

MAY 2017

SOCAR Polymer Newsletter / Issue 5 / 2017

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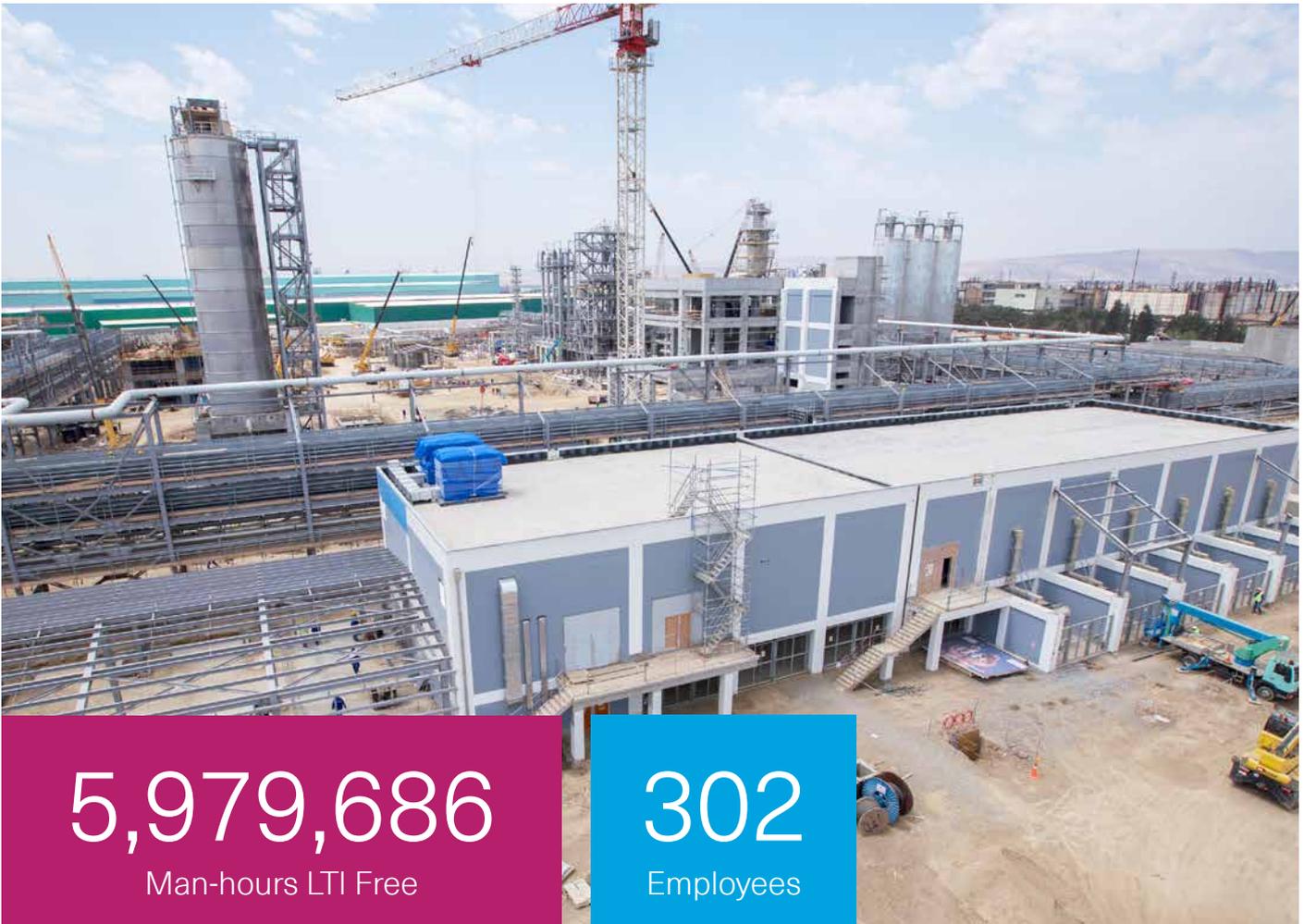
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5,979,686

Man-hours LTI Free

302

Employees

81.0%

PP Total progress in May

44.9%

HDPE Total progress in May



A message from the General Manager



Dear team,

Safety... the issue discussed frequently these days to the point when it seems trivial and just for the record. Considering the mortality rates of the early industrialization period or, in particular, that of the early Soviet industrialization era, we have come a long way. One might ask the question of 'what is a satisfactory safety target for megaprojects such as ours?', or 'how much money and resources we should allocate?'. In case of SOCAR Polymer, the answers to the above would be respectively 'flawless safety' and 'as much as it takes'. If you think "flawless" is too expensive, consider what accidents cost to individuals/families and companies.

We should all pride ourselves on the nearly 6,000,000 LTI-free hours our team has managed to achieve recently and we shall put our utmost to continue following this course, because for us safety is not simply a number of safe man-hours we are aiming at, but a reflection of the degree of care we take of our team, reflection of the extent of value we assign to each team member, and reflection of how we want the rest of stakeholders to perceive SOCAR Polymer.

However, it is indeed a flawless record, an exhilarating advance in the evergoing tough struggle with probability, especially with the increasing number of people on site, double shifts and tightening schedule. The biggest danger of all is complacency which we develop running the same procedures and routines every day over months. Complacency that might lead to being caught off-guard and unalert.

Team, I look forward to further embracing the safe approach in our work and call upon you not to forget that the extent of attention to colleagues' safety is the mirror reflection of your care towards them.

Farid Jafarov

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Farid Jafarov". The signature is stylized and written in a cursive-like font.



May 2017

Site Photos



PROGRESS ON SITE

HDPE plant

RCC works are ongoing in almost all sections of the HDPE plant, including the Blending silo, Organoleptic/Effluent Treatment, Polymerization and Extrusion areas. Installation of underground pipelines for the HDPE plant has been started.

April

Progress
over May

May



HDPE:
Organoleptic
Structure
and Effluent
Treatment.
RCC works
ongoing



HDPE:
Extrusion
Structure.
RCC works
ongoing



HDPE:
Extrusion Pipe
Rack.
RCC works
ongoing



PP plant and U&O area

Works reported as started or ongoing in April have been continued throughout May, with the following works completed or initiated in May in the areas specified below.

Installation of 2 tanks is completed in the Bagging and Packing area. Backfilling of the cable trench leading to the Electrical Substation is completed and the substation has been electrified. Leak tests have been conducted at the Raw and DM Water Tanks. 23 more steel structural (SS) columns have been installed (with the current total of 35 columns completed) in the Warehouse area. Internal welding works are completed in one of the Isobutane Spheres.

PP/U&O (Utilities and Offsite) Roof insulation started at the Workshop and Administration building. Installation of the Sprinkler system started at the Cooling Tower. Pump, pipe and equipment installation started in the Dry/Powder Silo Section and Blending Silo area.

Some heavy equipment, namely, the Nitrogen Storage Tank and Cold Box have been delivered to the construction site and preparation works for installation are under way.

April	Progress over May	May
	<p>PP/U&O: Common Control Room. Panel installation ongoing</p>	
	<p>PP/U&O: Administration building. Brickwork ongoing. Roof insulation started</p>	
	<p>PP/U&O: Cooling Tower. Sprinkler installation started</p>	

April

Progress
over May

May



PP/U&O: Flare
Knock Out
Drum.
Pipe
connection
ongoing



PP/U&O: Side
Stream Filter
Package.
Pipe
installation
ongoing



PP/U&O: Gate/
Guard House.
Brickwork
ongoing



PP/U&O:
Homogenization /
Blender Silo.
Pump, pipe
and equipment
installation
started



April

Progress
over May

May



PP/U&O:
Isobutane
Sphere.
Dike wall
welding
ongoing



PP/U&O:
Hexene
Storage Tank.
Tank erection
ongoing



Nitrogen
package.
Preparation
works for tank
and equipment
installation are
ongoing



Cable trench.
Backfilling
completed



April

Progress
over May

May



Warehouse.
SS column
installation
ongoing.
35 columns
installed.
Backfilling
started



PP/U&O:
Bagging
& Packing
Building.
Tank
installation
completed





PP/U&O: PP Dry /Powder Silo.
Equipment installation started



PP/U&O: DM Water Storage Tank.
Leak test conducted



PP/U&O: Raw Water Storage Tank.
Leak test conducted



Extruder Package equipment.
Extruder Package equipment (MARUBENI JSW, Japan) has been delivered to the site and is undergoing installation

SOCAR Polymer at the annual International Caspian Oil & Gas Exhibition



On 31 May, the 24th International Caspian Oil and Gas Exhibition opened its doors to the world. This international exhibition and conference is the largest energy sector event in the Caspian region and is recognized as a good platform for establishing reliable business relationships, negotiating significant contracts and successfully implementing projects. Each year, the exhibition is attended by more than 10,000 local and international professionals. The fact that the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev participates in the opening ceremony of the exhibition testifies to the high status of the event. The AR Ministry of Energy and the SOCAR company both give invaluable support to the "Caspian Oil & Gas" events.

This year SOCAR Polymer once again traditionally occupied its place among the exponents, with 60 square meters of well-decorated space. The key

message of our exposition declared that "Dedicated and skilled employees are our greatest strength". It was the slogan manifested at SOCAR Polymer's stand.





With time and space limits involved, we had been able to present to the public only 11 of our employees. Nevertheless, they symbolized and mirrored the strengths of the entire SOCAR Polymer team. Short but expressly descriptive information blocks about the 11 representatives were displayed in 2 languages on large vertical video panels. We would like to thank Bahruz Hajiyev, Elman Bakhish, Elshan Garayev, Elshan Rahimov, Gullar Tagiyeva, Khalid Gasimov, Mansur Atakishiyev, Matin Huseynli, Orkhan Hasanov, Tamara Maharramova and Tarlan Abiyev who had contributed into the creation of the employee infoblocks.

Further, our stand featured a touchscreen display with 10 “before/after” photos of the PP and HDPE plants’ construction site over a widely stretched time period that encompassed the demolition of the old Soviet plant, site cleaning and subsequent construction phases of our new plants.

