The results were used for some highly strategic infrastructure disaster management planning.”

In terms of specific projects, there have been so many that have each been special in their own way, so here is a very small selection;

We worked on a truly unique but fascinating meteorological modelling project on behalf of a government department back in 2013. While we had bags of air quality expertise within the company, finding specialists with the very niche meteorological modelling skillset anywhere in the world would have been a challenge, let alone within a company less than 4 years old! I took the bull by the horns so to speak, quickly familiarised myself with some open source software, normally used for more academic applications, and was able to apply it to this

very interesting project. The outcome was fantastic and very successful for WKC and the wider project team. The results were used for some highly strategic infrastructure disaster management planning.

In 2012 WKC were retained to provide air quality advice on the world's largest gold mine at that time based in Mongolia. The project required a field visit to the extremely remote mine location to undertake some emissions sampling which I was keen to volunteer. The trip was memorable for so many reasons, not least experiencing the local culture, cuisine and warm welcome offered to me in the Gobi Desert!



"I feel extremely privileged to be leading a team that gets to contribute on a daily basis to the phenomenal success story that is Dubai, and the wider UAE."



Dubai skyline

More locally, in 2014, we were retained by a high-profile hotel chain to do beach erosion studies at some of their local properties throughout the UAE. Using some of our newly acquired skills and specialist modelling software systems, we were able to put forward some very practical, hands-on, engineering advice to minimise the rate at which the '5-star' beach would be lost to the Gulf. Taking site visits to 5-star hotels certainly had its perks!

What's next?

I remember going to Dubai Offshore Sailing Club as a youth with my family. Now I spend much of my time working professionally on projects to protect the UAE's coastline and marine life. I feel extremely privileged to be leading a team that gets to contribute on a daily basis to the phenomenal success story that is Dubai, and the wider UAE.

WKC has now completed its first 10 years of operation, and I am excited about the next 10. We are still growing, finding new markets and opportunities, learning new skills, and despite the difficult and stressful sector that we work in, we still have fun! I am particularly excited about the company's broader push into new innovations and products enabling us to stay at the cutting edge of our industry.

"We always use Greg's amazing career progression as a shining example to all newcomers to WKC as to what can be accomplished through hard work, entrepreneurial flare, loyalty to your colleagues and clients. We don't use the arbitrary criteria of age to hold people back – it's the quality of years that count, not simply the number. Greg is testament to that."

Tristan Coleman, WKC Co-founder and Greg's former line manager and mentor



Not All Heroes Wear Capes!

Tristan Coleman, WKC Co-founder, and Dipak Hirlekar, UAE Admin Manager, tell the story of how Dipak came to work at WKC and the significant influence he has had in shaping the business in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Dipak first arrived in the UAE in 1984, landing in Sharjah airport, then one of the busier travel hubs in the Gulf due to its booming oil and gas activity. Dipak once told me that as he boarded the bus from the airport, he had no idea what his ultimate destination would be like! Half of the bus got out in Dubai, the other half continuing south to the capital city, Abu Dhabi, where Dipak would end up staying for the next 36 years.



Dipak showing his support for the UAE forces, 2017

“The journey from Sharjah to Abu Dhabi today takes approximately two and a half hours by car – the journey back in 1984 took almost the entire day along small roads through the desert – honestly I didn’t know where I was going!” **Dipak**



Abu Dhabi in the Mid 1980's © skyscrapercity.com



Dipak worked for Dames and Moore (which later became URS Corporation, and more recently, AECOM) between 1990 and 2001. Dipak then moved to New Zealand for a few years where he put his entrepreneurial flare to good use and set up a landscape gardening business. Clearly missing the heat, hustle and bustle of the UAE, Dipak returned to Abu Dhabi in 2004 to take up his employment again with URS.

