



Eugene Mayne

Founder & CEO
Tristar Group, UAE



Q You established the Tristar Group in 1998. Over the years it has grown into a fully integrated energy logistics solutions provider operating in over 21 countries, under your able leadership. Please briefly trace the growth of the Tristar Group.

A. Tristar was founded in 1998 in the UAE with three used trucks and we have been fortunate to grow the business to what it is today. Over the last 22 years, we have built strong relationships with a diverse group of blue-chip customers including oil majors and international NGOs. Today, we have a resilient business model that protects us against market volatility and has positioned us well for long term success. In addition to running a profitable business, we also aim to be a Business for Purpose and therefore are fully committed to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We are committed to creating and maintaining jobs and positive FDI in the countries in which we operate.

Q The group has recently inked new deals and reassured the group's support to its entire 2000 strong workforce. Please tell us about your resilient business model.

A. Tristar Group offers an integrated energy logistics platform across road transportation and warehousing, maritime logistics, fuel farm management, and commercial and remote fuel supply. We operate in 21 countries and territories on three continents across the downstream

energy value chain. Our resilient business model, underpinned by long-term contracts with our investment grade customers, has ensured that our revenue streams remained stable without the pressure of cancelled contracts or price negotiations, despite the pandemic.

Q What has been your Covid response strategy?

A. We have chosen to find solutions to mitigate the negative impact of COVID-19 by staying focused on reducing service disruptions to customers rather than reducing our workforce. We have set up a Crisis Committee which meets weekly even now to review and monitor the health of our employees and potential disruptions to our services across the 21 countries and territories we operate in. Astute management of our business continuity plans with day to day oversight by the committee has ensured minimization of disruptions and that the arrangements for employee testing, isolation and treatments are well established. We organised COVID-19 testing for all our employees and proactively implemented several preventive measures to enable our employees to keep themselves and their families safe. We also provide regular operational updates on emerging situation to our customers, which has been well received as it mitigates the risk of disruption to their individual supply chains. We also continue to check in on our employees, to make sure they are doing well both mentally and physically.

Q You have been leading the Tristar Group's digital transformation from the forefront, establishing new standards and revolutionizing the logistics business by deploying Blockchain technology. What have been the challenges on this journey?

A. I have been advocating for the adoption of new technologies such as Blockchain in order to modernize the logistics industry. The challenge, as we progress from pilot projects, will be to determine the business case for its use at scale. However, we have seen promising results in the short term.

Q How can disruptive technologies such as Blockchain, Artificial Intelligence, and Analytics etc. enhance resilience for the global supply chain and logistics industry to make it future-proof?

A. Over the last few years, we have witnessed companies in the logistics sector integrate automation and AI technologies both internally within their business models and externally with customer projects. Logistics firms are investing in specific types of technology and training that will protect and enhance human productivity and reduce operating costs, ultimately ensuring long-term resilience.

Blockchain gives logistics companies the ability to provide irrevocable verification and oversight to complex transportation processes for customers. It also enables businesses to eliminate the risk of human error and optimise warehousing manpower, scheduling and deliveries, which results in fewer manual transactions.



Tristar Group Founder & CEO, Mr. Eugene Mayne giving a Special Address at the Global Business Meet, held at the House of Lords (UK Parliament) at IOD's London Global Convention in November 2019.



Mr. Mayne during a Road Safety Awareness Seminar held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia by the Tristar Group in April 2019.



Tristar Group's commitment towards gender equality as exemplified through their workforce.

Robotic process automation, remote vehicle management, and other artificial intelligence solutions will help with predictive maintenance and forecasting analysis.

At Tristar, we recently fitted 50 vehicles with a Driver Fatigue Management System which uses an infra-red camera to track a driver's eye movements and warn the Journey Management Team in the head office if a driver is tired. If a driver is fatigued, a member of the Journey Management Team will call him to advise further rest when he reaches his designated rest area.

We have also recently acquired new trucks with the latest active and passive safety technology to help avoid dangerous collisions.

Q. What do you foresee for the future of the logistics industry in the face of the continuing global pandemic, and what is your vision for the Tristar Group?

- A. For the short term, we will continue to focus on strengthening our integrated logistics model by looking for key acquisitions in our areas of interest and ensuring our organic business continues to grow annually in double digits.

Integration of technology is a given and we are constantly working to find the newest technology that is both efficient and cost effective for our current and future projects. At the moment, we are looking at Robot Processing Automation and Artificial Intelligence solutions to help with predictive maintenance and forecasting analysis which will ultimately increase performance and efficiency. We are also looking at smart ship technology to better improve operating costs on our marine assets.

We also look forward to strengthening our Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) programme and implementing sustainable practices across all our sectors. Our commitment to being a strong advocate of the United Nations SDGs will continue unabated as we strongly believe that as a private sector company we should lead the way for the business world to pay attention to the health and well being of people, which will continue to be a priority for Tristar.

Q. The Tristar Group strongly believes in giving back to the society and environment through your CSR and Sustainability efforts. How do you align your efforts in these domains with your overall organization strategy?

- A. Since our inception in 1998 we made the decision to be a responsible business, which translates to paying attention to the health and safety our employees and the community at large. We believe that our ESG strategy goes hand in hand with our business strategy, and in fact is closely linked to our long-term growth. In 2019, with the aim to protect environmental resources, Tristar achieved a 22% reduction in water use per employee and paper consumption. We also

offset 25% of 2019 group carbon emissions using the UNFCCC program. Our JAFZA Warehouse in UAE received the prestigious U.S. Green Building Council LEED Gold certification.

Additionally, we continued conducting road safety campaigns for the community in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, and expanded our educational initiatives in Africa. We also signed the UN Women's Empowerment Principles as part of our commitment towards gender equality.

Q As leaders of the logistics and warehousing business, what do you foresee the trends in the industry in the post pandemic era?

- A. The post-pandemic world will require constant innovation and adaptation. Technologies that would have taken years to adopt are now being implemented in a matter of months due to the pandemic. Technologies such as smart ships, Blockchain, internet of things and robot process automation will enable transparency, flexibility and remote oversight, which will be essential in the post pandemic world.

There will be an accelerated shift towards prioritising renewable energy sources as climate change moves up the agenda for local and regional governments. Sustainability will be a key priority going forward and is an integral part of our business. We are exploring initiatives that include maximizing the use of renewable energy across group operations.

Ultimately, as a Business for Purpose, we encourage other private sector entities to operate in a responsible manner and prioritize the adoption of an ESG framework. Given the far-reaching economic and social impact of the pandemic, the logistics industry could look to do their part in rebuilding a better future for the global economy. ■

Mr. Eugene Mayne is a visionary Entrepreneur with over 40 years of professional experience in business leadership in UAE, leading all Tristar Group activities spanning Surface Transport, Ocean and Coastal Transport, Specialized Warehousing, Fuel Farm Management, Turnkey Fuel Supply Operations, Commercial Aviation Services, Lubricants and Chemicals Distribution. He is on Board of Tristar Holding, Tricore and Trychem, Swiss International School, Dubai, and Member international Business Professional Council. He was ranked among the Top 100 Indian Leaders in the Arab World for 2014-2018 – Forbes Middle East Magazine. Mr. Mayne was recently elected to the Board of Directors of the Global Compact Network, UAE.