A large video wall demonstrated a 3-minute short video about our

Project, taking spectators virtually to the plants’ site in Sumgayit by means of drone-shot views of the plants under construction. The video can be viewed at SOCAR Polymer’s youtube channel by following the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L03VzcVLJc&feature=youtu.be>

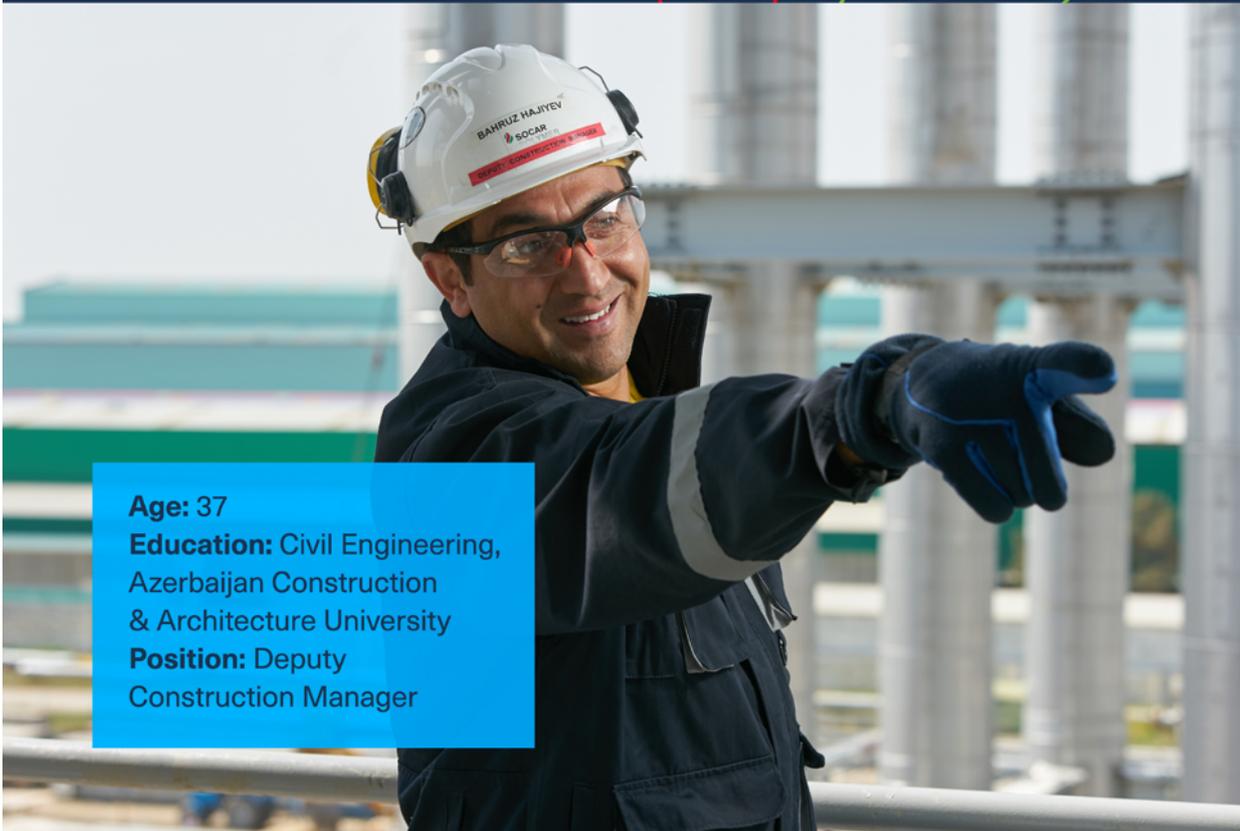
We would like to express our gratitude to everyone who made efforts to help make the video come to life by having provided technical and statistical data for the video, namely: Agil Balayev, Aygun Alekberova, Bahruz Hajiyev, Gulu Nabiye, Khalid Gasimov, Mansur Atakishiyev, Matin Huseynli, Oskar Humbatov, Rufat Guliyev, Samir Javadov, Tural Mammadli and others who made their invaluable contribution working behind the scenes, namely: Rauf Guliyev, Sona Ramazanova, Janos Bota, Sonuj Alizadeh and Ilaha Hajiyeva.

In the morning of the second exhibition day, the traditional annual Caspian Oil & Gas Conference launched its activity to support the exposition with discussions and exchange of views

and experience on issues relevant to this sector of industry and global economy.

Over the 4 days of the exhibition, our employees took turns at the stand as company representatives greeting the visitors, responding to inquiries and, thus, enriching with their personal presence the exposition dedicated to our employees. We thank Elshan Garayev, Gulnar Mirmovsumova, Gulu Nabiye, Ilaha Hajiyeva, Javid Aliyev, Kamal Ibrahimli, Mansur Atakishiyev, Matin Huseynli, Samir Javadov, Samira Ibrahimli, Sona Ramazanova, and Tarlan Abiyev for representing our company at our exhibition stand. Special thanks go to Adalat Muslumov for his indispensable contribution into the technical setup and preparation of the stand on the eve of the exhibition till late night hours, as well as for managing the operation, computerization and troubleshooting processes at the stand.

BAHRUZ HAJIYEV



Age: 37

Education: Civil Engineering,
Azerbaijan Construction
& Architecture University

Position: Deputy
Construction Manager

With a Master's Degree in Civil Engineering and 16 years of work experience in the construction field, Bahruz is responsible cumulatively for the civil, piping, mechanical, instrumental, electrical, lifting, warehousing and other aspects of construction.

He has accompanied SOCAR Polymer all along from the site preparation stage implemented flawlessly under his supervision.

Bahruz is the first in Azerbaijan to have become a Member of the Chartered Institute of Building. Such membership is the highest qualification that represents construction management professionals.

The Chartered Institute of Building is the world's largest and most influential professional body for Construction Management and leadership since 1934.

ELMAN BAKHISH

Age: 33

Education: Power engineering,
Azerbaijan State Oil Academy

Position: Lead Electrical Engineer



A PhD in electrical engineering with 12 years of education in the background and certificates of training received in Germany, Bulgaria, Finland and Holland, Elman joined our company with over 15 years of work experience in the field of electrical engineering, operation and maintenance. He started working early, in his 2nd year at the university, as an electrical operator at Baku Electrical Network. At the age of 23, Elman was the youngest chief engineer managing one of the district branches of Baku High Voltage Power Network.

He is the author of 13 articles on power engineering including 4 studies published abroad. One of the most challenging projects he engaged in was connected with the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars Railway electrification system SCADA.

His responsibilities now include electric system design supervision, monitoring of equipment factory acceptance and installation, approval of engineering documents, etc.

ELSHAN GARAYEV

Age: 36

Education: Oil Engineering,
Azerbaijan State Oil Academy

Position: Lead Piping Engineer



A Master in Triboengineering, Elshan possesses over 15 years of work experience in design and construction, with 2 years spent abroad in the Kazakhstan DUNGA Field construction Project and Georgian oil & gas terminal.

As a member of the Integrated Project Management Team, Elshan has participated in the evaluation of the integrated 3D model of the SOCAR Polymer plants. His responsibilities include timely provision of utilities and feedstock, advance planning of

all aspects of piping works to ensure compliance of design and installation with local and international standards; development of ToRs, checking of vendor documentation and material certificates.

Elshan is the author of published articles on “Rod-pumped well pacers” and “Blowout Preventers”. His article on “Modelling of rigid structures in severe conditions” was a tribute to the 80th Anniversary of the Azerbaijan State Oil Academy.

ELSHAN RAHIMOV

Age: 37

Education: Azerbaijan Technical University

Position: HSE Supervisor



Elshan is a good example to the saying: “We learn better through doing and teaching others to do”. With 5 years’ experience as a Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) Adviser in large projects implemented in Azerbaijan by international companies, Elshan has polished his skills in developing the corporate HSE culture and raising employee’s health and safety awareness for the sake of their families and their own.

Taking this process a step further, Elshan spent the following 8 years of his professional development on turning the lessons learned from practice into theory to be passed on at Occupational Health and Safety trainings, which he conducted as a competent senior HSE trainer and Quality Team Leader at one of the leading training organizations in Azerbaijan. 4,000,000+ Lost-Time-Injury-free manhours at SOCAR Polymer’s construction site speak highly in favour of its HSE team.

GULLAR TAGHIYEVA



Age: 31

Education: Environmental Technology, Imperial College London

Position: Environmental Engineer

Gullar holds 3 honour degrees: Bachelor's in Biology from Baku State University; TEMPUS TACIS Master's Degree in Environment and Oil & Gas Industry from the Azerbaijan State Oil Academy; and Master's in Environmental Technology from Imperial College London (UK). Gullar possesses sound knowledge of local environmental legislation, as well as international guidelines and conventions.

Through participation in the Contamination Land Project implemented in London in 2013, she became qualified in conceptual modelling of potential contamination and risk assessment. Having researched the oil spill incident in the Gulf of Mexico, Gullar can conduct a Net Environmental Benefit Analysis of clean-up operations. With first-hand experience in a Waste Management Project in London, Gullar is knowledgeable in analysis and synthesis of a Waste Management strategy for a decade.

KHALID GASIMOV



Age: 42

Education: Business Administration,
Western University

Position: HSE Manager

With more than 10 years of Health, Safety and Environmental (HSE) work experience in the construction, commissioning & operation fields mainly in Oil & Gas Sectors, Khalid is responsible for confirming that the project site adheres to Company and regulatory HSE standards and guidelines, monitoring the effective implementation of appropriate HSE System procedures. He has accompanied SOCAR Polymer all along from the site preparation stage implemented safely under his supervision.

Khalid is holding an international General Safety Diploma issued by the British Safety Council, as well as IOSH Managing Safely certification. Having such highest qualifications Khalid is a valuable asset to the SOCAR Polymer Project and all the working parties benefit from his knowledge, experience and continuous efforts towards developing the HSE culture.