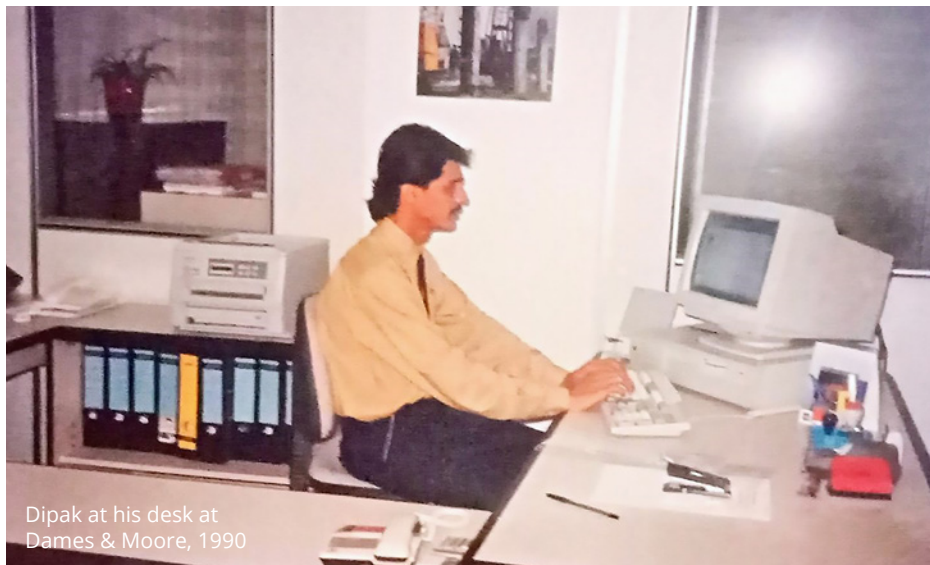
Dipak was the 'PRO' (the official company representative for ministerial and other legal matters) at URS. Fellow WKC co-founder, Ian James, and I worked in URS' Abu Dhabi office in

2004-2006. All who worked with him instantly admired Dipak's broad range of skills and positive attitude. Ian and I were also fortunate to form an immediate friendship that would last for the next decade and a half until this day.

Dipak's story with WKC started in 2011. After not having worked together for a few years, Dipak came to our Al Bateen office for a general catch up. Hearing that the business was doing well, albeit still very much in 'start-up' mode, the conversation soon turned to whether we had need for someone with his skills. Of course, cash was particularly tight in those early years and we hadn't budgeted for a full-time PRO or

administration support. But knowing Dipak's versatility and diverse talents, I simply could not let this opportunity pass by!

At the time we were bidding for a large contract with Abu Dhabi's refining company (then called TAKREER) involving measuring air pollution from their major combustion equipment at their three major facilities. This was a large, complex, and logistically challenging project. We were bidding against some tough competition, but we knew that if we were successful Dipak's talents – organisation, logistics, and good old-fashioned hard work – could help us make the project a real success.



Dipak at his desk at Dames & Moore, 1990



Ever popular Dipak with ex-URS colleagues, 2005

We took a chance on hiring Dipak. And shortly afterwards, our gamble paid off and we were successful with the TAKREER contract!

After weeks of difficult work out in the (very hot!) facilities, with one of our first major projects under our belt, the WKC business started to truly take off, with Dipak now well and truly integral to the growing team.

And it didn't stop there.

“Over the last 10 years in the UAE we have established two branches, upgraded our office premises and trade licenses multiple times, maintained a long list of governmental licenses and company registrations, and arranged visas for dozens of staff members.” **Dipak**



TAKREER's Utilities Plant in Ruwais, Abu Dhabi, 2011

Consistently displaying WKC's core values of 'entrepreneurship' and 'one-team' spirit, as well as super-human amounts of patience and tenacity, Dipak has been at the heart of all our important milestones in the growth of the business. Dipak leaves no stone unturned to ensure the UAE offices are running smoothly, remain organised, and the staff are safe & secure.



Tristan and WKC UAE sponsor, Humaid Al Mazmi, 2018

Dipak was fundamental in securing our sponsorship arrangement with Humaid Al Mazmi. Having forged a very strong and important relationship with Humaid, Dipak has



Dipak with one of his protégés, Anthony Fernandes, in Abu Dhabi, 2019

been and continues to be a crucial link to our Emirati sponsor, from whom we receive all-important moral and administrative support on many issues in the UAE.

