



LES GAZ INDUSTRIELS LTD.

UNE VALEUR SÛRE

LES GAZ INDUSTRIELS LIMITED (LGI)

THE DESIRE TO DIVERSIFY



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*Managing Director, Jérôme Commins
discusses LGI's diversification over the
years and its plan to expand into
Africa's emerging markets*

WRITTEN BY: **WILL DAYNES**
RESEARCH BY: **VINCE KIELTY**

Les Gaz Industriels Limited (LGI) was originally incorporated as a private company in 1952, with 100 percent Mauritian equity and the core aim of producing oxygen and acetylene for metal cutting and welding purposes. Eleven years later a majority stake in the business was acquired by leading South African gas company African Oxygen Ltd (Afrox).

This significant development helped shape the future of LGI, transforming it into a business that has diversified hugely throughout the years into a wide range of products, specifically the manufacture, sales and delivery of medical and industrial gases in bulk and in cylinders, the manufacture, sales and delivery of welding electrodes, installation of gas reticulation, project management, maintenance contracts as well as water treatment, with a growing market share in the Mauritian market and abroad.

It was on 5 April 2008 that Jérôme Commins was employed by LGI, taking on the role of Finance and Administrative Manager. In December 2009 he took on the position of acting Managing Director, before taking full lead of the business in February 2010.

“In the time since,” Jérôme states, “we have undergone massive developments as a business and today find ourselves in the midst of a huge investment programme where we are putting significant capital into new technologies for the production of liquid oxygen, liquid nitrogen, liquid carbon dioxide, liquid argon and all types of gases that we produce locally,”





1952

The year that LGI was incorporated as a private company

One of Jérôme’s most personal, and challenging, undertakings since he took on the role of Managing Director was to convince the board of LGI to invest massively in the acquisition of a new state-of-the-art production plant at the company’s site in Mauritius. Having put his case forward successfully the company is now looking forward to taking delivery of the plant no later than September of this year.

“This new plant will open up a whole new world of possibility for us,” Jérôme enthuses. “While our existing facilities have served us well it has been obvious for some time that we needed to modernise, upgrade our capabilities and increase our stock and storage capacities in order to grow not just on a local level, but also in terms of regional and international expansion, while remaining competitive.”

“One of LGI’s proudest achievements” Jérôme states “is the fact that we have among our Partners, the largest fleet of IMO Type 7 ISO Tankers in the region.” Jérôme is also confident and more than happy that the tanks the company supplies are well-maintained, marine certified and regularly recertified in accordance to class requirements, making LGI a preferred lessor



If we placed all our industrial gas cylinders in a line, they would cover the surface, and even more, of a football ground

to its customers. One most important aspect that Jérôme highlights is that the tanks can be refilled on LGI’s site in Mauritius and re-forwarded throughout the world.

Having been established in Mauritius for well over 60 years, LGI finds itself in as good a position as anybody to offer its support to international and multi-national companies

looking to set up operations in the Indian Ocean or on the African continent. This is particularly true when it comes to the company’s welding operations, for which it is perhaps best known for its production of the well-known Vitemax brand.

“One of the things I am working on at the moment,” Jérôme explains, “is

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“JÉRÔME KNOWS THAT DESPITE LGI’S SUCCESS TO DATE, THE COMPANY MUST CONTINUE TO IMPROVE, AND THIS ALL STARTS WITH THE COMPANY’S MOST VALUED ASSET, ITS PEOPLE”



There are no higher priorities than the health and safety of our employees, customers, suppliers and the community, and the protection of the environment

attracting investors from the welding sector to come and make things happen in Mauritius by importing the components and equipment needed to produce locally, before exporting the finished items back into core regional and African markets. In many ways I would like to see Mauritius become something of a hub for this sort of activity and we are already in discussion with several Indian and South African companies that share our long-term vision.”

While Mauritius itself is currently experiencing strong organic growth, the company is well aware that further opportunities await it in a host of surrounding markets, especially those in Africa. “Our strategy for expansion,” Jérôme says, “is to first target other small markets before moving deeper into Africa. This is a goal that we believe we are in a strong position to accomplish.”

In addition to its aforementioned aims, LGI is also looking to move into the supply of carbon dioxide to a number of large multi-national players, including Coca-Cola and Pespico. Furthermore, the company has designs on expanding further into the healthcare and homecare markets, providing its services to clients both locally



Whenever anyone buys anything from LGI we always put 100 percent of enthusiasm behind it

and abroad in the very near future.

Although LGI is a company based in a small country it still harbours a strong desire to be involved in large projects in some of the busiest markets in the world. Today it finds itself in a good position to achieve this thanks in part to its involvement with the Ambatovy mining project, one of the most ambitious industrial undertakings in the history of Madagascar.

“Our involvement in this project is fascinating, not only because of the size and importance of the project but also in terms of the volumes of our products that we are

supplying to what is a logistically challenging island location,” Jérôme enthuses. “Indeed we have faced some minor obstacles in getting our products delivered on time and to specification to Madagascar, but we have succeeded in doing so and therefore have proven ourselves capable of taking on the most challenging of tasks and exceeding our customer’s requirements.”

Not one to rest on his laurels, Jérôme knows that despite LGI’s success to date, there is more to be achieved and in order to do so the company must continue to improve, and this all starts with the company’s most valued asset, its people. “Our human capital is of vital importance to us and that is why we will continue to focus on their continuous development, providing them with the training needed.”

To this end the company has a number of exciting training programmes that will continue throughout the course of 2013. Meanwhile it will continue to provide its employees with the opportunity to travel abroad to train in specific fields, with various Partners currently based in Italy, France, South Africa, Canada, Singapore and India.

“As our people grow,” Jérôme concludes, “so too will our business as we work to rapidly develop our overall offering, while at all times retaining the efficiency, competitive prices and product quality that LGI has become synonymous for.” **BE**

For more information about
Les Gaz Industriels Limited (LGI) visit:
www.gaz-industriels.com



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