MANSUR ATAKISHIYEV

Age: 36

Education: Power Engineering,
Azerbaijan State Oil Academy

Position: Project Engineer



Mansur's 15-year-long career started at the construction of Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli oil drilling platforms. He quickly progressed to the position of a Project Engineering Coordinator, and later, an EPC projects Manager. Mansur's work experience abroad includes subsurface seismic exploration of offshore oil fields in Egypt, UK, South Africa, Kazakhstan and the Mediterranean region.

In Azerbaijan, he has managed numerous brownfield projects including BTC/WREP/SCP. Now, Mansur is a Project Engineer with broad responsibilities in management, coordination and implementation of project activities and management of incorporated sub-projects.

Mansur holds two bachelor degrees and a certificate from the Open University Business School of Great Britain.

MATIN HUSEYNLI

Age: 25

Education: Chemical Engineering,
University of Toronto

Position: Process Engineer



Matin is a medalist of two International Olympiads in Chemistry. For his Bachelor degree, Matin won a scholarship through the State Program on Education of Azerbaijani Youths Abroad and majored in Chemical Engineering at the University of Toronto, Canada. He joined the company in 2014 as a recent graduate Process Engineer. For one full year, Matin attended on-the-job trainings at EPC contractor – Tecnimont's office in Mumbai and Project management trainings provided by PMI &

George-Washington University. As a member of the Integrated Project Management Team, he deals with process related issues, oversees the engineering works performed by contractors, reviews process datasheets, and ensures technical interfacing between SOCAR Polymer and 3rd party suppliers of Utilities and Feedstock.

ORKHAN HASANOV

Age: 26

Education: Advanced
Chemical Engineering,
University of Cambridge

Position: Process Engineer

Educated at Newcastle (BEng) and Cambridge Universities (MPhil), Orkhan has worked at a Research Center in Cambridge (UK) and received on-job training during detailed engineering phase of SOCAR Polymer project in Mumbai (India). Completion of degrees with excellence in studies allowed him to become an Associate Member of the Institution of Chemical Engineers.

Orkhan has conducted a research project about polymer electrolytes for high pressure and high temperature battery applications and developed testing methodology, characterized tested polymer material and identified future development directions. He also holds an Entrepreneurship certificate of the Cambridge Judge Business School. Orkhan's responsibilities include supervision of process issues, i.e. PFDs, PIDs, Data Sheets, HAZOP, etc.

TAMARA MAHARRAMOVA



Age: 33
Education: Automation and Process, Azerbaijan State Oil Academy
Position: QA/QC Welding/Piping Inspector

Tamara possesses work experience of 15 years in the field of inspection including 7 years of work abroad – UK, USA, Ireland, Thailand, UAE, Turkey and Georgia.

Tamara is not just a trained inspector, but one of the few female certified welders in Azerbaijan. This month this only woman in the department of 6 QA/QC specialists has been appointed a Deputy QA Manager.

Tamara holds a corporate award for her original suggestion of an oil spill cleaning technique which resulted in a 4-fold cost reduction.

She is one of the 2 professionals across Azerbaijan holding an API 653 certificate for aboveground tank inspection. She also holds a Plant Inspector Level 2 certificate and an Underwater Visual Inspector certificate CSWIP 3.2U.

TARLAN ABIYEV

Age: 33

Education: Automatic Control Systems,
National Aviation Academy

Position: Lead Controls
& Automation Engineer



A PhD Degree holder, Tarlan possesses 12 years' work experience in different industries with applied industrial process automation and instrumentation systems, including oil & gas, petrochemical, air traffic control and other fields. He has worked in different offshore and onshore projects in Azerbaijan such as BTC/SCP pipelines and the like.

Tarlan is a certified specialist trained abroad in different disciplines, including Software Engineering,

Programming and Operation (UK); Smart Plant Instrumentation and Engineers' Training (Netherlands); Commissioning & Startup training (India, Mumbai), etc.

His main responsibility is to ensure flawless execution of the Control and Instrumentation scope of the project at all its stages, starting from FEED, Detailed Engineering Design, Pre-commissioning, Commissioning, to Start up.

Summer interns selection launched



Students and graduates demonstrated genuine interest in SOCAR Polymer's Summer Internship Program and by the deadline of 30 April 2017, a total of 1287 online applications were submitted. The selection process was then launched to select 15-20 finalists for the 15 intern positions advertised. The first stage of the selection process started with the eligibility check, followed by screening of the applications comprising essays, academic transcripts and CVs, leaving in the end 551 applications accepted for the next selection stage. As candidates were allowed to apply nominating themselves for a number of positions, the 551 shortlisted applications were from 346 applicants. One of the reasons why many applicants didn't pass to the second selection stage was failure to come up with an impressive essay. The shortlisted candidates received an email inviting them to the English language (EL) test, unless they had submitted a document certifying their English language proficiency level as not lower than score 6 in IELTS or 80 in TOEFL (40 applicants). The applicants from the Baku Higher Oil School (111 applicants) were exempted from the test as the language of instruction at BHOS was English. The same rule applied to the applicants who studied for their higher education diploma abroad.

The English language test comprising 40 questions on English grammar and vocabulary was developed and administered by a 3rd party. The testing was held on May 26 at Grand Hotel Europe. The examinees were divided into 4 groups of about 50 people in each to be tested at different hours during the day and were instructed to bring to the test-room an ID card, a documented proof of their enrolment as

a 3rd or 4th year student or their Bachelor Diploma issued in 2016. A total of 50 applicants who demonstrated an Upper-intermediate or higher level of proficiency in the English language were informed by email to have passed the English test.

The next stage of the selection process will take place early in June and see 201 contestants sit for a so-called Ability test which consists of about 25 numerical reasoning test questions.

We wish all candidates good luck!



The second wave of trainings at PETKIM - OPS Fundamentals course



SOCAR Polymer continues its cooperation with PETKIM, aimed at continuous development of human resources and competence improvement through learning from others' progressive experience to navigate the company towards innovations.

Starting on May 08, another group of our employees comprising 13 plant operators and 1 plant shift supervisor attended a week-long course at a PETKIM industrial facility in Turkey to further enhance their professional capacity and experience. The productive training culminated in a Certificate Award ceremony held in PETKIM on May 12.

1. Kamran Gurbanly – Plant Operator
2. Vasif Hajiyev - Plant Operator
3. Tavakkul Mammadov - Plant Operator
4. Shahmammad Agjayev - Plant Operator
5. Said Gabilov - Plant Operator
6. Fuzuly Khalilov - Plant Operator
7. Hikmat Karimov - Plant Operator
8. Ragib Sadiyev - Plant Operator
9. Shamil Bayramov - Plant Operator
10. Tural Mehdizadeh - Plant Operator
11. Gafar Rustamov - Plant Operator
12. Abdulahad Akhundov - Plant Operator
13. Vugar Mammadov - Plant Operator
14. Tural Aliyev– Plant Shift Supervisor

SOCAR Polymer

Afag Ismayilova – Training and Development Specialist

Aylar Mustafayeva – Training and Development Coordinator

PETKIM

Khalig Mustafayev - Deputy General Manager on Business Support and Administration

Levent Kocagul - Deputy General Manager on Human Resources

Hasan Ulvi Suer - Training and Development Specialist

Faruk Demirbash - Polymer Plants Group Manager



Temporary Electrical Substation powered up



Provision of power supply to the PP/HDPE/U&O sections of the construction area at this point in the Project is required by our EPC contractor – the Kinetics Technology S.p.A. company, in order to conduct pre-commissioning tests on different pieces of equipment installed on site. To avoid delays inducible by the appropriate party's failure to timely supply power to our site, SOCAR Polymer resorted to the Plan B of constructing a temporary electrical substation (TES) for the purpose. Thus, the TES was constructed and successfully electrified on May 19, making pre-commissioning power available on site.

The TES is located physically outside the Project site perimeter northwards and feeds at 35000V level from the substation owned by the Sumgait Chemical Industrial Park

(SCIP). Subsequently, the TES transforms the 35000V of voltage supply to 6300V and supplies 6MW power to the plants' Common Electrical Substation via feeder cables.

It was not easy to complete the TES in time and get all the permits to energize it within a very tight timeframe, but SCIP assisted SOCAR Polymer in resolving the permit issues.

Upon the energization, KT was able to perform tests on medium voltage switchgear 3710-ESW01 A and B as of May 2017.

Electrification was an important milestone in our Project and therefore we thank everyone for their contribution to this achievement.

SOCAR Polymer represented at the 2nd Graduate Career Exhibition



SOCAR Polymer took part in the 2nd Graduate Career Exhibition held at the Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University (ASOIU) on May 27. The event brought together 56 companies and some 1500 students and graduates, with a total of 239 vacancies offered over 4 hours. Many state and private companies such as SOCAR, Azersu OJSC, BP, Schneider Electric, Schlumberger were represented at this job fair. Visiting the fair, the rector of ASOIU, Prof. Mustafa Babanli visited the company stands and spoke to the company representatives about the available vacancies. SOCAR Polymer was represented at this event by our Training and





Development Coordinator Aylar Mustafayeva and HR Assistant Ravan Khalilov. They informed the visitors about the active vacancies in the company, the details of the regular recruitment process and the annual Summer Internship Program, as well as answered questions.

At the Doors Open meeting held at 14:00 immediately after the exhibition, Mr.Babanli met with the heads and representatives of the companies participating in the exhibition to highlight the positive trends and outcomes of this growing event, and the intention to turn it into an annual tradition, as well as the university's internship programs, recent reforms and future plans. "This year's statistical indicators make me happier in comparison with the last exhibition. Although the exhibition is organized for the second time only, the achieved progress is quite evident. As a university, we have always attached much significance to students' internship experience at enterprises. As the education given at ASOIU leads to jobs based on practical skills and knowledge, collaboration with companies has always been a priority for us in our efforts to provide companies with the professionals they need. So, we can only develop if we act together," the rector emphasized.

The meeting was finalized with an exchange of opinions regarding the need and demand for specialists, students' problems and other current challenges.



