

Five minutes with: Mohammed Jindran, OLS

by Ashleigh McGinley on Mar 29, 2016



Mohammed Jindran, managing director of Overseas Labour Supply.

Can you briefly explain the role of OLS?

OLS is the oldest and largest overseas recruitment agency operating in the UAE since 1979 with a recruited head count of over 120,000 workers so far.

We recruit our workers from 18 countries namely: India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Philippines, Vietnam, Indonesia, Egypt, Sudan, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Cameroon, Romania, Albania and Canada.

We have trade testing facilities at all our recruitment centres which enables our clients to select the most suitable employees based on their project requirements.

Specialising in the recruitment of construction workers at all levels, ranging from engineers to skilled/unskilled positions, we guarantee our recruits for a period of three months - and in the case that any worker is found unfit or unsuitable we will find a replacement at no cost to the employer.

Can you outline the main projects OLS is working on at present?

OLS has provided overseas manpower to a wide range of construction projects in the UAE and GCC states which includes iconic projects such as the Palm Jumeirah, Atlantis Hotel, Ski Dubai and Dubai Airports.

At present, OLS is involved in the recruitment for:

- *Etihad Museum - a sprawling social development designed to commemorate and tell the story of the UAE before and after it was founded.*
- *Abu Dhabi Marina Bloom Project - a cleverly interwoven design offering spectacular views of the Arabian Gulf, Marina and Abu Dhabi City.*
- *Falcon City - a large residential and entertainment project in Dubailand along Emirates Road.*
- *Al Barari Development - a beautiful green development along Emirates Road.*
- *Dubai Sports City - Fortuna Village.*
- *Akoya by Damac - Oxygen 2 - a project comprising 6 high-grade buildings.*
- *TMI Tower in TECOM.*

Is the slump in oil prices presenting any challenges for OLS at present?

As we are involved with already on-going construction projects around UAE, we did not feel much of a challenge due to the slump in oil prices.

Although new projects that were due to be awarded have been either delayed or kept on hold for a while.

However, as our clients are mainly construction companies who have various projects in hand that have already commenced we continue to recruit the labour force for them at various stages of their projects.

In general, what are the main challenges faced by OLS?

Recruiting the workers at salary levels of the past is really the main challenge we face, especially when dealing with construction companies that already have a large number of previously recruited workers who joined at lower salary levels a few years ago.

It becomes a major challenge for these companies to recruit new workers at higher salaries, because they would have to increase the salaries of all their existing employees before bringing new workers in at higher salary levels.

As salary levels in countries like India have already gone up even for projects within India itself, we find it very challenging to convince new recruits to accept salaries that were paid a few years earlier by the UAE companies.

However, most companies are now gradually making the transition to newer salary levels.

Most try to keep basic salaries on the lower side - but compensate by increasing food and living allowances and issuing more overtime payments that total up to a reasonable pay cheque for employees at the end of the month.

What are OLS' plans for the immediate future?

For the immediate future we are concentrating on sourcing workers from newer non-traditional markets such as Vietnam and Africa for our clients who are requiring a larger mix of nationalities in their work force.

And, of course the timely execution of the current recruitment projects is foremost in our minds right now.

What are OLS' plans for the year ahead?

Looking ahead, we are keeping a close watch on market developments related to the commencement of new projects.

We are looking forward to being an integral part of the recruitment for Expo 2020 projects, which many of our existing clients are vying for.

We expect the momentum for Expo 2020 construction projects to start picking up during the third quarter of 2016 - we are keeping ourselves well prepared to meet the bulk recruitment needs of our clients.