Dipak has been both a friend and a mentor to me and indeed to many of his colleagues at WKC. Dipak really has been the unsung hero of our UAE business, and never a more hardworking and honest person will you ever have the privilege to work alongside! It's been a real privilege so far...



Dipak and Tristan cutting the cake after opening WKC's new AD office in 2012



Dipak with his wife and son during the opening ceremony of his farm in India (left) and tending to some of his produce (right), 2019



"I am currently investing some of my savings into a small farm in Goa, India. Just a convenient short flight from Abu Dhabi, I spend most of my free time back in India, tending to my produce with my wife and son." **Dipak**

WKC's Secret Sauce!

In this final section, the **WKC Co-founders Tristan Coleman** and **Ian James**, discuss the importance of taking time to discover and articulate your company values, and what was the magic ingredient that has allowed them to create a successful international consultancy business and true success story.

■ The story of WKC's first ten years has been incredible. Starting out with a laptop and a mobile phone, and a shared vision of offering technically robust, high value environmental consultancy services, we set out to create a trusted name in environmental consulting.

We now have offices in three continents, a world-class team of consultants, engineers and administrators, and an enviable portfolio of developments to which we have contributed and clients whom we have supported.

But what made it all possible? What are WKC's strengths... the magic ingredient... the 'Secret Sauce'?

WKC's three, simple values;

1. **Technical excellence**
2. **Entrepreneurial flare**
3. **One-team philosophy**



Business strategy meeting held in Abu Dhabi, 2019

“I don’t believe you can simply invent your company values, often just to fill up space on a website or a brochure. You must take time to discover your personality, rather than inventing it. Ask yourself; what makes you different from your competitors, what is it that contributes to your success, and what makes others want to work with you? Answer these questions, and you have discovered your company ‘values’.”

Tristan Coleman, Co-founder



“After discovering and defining your company values, you must also condense them down to make them memorable and simple to communicate. There is no point declaring a value that could apply to almost any company in your sector! Rather, focus on articulating those qualities that truly set you apart. And what a powerful exercise it can be!”

Ian James, Co-founder

1. Technical Excellence

Ashley and Shivani's journey from Graduate Engineers to the world of environmental consultancy utilising WKC's unique, technically-focused graduate training programme and subsequent specialisation in some of our more complicated and challenging projects, gaining high words of praise from their clients as far afield as South Korea in the process, is testament to WKC's prioritisation of technical excellence within the business.

Shaun's meteoric rise to become the Abu Dhabi office manager can largely be attributed to his aptitude for the more technically-focused elements of the environmental consultancy, underpinned by his background in mechanical engineering.



Ashley and Shivani carrying out a survey in South Africa, 2018

Ben's arrival as BD Manager, bringing a wealth of experience in the world of HSE systems, not least having the responsibility of tens of thousands of workers' safety while working for one of the world's largest sour gas development projects underpins WKC's technical prowess in some exciting and rapidly developing service offerings.