Overseas OPS Trainings

OPS (OPERATIONS) TRAININGS ARE OVERSEAS TRAININGS CONDUCTED FOR SOCAR POLYMER'S OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE STAFF TO EXPAND THEIR THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICAL SKILLS REGARDING THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF OPERATING/MAINTAINING THE VARIOUS TYPES OF EQUIPMENT INSTALLED AT THE PP PLANT. TRAININGS ARE ORGANIZED BY TECNIMONT AND SOCAR POLYMER, AND ARE DELIVERED AT MANUFACTURERS' FACILITIES IN INDIA AND ITALY.



All of the staff for the plants will undergo appropriate training. The employees trained abroad form the core group of the staff, who will be responsible for the integrity and reliability of the plant operations. They will also provide assistance to the vendors' representatives in the pre-commissioning and commissioning processes. The rest of the staff will be trained in Sumgayit, with both classroom hours and hands-on involvement in pre- and commissioning operations. Since the PP and HDPE plants will run 24/7, the operating team members will work in shifts. Every shift will have a number of core group members in it to ensure faultless operation of the plants.

During the month of May, SOCAR Polymer employees attended the following trainings:

Training theme	C-3101 A/B/C & C-3102 Air Compressor	Distribution Control System	Emergency Shut Down	LV Switchgear	DC/AC UPS
Company/ Location	Atlas Copco India Ltd. Pune, INDIA	Yokogawa India Ltd. Bangalore, INDIA		ABB Ltd. San Martino in Strada, ITALY	CEG Elettronica Industriale S.p.A. Arezzo, ITALY
Duration	10 days	15 days	5 days	5 days	3 days
Dates	17-27 May	15-26 May	29 May-2 Jun	22 May-26 May	30 May-1 Jun
Participants' positions	2 mechanical shift supervisors and 2 technicians	2 shift supervisors, 1 process engineer, 5 plant operators, 1 junior instrumentation engineer, and 6 instrumentation technicians		3 electrical technicians	
Participants' names	Mahmud Huseynov Ilyas Muradov Kamran Gurbanov Rufat Hajiyev	Elmaddin Kazimov Nariman Akbarov Rovshan Sadigov Elvin Aslanli Nizami Piriye Rashid Karimli Rasul Ahadov Khalil Hasanov	Royal Novruzov Yelmar Aliyev Elchin Aliyev Javid Abdullayev Vusal Huseynov Shahin Gaziye Ramin Osmanov	Farid Mikayilov Muzaffar Soltanov Zaur Ismayilov	



Mahmud Huseynov
Mechanical Supervisor

- I attended the Air Compressors course conducted on 17-27 May by the Atlas Copco company in India. Atlas Copco is a world-renowned Indian company producing air compressors, air dryers and spare parts such as intercoolers, aftercoolers, moisture traps, filters, etc. This company is based in Pune – the 2nd biggest city of Maharashtra and an industrial hub of India. As the seventh largest metropolitan economy, Pune accounts for the 6th highest per capita income in the country. With its numerous colleges and universities, Pune is emerging as a prominent location for IT, non-IT and manufacturing companies to expand. It is home to the Automotive Research Association of India, with all sectors of the automotive industry represented, from two-wheelers and auto-rickshaws to cars, tractors, excavators and trucks. Many famous automotive companies like Mercedes Benz, General Motors, Land Rover, Jaguar, Renault, Volkswagen, and Fiat, as well as automotive component manufacturers such as Saint-Gobain Sekurit, TATA Autocomp Systems Ltd, Robert Bosch GmbH, etc. have production facilities here. So, the number of mechanical engineering companies is growing in Pune day by day.

The training center was in Atlas Copco company's main office building. The course covered 2 types of air compressors and 2 types of dryers for them. Enrolled in the course were 2 supervisors and 2 technicians from the Mechanical subdivision of our plants' Maintenance team.

Atlas Copco's project engineer Ganesh Chandkhede and project manager Manish Gandhi were our principal trainers. They both specialized in air compressors. They presented to us three pieces of the ZR500 type two-stage screw air compressors supplied with water cooling systems, air and oil filters, moisture traps, oil heat exchangers, strainers and big motors. They also provided manuals and video tutorials containing precise information about the ZT200 emergency two-stage screw air cooled compressor, supplied with fin fan coolers, alternators, engines and other auxiliary parts. Atlas Copco also provided comprehensive training materials on CD and BD dryers it produces. Both dryer types are designed to remove moisture from compressed air used for regulating the control valves and cleaning the auxiliary mechanical components such as filters. The three ZR500 water-cooled two-stage air compressors and one ZT200 air-cooled two-stage air compressor in combination with their CD and BD type dryers are used for producing instrument and plant air. In the framework of the training, we also visited Atlas Copco's mechanical and testing shops to get familiarized with the actual workflow during maintenance, repair, installation, and mounting works.

The training was well organized and quite informative. Upon return from the training, I shared all the gained information and useful tips with the rest of our mechanical team through an electronic presentation. I am very thankful to SOCAR Polymer for the opportunity to attend and benefit from this training.



Nariman Akbarov

Operations Shift Supervisor

- These trainings on operations were aimed at providing us with the theory and practice related to the Distribution Control and Emergency Shut Down systems at our plants.

The provider of the DCS/ESD trainings, the Yokogawa company possesses more than 100 years of work experience in this field, cooperating with the leading oil-gas and petrochemical companies of the world.

The training was held at the training centre and production facilities of the Yokogawa company in the Bangalore city of the Republic of India. The training centre was well provided with state-of-the-art equipment.

The DCS/ESD trainings were attended abroad because the simulation program and the Yokogawa company's equipment for these trainings were located at that training centre.

The trainers selected separately for the mentioned two training are Yokogawa employees with long-standing experience in the given fields. Consisting of both theoretical and practical parts, the trainings were conducted both in classrooms and on site. The trainers tried to diversify the topics in the daily program of the trainings.

A total of 15 members of SOCAR Polymer's Operations and Maintenance departments took part in the training. According to the plan, daily training sessions lasted 6 hours.

The training mainly covered the DCS/ESD systems to be installed at our plant, and one training day was fully dedicated to practical familiarization with the DCS system of an HDPE production facility.

Practical performance of the DCS system operations was, in my opinion, the most useful part of the training.

The most interesting part of the DCS training, which will turn very helpful during operations, was when we, the trainees, prepared the real-time graphs of the processes ourselves. The skills gained during the developing such real-time graphical reports will be very useful for the operations team.

In comparison with the DCS training, the ESD training seemed more complicated judging by the diversity of the topics covered. However, at the final post-training test, the trainees from SOCAR Polymer proved that they had mastered the subject well and were granted respective certificates thereof.

The trainings well planned by the professionals of the Yokogawa company covered most of the topics and issues pertaining to the DCS/ESD systems.

Once the PP and HDPE operation systems are in place at the SOCAR Polymer plant, we shall constantly apply the knowledge and skills we have gained at the DCS/ESD trainings. We shall also share the gained knowledge and practical experience with the rest of our team.

We are thankful to the management of the SOCAR Polymer company for their support and provided opportunities to attend international trainings for improvements both in theory and practice. All the administrative issues related to the trainings had been accurately solved by our company, enabling us to fully benefit from the experience. The hospitable trainers of the Yokogawa company largely supported us throughout the trainings, so, on behalf of all our trainees I am expressing our gratitude to them as well.

Building up Presentation Skills



SOCAR Polymer arranged a 16-hours' training on "Presentation Skills" held on May 24 and 26 for the Integrated Project Management Team (IPMT) members, having them look at all the factors that affect how successfully they deliver any presentation, anywhere. The training offered simple, easy to practice tools to help cope with nerves, get the message across memorably, structure the material for the best impact and present to audiences of varied sizes. The course helped presenters look forward to their next presentation instead of wishing they were elsewhere in a less stressful environment. It was fun and effective with plenty of opportunities to practice.

The training was organised by a 3rd party and included modules on categorization of speakers, preparation steps for a presentation, structural design of a presentation, important principles to create powerful presentations, useful tips for a presenter, and individual/group exercises on delivering presentations. The training has benefitted 12 IPMT members, namely, Anar Mahmudov, Aydamir Huseynov, Jalya Farzaliyeva, Jamila Ismayilzadeh, Kamil Sadigov,

Matin Huseynli, Mansur Atakishiyev, Nasim Mammadov, Rufat Guliyev, Sabina Afandiyeva, Sabina

Huseynova, Tarlan Abiyev, as well as Fidan Huseynova and Emil Mahmudlu.





Ascent to the Heydar Aliyev mountain peak

On the occasion of the 94th birthday anniversary of the great national leader Heydar Aliyev, 11 employees of the SOCAR Polymer company successfully participated in the ascent to the Heydar Aliyev mountain peak located 3751 m above the sea level, in the Shahdag National Park, within the Ghizil Gaya section of the Bashdag mountain range of the Great Caucasus.





SOCAR Polymer's sportive employees had well prepared for this ascent organized by the Association of Azerbaijan Extreme Sports Federation (FAIREX) and Azerbaijan Mountaineering Extreme Sports Federation. On April 9 and 23 they had made test ascents to the peaks of the Beshbarmag mountain and Charaggaya cliff in the Baku-Guba direction in order to try their strength and develop essential skills and habits.

Our group of mountain climbers left the Baku city on May 7 to conquer the Heydar Aliyev summit, with mountain guides who accompanied the ascenders along the route pre-determined by the Organisational Committee established in the Shahdag National Park by the Ministry of Ecology

and Natural Resources (MENR). The ascenders covered on foot a total of approximately 20 km from the 1st camp in 4 kilometers' distance from Khinalig settlement (approx. 2200 m above sea level) to the Heydar Aliyev peak and back. Despite the unstable weather conditions in the Shahdag area, our high-spirited team overcame such challenges as snow, rain, slippery ice and shifty gravel, burning sunrays and fatigue to realize the power and significance of unity and team efforts. With the Azerbaijan National Flag, SOCAR Polymer, SOCAR GPC and Fluor's flags raised at the peak of the mountain, the proud ascenders commemorated the great politician and distinguished leader, Heydar Aliyev.



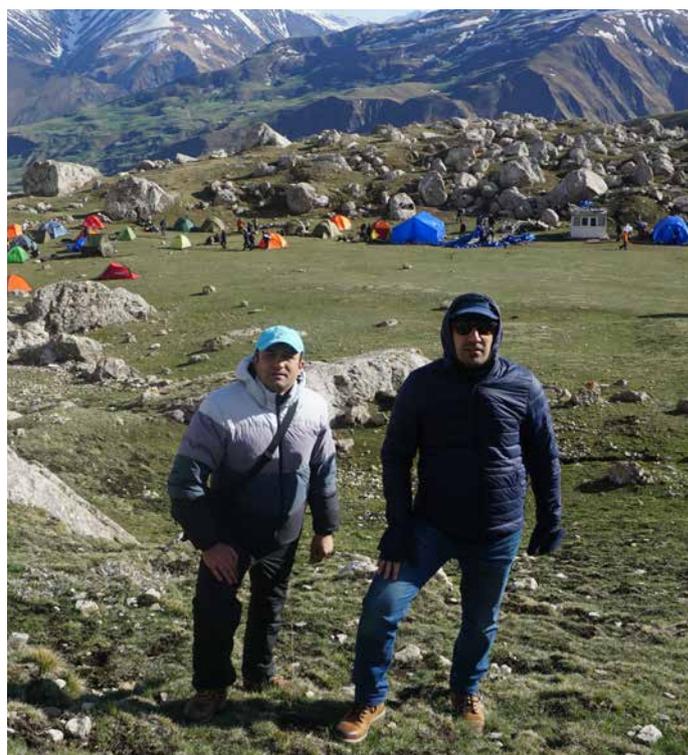


SOCAR Polymer's summit conquerors are Elshan Garayev, Elizabeth Lombarts, Famil Mammadov, Gabil Mikayilov, Guy Lombarts, James Chau, Javid Jafarov, Khalil Hasanov, Mansur Atakishiyev, Samir Javadov and Tariyel Bagishov.



It is worthy of note that the number of people participating in this initiative has grown considerably in recent years, turning the event into a good annual tradition. This year, about 600 local and foreign, professional and amateur sportsmen from different districts, ministries, organisations, companies and entities of the republic have joined in this event. The Azerbaijan Air and Extreme Sports Federation was in charge of ensuring the safety of and providing instructions to the ascenders. On SOCAR Polymer's part, large credit is due to Guy

Lombarts, Sabina Huseynova and Sona Ramazanova for having efficiently arranged our employees' participation in the event by holding weekly organizational and informative meetings and effectively resolving all the direct or associated organizational and logistic issues encountered. The successful ascent of our colleagues was celebrated in SOCAR Polymer's Baku office as the General Manager of the company Farid Jafarov presented medals to the happy and proud awardees.

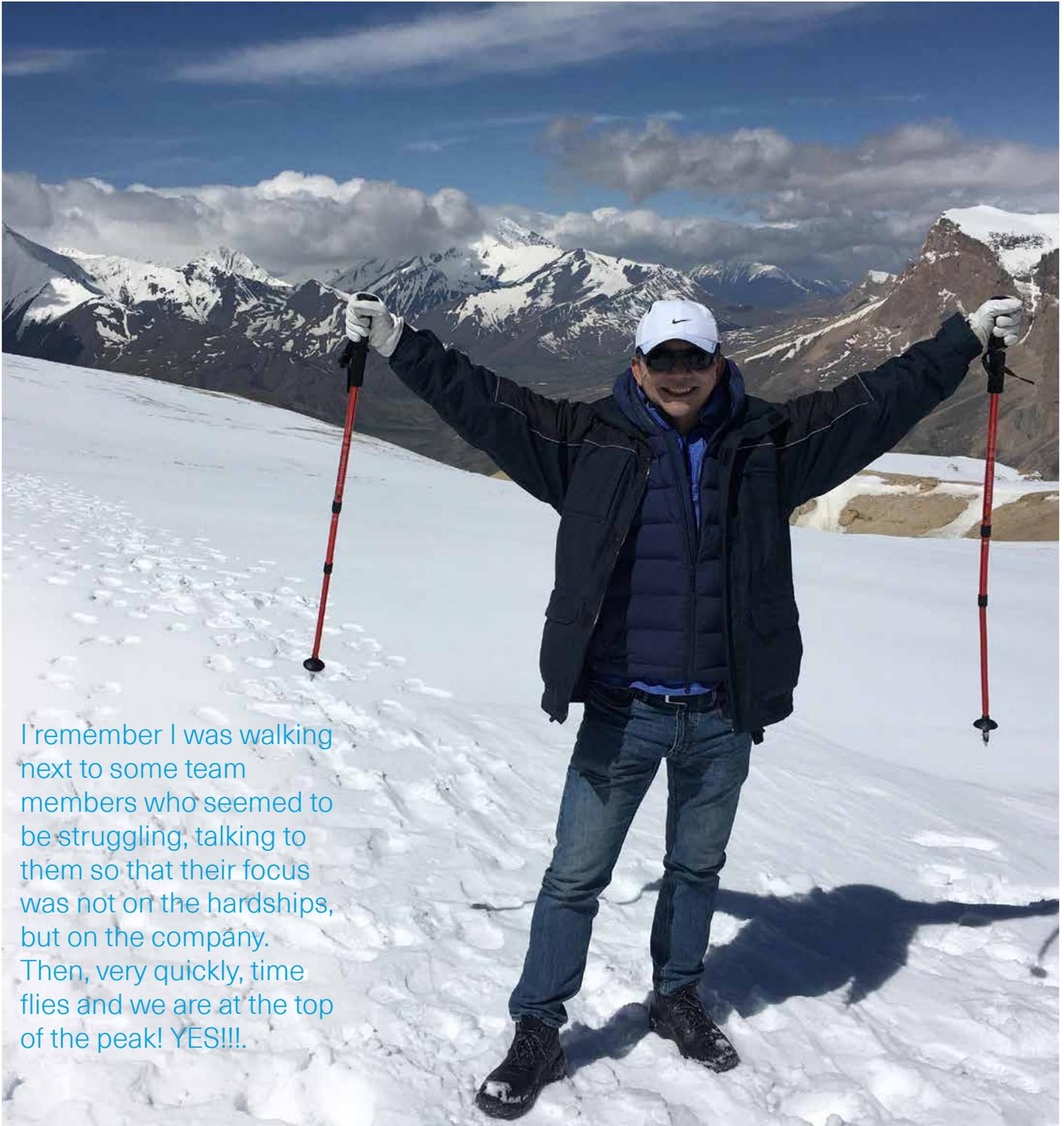


SUMMIT CONQUERORS TELL THEIR STORY

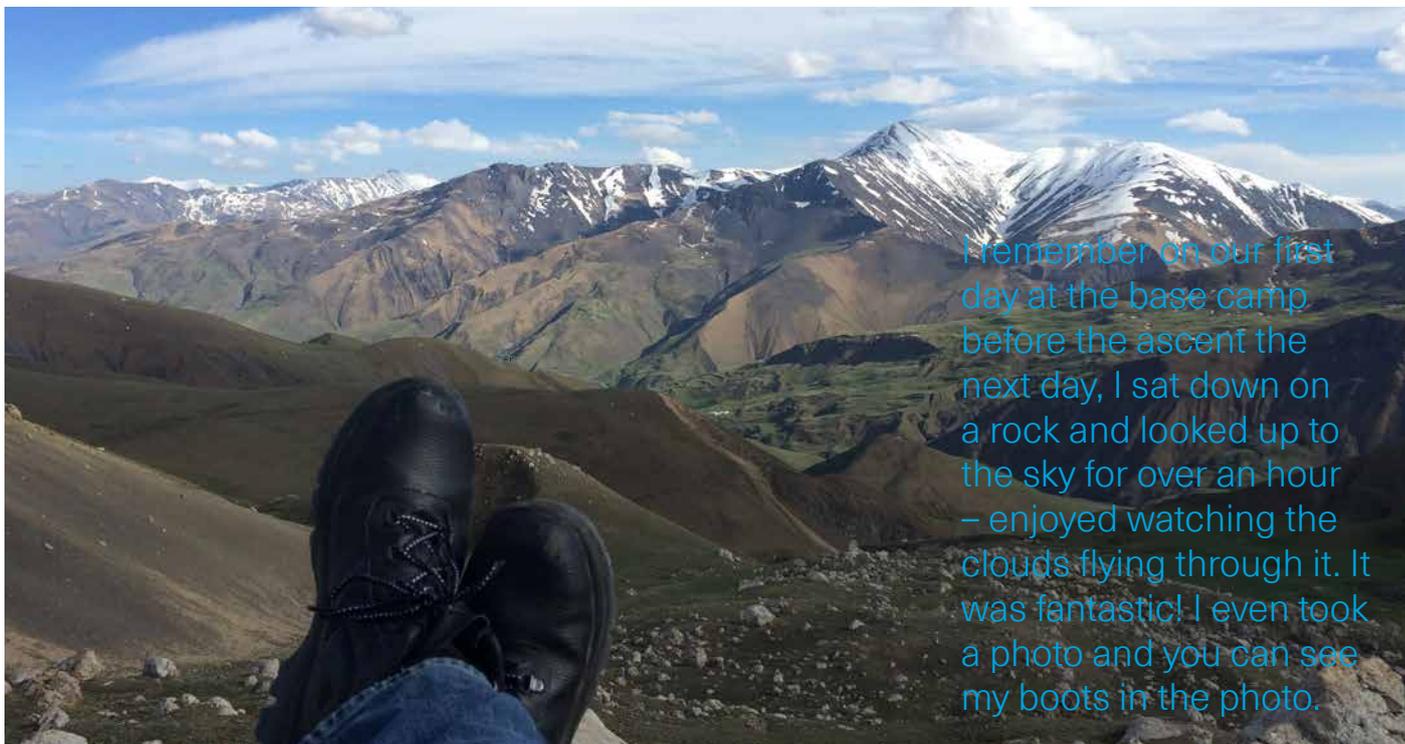
Get a sense of achievement

James Chau

Engineering manager



I remember I was walking next to some team members who seemed to be struggling, talking to them so that their focus was not on the hardships, but on the company. Then, very quickly, time flies and we are at the top of the peak! YES!!!