Shaun being welcomed to his manager's office in Abu Dhabi, 2019



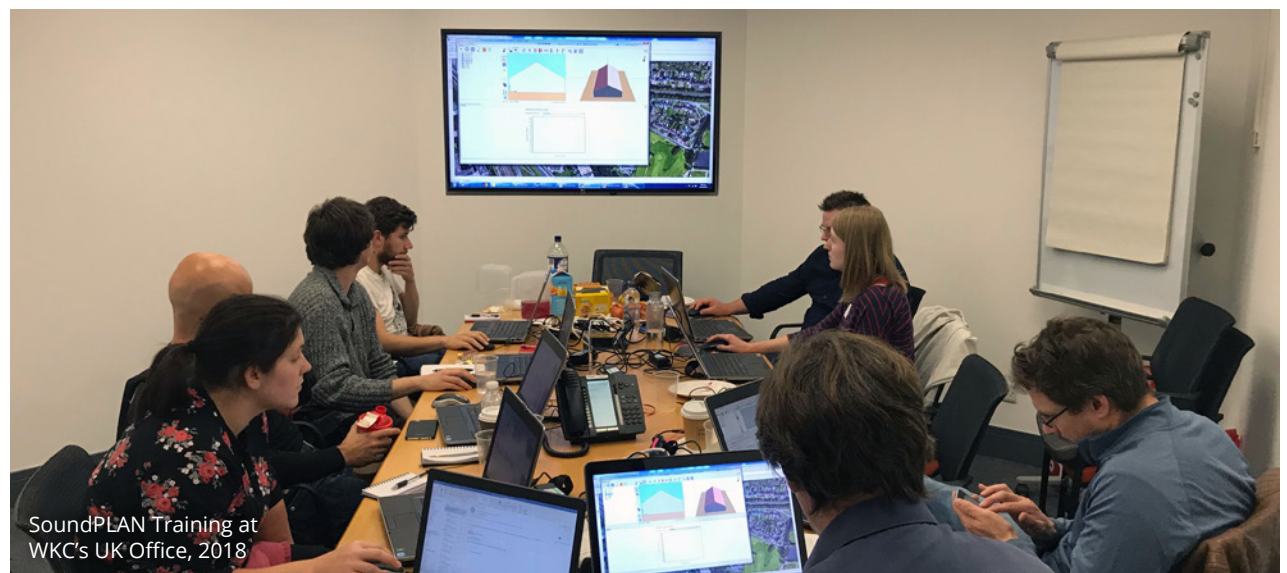
Ben (front and right), leading a HSE workshop for ADNOC Sour Gas, Abu Dhabi, 2015

2. Entrepreneurial Flare

Ian and Tristan's journey, the first seed sown during a chance encounter in a bar in Wimbledon, setting up WKC a few years later, and going on to build a diverse consultancy business that has delivered tens of millions of dollars' worth of high value, specialist advice for customers all over the world provides the backdrop and inspiration for all of our budding entrepreneurs.

Marc's creation of a centre of environmental engineering excellence in South Africa providing specialist services to customers nationally, across the African continent and beyond into the Middle East, Europe and Africa is but one example of WKC seeking out and utilising opportunities to innovate and evolve the business for the better.

Richard's journey with WKC has been important in so many ways, not least the linkage with SoundPLAN, which ultimately led to WKC diversifying away from pure consultancy work and becoming the official SoundPLAN technical support and distribution partner in one of their largest and most important markets, the UK.



3. One-Team Philosophy

Teamwork and cooperation cannot be better illustrated than Dipak's relentless and tireless work into ensuring that his colleagues across two offices in the UAE are safe, secure and have a proper administrative platform from which to operate, and ensuring any colleagues visiting to offer much-needed support are also well-looked after.



Tristan with WKC's Rangers at the Jubail Mangrove Park, Abu Dhabi, 2020



Marc's encounter with an armed convoy in Nigeria, 2013

Our multi-disciplinary team often find themselves in interesting yet challenging circumstances, often far away from home, so that projects can be executed as smoothly as possible. From Marc's encounter with armed convoys looking for pirates in Nigeria, to

Shaun's first overseas trip including a turbo-prop plane journey to Tanzania, and Greg's trip to the Mongolian Gobi desert, the speed at which we mobilise multi-disciplinary teams from across our offices and deploy them all over the world is second to none.



Dipak behind the wheel of an Abu Dhabi police car, 2017

Our Secret Sauce?

So what's in our 'Secret Sauce'?

We cannot define it in a single sentence, paragraph, or even this book. It's the countless hours of effort and ingenuity that are applied each day at WKC, the shared vision, values and goals.

It's the personal stories of all those that have contributed to the amazing WKC journey over the last decade.

It's WKC's Story.

Here's to the next 10 years!

Tristan and Ian





Onwards and Upwards!

Celebrating 10 years of excellence



wkcgroupp.com