I remember on our first day at the base camp before the ascent the next day, I sat down on a rock and looked up to the sky for over an hour – enjoyed watching the clouds flying through it. It was fantastic! I even took a photo and you can see my boots in the photo.

I always enjoyed mountain hiking in Canada, and this was my first time climbing a mountain in Azerbaijan. I enjoy the outdoors and in Vancouver where I live, there are three mountains called Cypress, Seymour and Grouse. My family goes there all the time for hiking in the summer and skiing in the winter. My wife was the one who brought me into skiing. If she had been here at the time of this ascent I am sure she would have joined in. To answer your question about the other sports I do, nowadays I mainly do running, working out in the gym, roller-blading, golfing and bicycling. In the past I did other sports, such as skiing, playing basketball, soccer, and volleyball.

Speaking of the ascent to the H.Aliyev peak, it was a fantastic event. We, SOCAR Polymer's mountaineer team, were well-prepared, equipped and the ascent was totally safe. The event was quite well-organized. The company provided the backpacks and the camping gear, which is very important. The transportation between Baku and the mountain location was excellent. What an incredible ride on some mountain roads though! On the mountain slope, we just followed the leading guide in a single file during our ascent to the peak.

What is the biggest challenge during the ascent to the peak? I had so much fun that I forgot about the challenges, to be honest. I suppose the night staying over in the mountains was the biggest challenge. Sleeping in a tent was a bit cold, even for a Canadian. Another challenge that comes to my mind is that we had to be careful not to step through the snow during our ascent. It happened to me a couple of times: I stepped through the snow to my knee, so I had to pull myself up before carrying on with the journey.

In terms of elevation adjustment, it was a good plan that we stayed overnight in the base camp located at about 2900 meters above sea level, where we adjusted our bodies to the high altitude. This prevented us from having sickness due to the high elevation level. Another thing one must keep in mind at high elevation is that the sun is very strong. Sunscreen is a must for skin protection all the time.

In mountains, you get all kinds of weather and it is part of the fun to me personally. How often do you have rain and snow

and sun on the same day? Up there you do, and it is part of the experience that gives an incredible emotional charge. Having gone through it, now I can talk to you about it, and that's what I mean – it's rewarding.

The mountain range in the area of the H.Aliyev peak is unbelievable. I remember on our first day at the base camp before the ascent the next day, I sat down on a rock and looked up to the sky for over an hour – enjoyed watching the clouds flying through it. It was fantastic! I even took a photo and you can see my boots in the photo.

And of course, every time I go up a mountain like this I have a great sense of achievement. Especially with the slippery path covered with snow and mud, I feel good when I get up to the mountain peak, no matter how many times I have done that before. I really enjoy it and I have to thank SOCAR Polymer for having given me the opportunity as part of the SP team to appreciate such a wonderful scenery in Azerbaijan. As soon as I heard about it I signed up for it right away, and I would definitely be happy to join in next year, given such a chance.

One wonderful thing about going to an event like this is overcoming the challenges together with your colleagues. We supported and helped each other during the ascent to the peak. To some team members, the ascent to the peak was physically demanding and difficult. We then encouraged one another. I remember I was walking next to some team members who seemed to be struggling, talking to them so that their focus was not on the hardships, but on the company. Then, very quickly, time flies and we are at the top of the peak!

This first-time ascent to the H.Aliyev peak will encourage others in the SOCAR Polymer to join in the fun next time. My recommendation to those who missed out this year would be 'just come, it's easier than you think, and you can do it'. We can even organize a fun hike up to the Beshbarmak mountain peak to begin with. The SOCAR Polymer marathon runners, including the ladies, can definitely go for it.



Guy Lombarts Fluor Project Director

I have always tried to do extreme sports where you have to challenge yourself to do something a little bit out of your envelope. Not very often, but at least once a year, I need to do something special when you push yourself outside of civilization, outside of the city life, into the nature, and try something out of the ordinary. You do it for yourself, to challenge yourself, to push yourself outside of your limit, but to be honest, there is no limit to what you can do once you start believing in yourself.

When you go on a mountain like that you always go through several phases. The first is the excitement about the prospect, when spirits and confidence are high, so, in the first hour, you climb and you are fresh. But then towards the middle slowly yet surely your muscles start hurting, you realize that it is tougher than you thought, you can't see how far the summit is, your spirit goes down and you start questioning yourself and wondering 'am I strong enough to finish it?', 'why on the earth do I want to do this?', 'what kind of joy have I got to have all this pain in my muscles?', 'why didn't I choose something else to do in my weekend?' and you hate yourself for having made the decision to do it. There is always this black hole in the middle of the ascent to overcome. It's like falling into a pit, but the moment you

realize that your mind controls everything you learn to get out of the pit. So, it is about overcoming your doubt about yourself which I think is the most enjoyable part of the experience. I think my team got exactly the same feeling. And for me it is an incredible satisfaction to see that this entire team had this experience and came back proud of themselves. That is last phase you go through – satisfaction. Once you have gone through this experience, you want to have this feeling again. It becomes an addiction. It is like adrenalin pumping. You are driven by adrenalin, although it's not a competitive sport in which you have a lot of emotions. You get addicted to it because when you go back to your life you miss this excitement, and that's why you have to come back every year and do it again, because there is something so beautiful about it that you have to relive it next year and the year after.

In addition to that, I must say Azerbaijan is a nice country, but its jewel is the Caucasus – the mountains are pristine. I've long wished to go up to one of the tops.

It's the first time I've done it with such a big group and luckily, we had a very well-trained colleague who'd done it before and took care of all the little issues on the way



because it never works according to plan. By solving issues, he enabled us to focus on the experience and there was nothing negative that could affect our spirit. We had a couple of sessions to prepare for the ascent. Both Alexey Seytlin from SOCAR and myself gave all the tips. When you first hear a tip, you don't realize how important it is. Only when you are there you remember 'oh, yes, I was told to put tape on my feet in the areas where I might get blisters'. That's why we did a couple of trainings – not so much to train the muscles, but to indicate where one could suffer and how to do things right. For instance, how to strap your bag: whether to let it low on your hips or put it higher on your shoulders. Normally, one has to carry about 16 kg on one's back. We were lucky there were tents and sleeping bags on the top, so, we had 10-12 kg, except for the people who decided to take heavy food. Every gram counts when you are climbing up, so, you have to choose, either light dehydrated food or heavy cans of preserves. We also had stoves and pots for cooking for people who wanted to eat something hot in the evening. You have to look at every single gram and ask yourself if you need it. Do I need a big or small toothbrush, and will an airplane size toothpaste tube be enough? Management of your backpack is something you learn best through experience. Such things can be explained, and

there are a lot of tips you can get, but they will not sink in unless you are climbing and actually experiencing these problems. So, hopefully, tips are remembered to make an ascent as pleasant as possible.

We started from Khinalig with a shirt on and warm clothes in the backpack (it was about 25 degrees outside). As it grew colder, we put things on. It was minus 15 on the slope at night and when we started out very early in the morning, we had all our clothes on us, but when we were coming down early afternoon it was already warmer.

I think the biggest challenge for everybody was the night when we were in tents on a freezing-cold mountain slope. I don't think you can get prepared for it, there is always something that turns out harder than you expected. Even though you are sleeping completely dressed in a sleeping bag, there is still the wind blowing even through the tent.

Another challenge, of course, is sore feet which suffer most from the climb: you do it only three days in a lifetime or 3 days in a year, and your feet are not used to such stress, so, if you don't have the right socks, you get blisters and pain. And yes, there is such a thing as the 'right' or 'wrong' socks.



We also suffered a lot from the sun which is very bright at that altitude and sunrays are not filtered, so, those who didn't have very good sunglasses got pain in the eyes. Of course, one can tell people all the DOs and DON'Ts but one cannot prepare them for every possible case.

There are several ways in which this experience has benefited the team. Some of them are stronger, some are weaker, so at a certain moment they've had to help each other, be it physical support or just a couple of words. So, the first benefit is learning that you are really a team and you have to get the last one up and cannot abandon anybody, so, you make sure the whole team fully shares the experience.

Also, they learned to organize themselves. It is not like 'I am in a group, so, somebody will take care of me'. You prepare yourself to carry your own stuff, but then there is also a little task you do for the rest of the group. One will carry the food for everybody, the other will carry the stove, so, you always have a share of responsibility for others.

The other thing makes you benefit as an individual. It is proving to yourself that if you set your mind to it, you can still achieve it. And when you come back here and set up a task at work, you know nothing is impossible. You come back believing in yourself, and thinking more ahead, because up there you had to plan ahead with everybody. Suddenly your planning skills get better. It's probably not visible and it's something you may not realize you've acquired. These are the aspects that you learn and can apply in your day-to-day life.

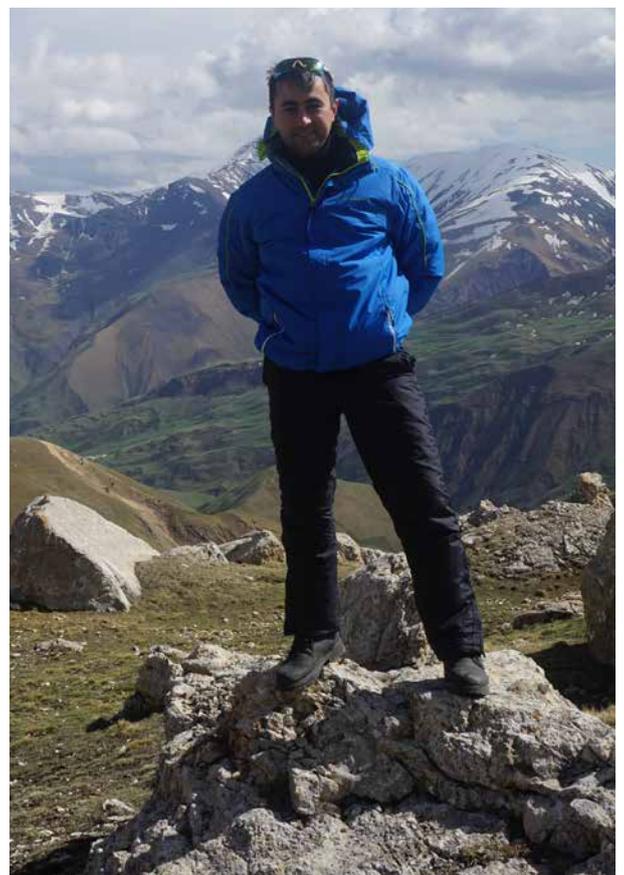
You know, I knew a few of the people in the working environment, but I saw them completely differently in the adventure environment. People of whom you never hear in the office, took the lead sorting out everything for everybody. For example, two guys took the lead of the group and I was just following them. You don't realize the skills of the people until you put them in a completely different environment. The best leader for the group in the mountains turned out somebody who in the office never shows the will or wish to take a leading position. So, for me it was a good way to understand more about the people, and for them it was great to know how much they can rely on each other in a completely different environment.

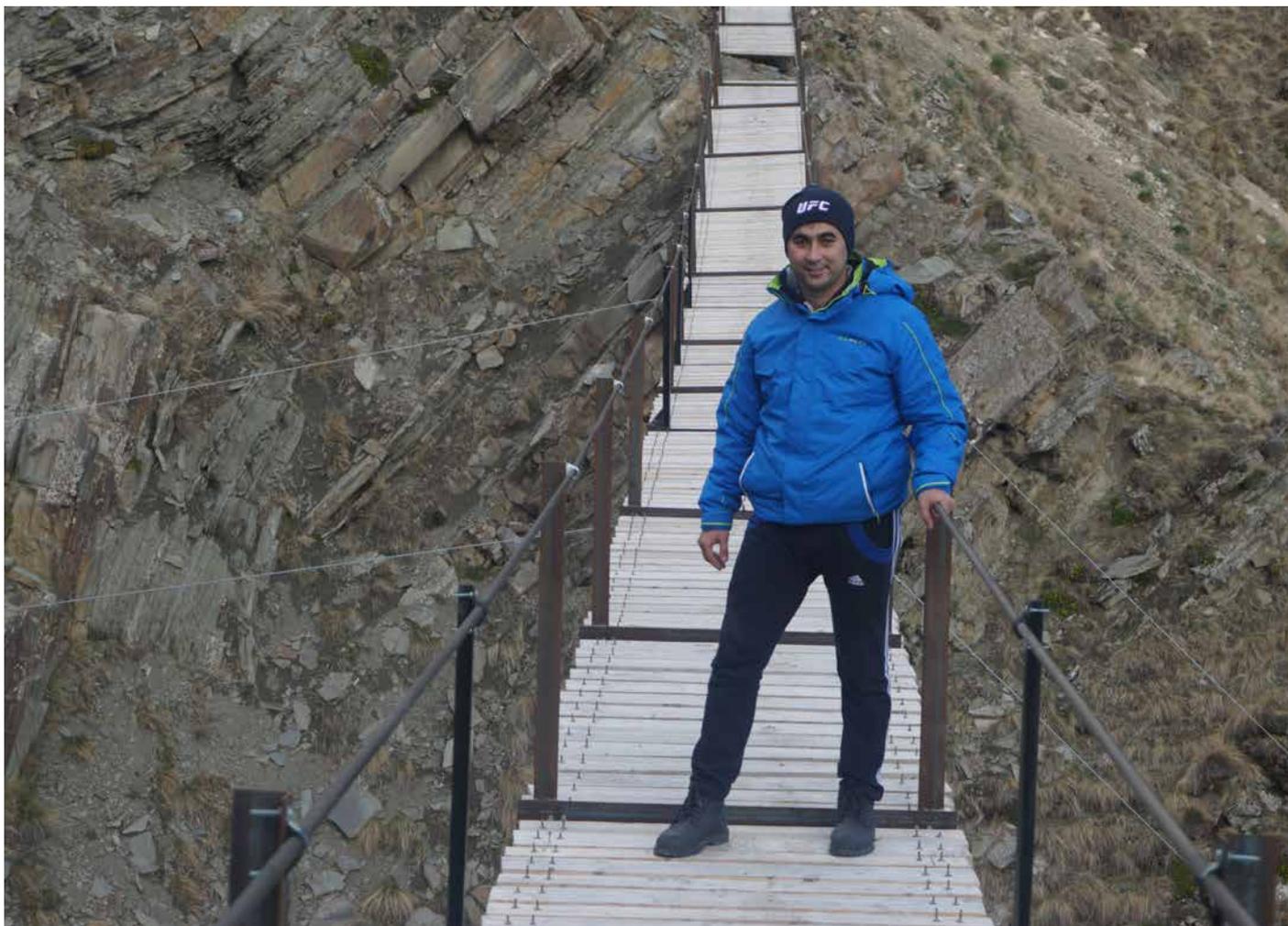


Famil Mammadov
Warehouseman

Our journey into mountains started with Khinalig, which as you may know is a settlement located highest above the sea level in our country. An old truck produced in the Soviet times drove us to the Khinalig settlement as other vehicles failed the task half way through. Heading for Khinalig with natural obstacles and technical issues on the way you get a feeling that it is some kind of a faraway kingdom in a fairyland that only the most persistent and daring ones can reach. The settlement itself, too, is comprised of ancient-style handmade houses, with amicable people dwelling in them and speaking their own specific language we didn't comprehend. But they understood us and were willing to help in any way they could. We made a short stop there and tasted the crystal clear cold water of their springs.

Then we continued our journey to the guest house located amidst three hills with a fabulous view of the BazarDuzu mountain which is one of the highest peaks in the Caucasus mountain range. As soon as we settled in the guest house for the night, we walked out to enjoy the views. Even though gathered there were people from different organisations and companies, everyone was sociable and positive. That evening we played games, told jokes and enjoyed the company of new friends. It was snowing and cold at night, and in the morning it was raining when we set out for the next camp. The weather lived a life of its own, changing every half an hour. Wind, sunshine, rain and snow alternated accompanying us for 2 hours on our way to the organisers' camp. The ascent was not an easy one, and we took breaks every hour. Interestingly, I saw





nearby-village-residents with horses, who offered help to the ascenders so that they could travel light by loading their belongings on horses. Quite a few ascenders resorted to such services, whereas the SOCAR Polymer team decided to overcome the hardships on their own, although some carried as much as 40-50 kg. When we reached the FAIREX team's camp, we were well received and promptly settled in, as all the workflow processes in the camp were well coordinated and managed. The higher into the mountains, the greater the changes in temperature and pressure, so we adjusted gradually. Awake at 6 a.m., we quickly got prepared and accurately lined up for the culminating part of the ascent. I would divide the 3-hour hike to the peak into three phases: the first being the easiest, the second – the hardest, and the last – of moderate difficulty. We were lucky to have remarkably good weather that morning. Progressing upwards we passed warnings down the chain to notify our followers about the slippery parts of the icy path and other circumstances that demanded caution. Some of our colleagues at this point experienced the hardest times and stopped to take a break and accumulate strength. Closer to the summit, ice yielded to snow and it became less difficult to advance. Finally, at the top we enjoyed the solemn triumph of will and persistence over physical strain and disbelief. Up there, not only a geographical peak was reached, but also many imaginative peaks of success in personal self-tests were achieved.

Upon return to the camp we were awarded with certificates that increased our deep inner satisfaction with ourselves.

Through this event, I rediscovered some of my colleagues and gained new friends. Our team spirit, I should say, was very high. We backed one another as fellow-soldiers do in battlefields. When I had pain in my feet or other colleagues had different issues, we collectively sought solution. Even aspiration for victory and words of encouragement were commonly shared, just as any tension was collectively neutralized.

It has become an unforgettable event in my life. I highly estimate it as I've realized that in the company of the right people one can feel inner comfort even in the most uncomfortable circumstances of all. I've grown confident in the fact that our team is reliable and it is a very important realization plain as it may sound.

I would like to express my gratitude to our company and personally to Farid Jafarov for giving us the opportunity to participate in this event, as well as to Sona Ramazanova for helping us get equipped, prepared and provided with all that was necessary. I am hoping that we will be as successful in attaining our job-related goals as we have been in this sport challenge, both individually and as a team.

A man wearing a dark blue jacket, khaki pants, a beanie, and sunglasses is hiking on a snowy mountain slope. He is using two trekking poles. In the background, other hikers and a mountain peak are visible under a clear blue sky.

Tariyel Bagishov

Warehouse Specialist

I am very much into sports. I play soccer 4 times a week. So, when I heard about the ascent I expressed my interest immediately. The idea originally came from our SOCAR colleagues who are extreme sport enthusiasts and know mountain paths pretty well.

The ascent surpassed our expectations both in terms of difficulties and post-satisfaction. It was difficult, at times even dangerous and extreme. However, all of our team managed to overcome the challenge.

When you look down from the summit, with clouds beneath you and the enormous Shahdag mountain ski resort appearing the size of a matchbox, it gives you colossal emotional charge and pleasure.

It was really a 3-day event. We had to adjust to the altitude change to avoid dizziness and nausea. On the first day, we spent the night at 2200 m, the second day at 2500 m, and the peak was at 3571 m above the sea level.

Two Mercedes minibuses were to take us from Baku to Guba and on to the elevated Khinalig village, but our adventures started early as the road to Khinalig was so steep that when one of the buses broke down on the way, the other refused to proceed and dropped us off 20-30 km away from the destination. The head of the Khinalig Village Council sent an old "GAZ-66" truck to give us a lift. We passed Khinalig and had our passports checked at the border control post. We had prepared for such formalities the week before. The truck brought us to Ateshgah, where we spent the first night in a guest house. There we cooked our meals, sat around a big table, sharing food, stories and fun, playing group games like charades. As far as I remember only Guy Lombarts went to bed early. He was clever to save energy for the next days' demands.

The guest house had 2 rooms, with 4 two-storied and a few folding beds, so we were quite comfortable there. What I liked most about Ateshgah was the experience of cooking food and grilling sausages over the burning gas that escapes from under the ground in that area. There was a flat-top stone placed on the flames for cooking purposes. A bowl of soup or a teapot on it came to a boil in no time.

The second stop was at the ascenders' camp set up by the Ministry of Ecology specifically for this year's ascent, with guides and first aiders. It was like a final registration camp to keep track of all the ascenders, coordinate the inflow of enthusiasts and award them with certificates on



the way back. The camp runners pronounced all the safety rules and instructions for an injury-free ascent, informed us of the agenda for the next day and advised to eat little but calorie-rich food.

We reached this camp within 3-4 hours of leaving Ateshgah, set up our tents, unrolled the floor mats and sleeping bags, lunched, took a walk around, and in the evening dined in small groups. Tents were designed for two people, but Elshan Garayev, Mansur Atakishiyev and I ended up in one. Gabil Mikayilov, Famil Mammadov and Samir Javadov shared another one. There was no electricity so we used flashlights. We heated food on the portable stoves our company had graciously procured among other things. We had rather well prepared for the event and distributed shopping tasks: I was to look for walking sticks, Guy Lombarts - for stoves, someone else – for floor mats. Walking sticks seemed a rare item in sports shops. I was about to go to Georgia to buy those. Mountain hiking is quite popular in Georgia.

The night we spend in the tents was remembered for the most disturbed night sleep ever. It was terribly cold and we made use of all the warm clothes we had packed. After light breakfast next morning, we lined up at 7 a.m. for a roll call and technical check-up. It was recommended to leave backpacks in the camp or take smaller ones with snacks. There were water springs on the way up, so bottles were needless. The path we followed wasn't going straight up, it was zigzagging. The slopes were covered with knee-high snow and we often sank in. We walked in one file, with one guide leading the procession, and another ending

it at the tail to make sure no one was left behind, and the two guides were communicating by radio. We made short breaks to let those behind to catch up with the rest. It took us 4 hours to reach the mountain peak, where we filled our lungs with the air of pride and renewed self-confidence, enjoyed the views and took numerous pictures, struggling with sweeping gusts of ice-cold wind. Guy Lombarts even took a picture with a flag bearing the coat-of-arms of his hometown in Belgium.

Going down turned out far more difficult than climbing up, for the risk of slipping or stumbling. We scattered around not to cause a domino effect if one should trip and push the person in front down. Some of the hikers slipped and slid down the slope. True, there weren't any places where one could slide off the edge into an abyss, but some of us surely slid on our backs and bottoms down quite a long distance, like on a sledge. I, for instance, fell and slid some 50-60 meters down the slope in punishment for having thoughtlessly laughed at Elshan Garayev's fall earlier. Samir, I remember, suffered the same fate. One had better have overalls for such occasions not to have snow go into clothes and up the sleeves, as one tries to slow down the ride with hands. There were some experienced hikers there who actually demonstrated a fast and professional descent using sledge-like appliances.

On the way back to Ateshgah, it hailed heavily with a smooth transition to heavy rain accompanied with wind. We all were soaked through. 'Wet to the bone' as they say.



Some of the lessons learnt are that clothes must be chosen wisely, pants are better be transformable into shorts as the environment quickly shifts from hot to cold and vice versa. Moving actively one tends to sweat more and it is not always possible to change clothes right away. Lip balm is another indispensable item up there, wanted to heal drying and cracking lips. Sunburns are very common at high altitudes. The right sunglasses are also a must both for eye protection and good visibility. Impermeable shoes are highly desirable. A small-size thermos to provide you with a hot drink out in the cold would be nice. Food and nutrition needs must be accurately calculated and planned for the entire journey not to carry excessive weight. We didn't have special dehydrated food for hikers, nor were we knowledgeable about the specialized stores to buy such food at, so, we ended up bringing canned beef and the like. Our bags weighed 20-25 kg. We gave lots of food to the organisers' team at the tent camp, which made them very happy. We left behind several cans of beef, biscuits, nutrition bars, mineral water (you know, mountain streak water is exclusively melted snow without minerals), eggplant paste, pickles, vegetables, fruit and the like. In short, this time most of us learned lessons from our own bitter experience.

Meanwhile, some of the skills that I gained included putting up a tent and lighting up a fire with minimal resources, and it is fascinating to learn new things in a completely uncommon environment outside of your comfort zone. From Ateshghah we drove back to Khinalig and then to Guba where we decided to celebrate the entire adventure with a lunch party in a local restaurant.

You know it is funny how on the way up while struggling with fatigue, sore muscles and evaporating enthusiasm, or when living through the descent hazards, enduring the pain from scratches and bruises you regret your involvement in such strenuous activity. You very often ask yourself 'what am I doing here?', 'why did I get myself into this?', and you absolutely hate yourself and promise never to do this again. But once you return home, get a rest, have a good meal, shower off all the tension and body soreness, you start thinking you could venture out for a climb again in a couple of weeks.

The teambuilding effect of the ascent is tangible, as it not only further consolidated our office team, but also expanded our communication beyond the office hours and work-related subjects. Practically for the first time it offered me an occasion to meet colleagues from our operations team, Javid and Khalil. So, the biggest outcome of this sportive event, in my opinion, has been further development of friendly relations among coworkers.

As for me, I grew up in the Gusar district enjoying the view of these mountains from our windows. For men in our district, climbing up those mountains at some point in life is a must. It is little fun doing that alone. So, this opportunity was very timely. I am immensely grateful to the organisers and SOCAR Polymer for the experience they granted me and my colleagues through this event.

World No-Tobacco Day on **31 May**

Tobacco endangers the lives of millions of people worldwide. It threatens our future and our development. Tobacco damages our health, economies and environment. Promote health and promote development.

Say NO to tobacco.

TOBACCO THREATENS US ALL



**SAY NO TO
TOBACCO**

**PROTECT HEALTH,
REDUCE POVERTY AND
PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT**

31MAY:WORLDNOTOBBACCO DAY
#NoTobacco

Tobacco use is a global epidemic, and the problem is getting worse rapidly. Here are some sobering facts:

- Tobacco kills more than 7 mln people every year.
- More than 6 million of those deaths are the result of direct tobacco use
- Almost 1 million non-smokers die each year from passive smoking worldwide, 1/3 of which are children.
- About 60,000 cases of cancer are caused annually by smoking
- Every minute approximately 10 people die from a tobacco-related disease including cancer
- Up to 10 billion cigarettes are disposed of in the environment every day
- Tobacco waste contains over 7000 toxic chemicals
- Cigarette butts account for 30-40% of all items collected in coastal and urban clean-ups
- More than 226 million adult tobacco users worldwide live in poverty
- In low-income households, more than 10% of income is spent on tobacco products, with less money for food, education and healthcare

Average cost of
20 cigarettes

2.5

Cost of smoking a pack
every day for a year:

912

Tobacco smoke contains over **4,000 chemicals**

Tobacco industry revenue in 2016 was

\$770 Billion

up from \$ 744 billion in 2014

That's more than the GDP of all but 17 nations

There are 4000 harmful substances in cigarettes, of which 40 are proven to be cancerogenic and are inhaled with the smoke. Among them are ammoniac, polonium, benzene, arsenic, formaldehyde, methanol, lead, quicksilver, cadmium, acetone and benzopyrene. The latter is not only cancerogenic, but also mutagenic, which means that even if a smoker is lucky to escape grave consequences, his posterity will not. Meanwhile, law requires cigarettes to be checked for only three ingredients: nicotine, carbon monoxide and tar. It is by law that their content amount must be indicated on the cigarette pack.

Every second, millions of people worldwide light a cigarette. Every year the army of smokers increases by a few more millions, although half of them dream of quitting this rather deadly than just bad habit. Billions are earned by those who own the tobacco industry, and fortunes are made by those who promise the best remedies from smoking or new easy quitting plots.

SOCAR Polymer's smoking statistics:

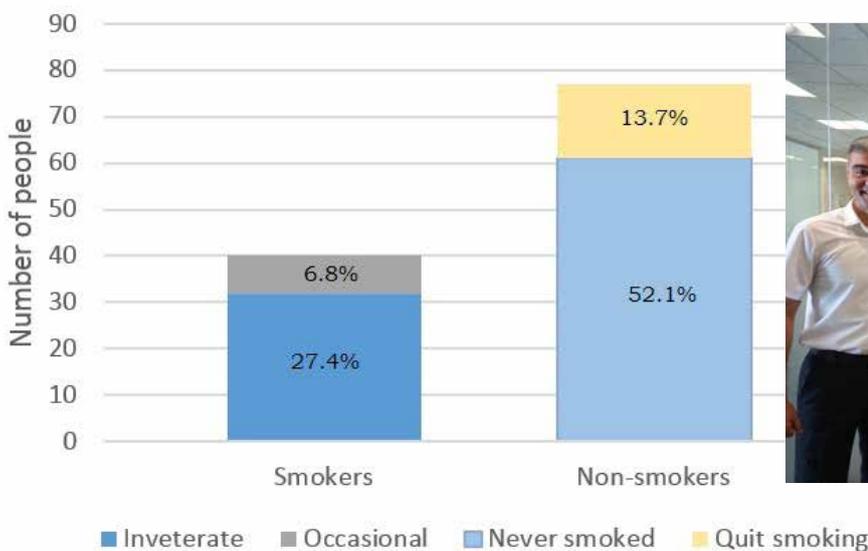
A survey covering SOCAR Polymer's Baku office revealed that 65.8% of our head office staff are non-smokers. 33.3% of the respondents were women.

Some medical research results claim that lungs get fully cleared from smoke residue and tar only after 6 years from quitting. It means that in 3 years we can congratulate **Mubariz Khudiyev** on having clean lungs cured from 6 years' harmful impact. 4 years ago, **Ali Nazarov** made the right decision of putting an end to his 6 years of smoking.

Among the 13.7% of the staff who quit smoking are **Adalat Muslumov** who hasn't lit a cigarette for 5 years following a 20-year-long period of heavy smoking and **Agshin Musayev** with 6 years of abstinence from nicotine. Another quitting record belongs to **Sonuj Alizadeh** who put an end to 14 years of smoking as far as 30 years ago.

We are happy for our colleagues who care for their own health and for that of those around them!

Smoking habits in SOCAR Polymer's Baku office





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