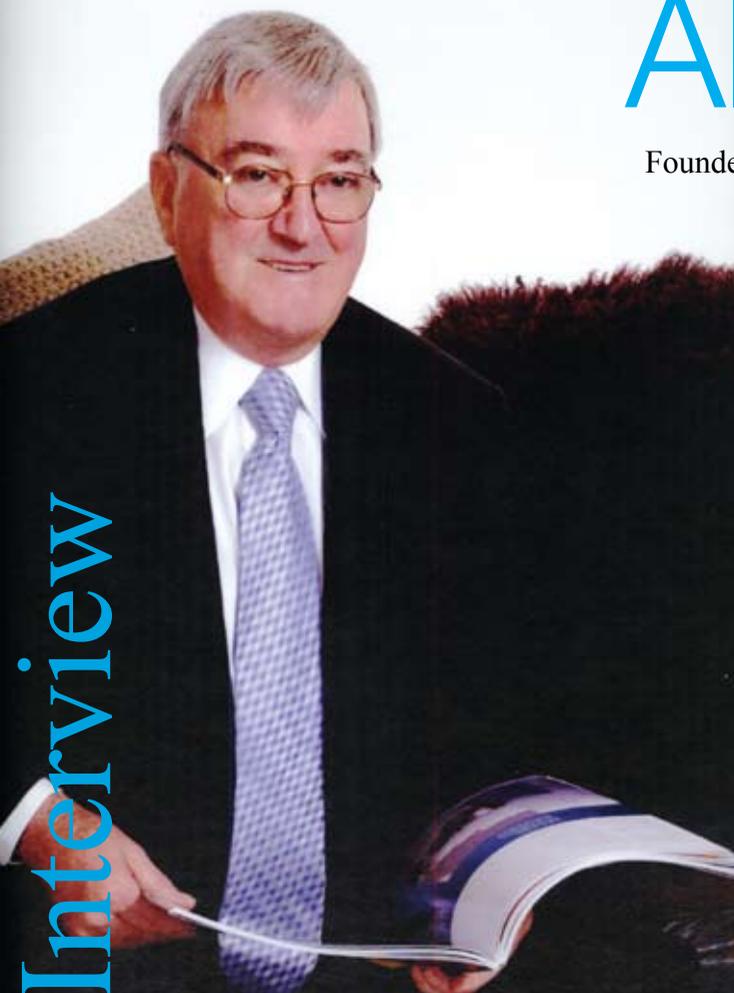


Alex Stewart

Founder and Chairman, Alex Stewart International Corporation



Interview

Mr. K Alex Stewart founded the Alex Stewart organization in 1978 after first gaining extensive experience in all aspects of sampling and assaying. Working his way up from basic laboratory duties, Alex Stewart went on to gain a First Class Honours degree in chemistry and become an Associate and Fellow of the Royal Institute of Chemistry. In 2010, AS Metallurgy's specialist metal laboratory opened and became the newest partner to provide inspection and analytical services to the metal industry and the Alex Stewart International network of inspection offices. In 2013, Alex Stewart will further expand its analytical services with the incorporation of a brand new metals laboratory which will be located at Sefton Science and Business Park, Liverpool, England.

Kindly elaborate about your business network & what specific services are offered to precious metals sector?

Alex Stewart International Corporation (ASIC) has provided inspection and analytical services to the metals and minerals industry for more than 30 years and has a regional network of companies spanning over 40 countries. Our organization provides fast, flexible and comprehensive inspection and analytical laboratory services with coverage at all major refineries.

We have established a new, full metals and minerals analytical facility at our laboratory located in, Netherton, Liverpool, England.

Our laboratory services provide traditional wet chemistry, fire assay/AA, ICP-MS/OES and XRF facilities for party and umpire analysis.

We also have a well-established gold and silver analytical laboratory in Dubai, located in the Gold & Diamond Park. Our company specialises in the sampling and analysis of all precious metal bearing materials including bullion, jewellery, residues, scrap, catalysts, resins, electronic scrap, PGM gauzes also bullion vault inspections and audits.

Our experienced representatives regularly attend the major precious metal reclaimers/refineries and catalyst manufacturers world-wide and are fully conversant with the various materials, processing facilities and sampling procedures employed at each location therefore we are

in an excellent position to provide a quality independent supervision and assaying service to our clients.

Alex Stewart International will weigh, sample and analyze a wide range of precious metals materials according to internationally accepted procedures. Samples are then sealed and sent to our laboratory for analysis either by classical wet chemistry or modern instrument methodology.

Can you share your views on RJC (Responsible Jewellery)? How do you approach / handle inspection of scrap jewellery?

Yes, the Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC) provides a code of practice in relation to the growing awareness and importance of ethical, human rights and environmental performance from mine to retail. In short, it gives buyers the confidence that precious metals products that they might purchase are from responsible sources and not from conflict sensitive regions. It would not surprise you to know that in addition to providing sampling and assaying of bullion, we at Alex Stewart International are able to assist in that due diligence process that is essential throughout the supply chain. Assessing the provenance of primary bullion is relatively easy given that each mine has particular grades that are peculiar to a given mine - a fingerprint if you like - but secondary or scrap material which

is co-mingled and traded through various traders can provide more of a challenge. Under these circumstances it is essential to follow the paper trail back to the original provider before making a judgment call on whether or not the source meets the guideline section of scrap jewellery.

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Jewellery and Gold Testing

We will weigh, test and analyse any gold or precious metal containing jewellery, including earrings, bracelets, necklaces, rings, fillings, chains, watches, pendants, coins, sovereigns and Krugerrands.

Tests are determined by XRF, which provides a scan analysis by measuring the intensity of the Gold x-rays by wavelength dispersion analysis. Our tests are non-destructive and minimal sample preparation permits very fast turnaround times. We can test whilst the client waits or we can send samples and stamped address envelopes for a speedy return with the results certificate.

When testing is complete, a full report indicates the percentage of gold content as well as other alloying metals such as copper, silver and zinc. Having tested for gold, we will email the client with an official certificate of its content and also return the sample.

With increased awareness & compliance of conflict gold, do you see a shift in the way inspection, analysis is done? Where do you see an increased role in this?

Historically metals used to move through a long supply chain of disinter mediated companies with little or no connections between the source and the final consumer. That process is now changing and there is a move towards a paper trail that accompanies the metal which is verified by accredited auditors. The role and responsibilities that samplers and assayers such as ourselves undertake are largely unchanged except we now form part of a cohesive whole in ensuring that the flow of metal is correctly monitored at each stage to ensure that the consumer can have full confidence that metal he or she buys fully complies with the guidelines set by the RJC. That confidence comes from certified entities being involved in the chain-of-custody as metal moves through the supply chain. Of course that requires companies involved in this process to have an international footprint and to be of high repute - as we are at Alex Stewart International.

Industrial usage of precious metals is wide spread. What kind of services do you offer to these various sectors (like electronic, pharmaceutical, chemical, oil and petrochemical, automobile, etc?)

We provide independent inspection, sampling, party and umpire assaying services to all of the above sectors.

We are involved with some of the world's major oil and petroleum refineries, catalyst manufacturers and precious metals reclaimers for shipments of both fresh and spent PGM catalysts.

Our chemical and pharmaceutical sectors business comprises of diverse range of materials including catalysts ,residues, pastes, gauzes, sludges, resins, filters, solutions and nitric acid plant recovered residues etc.

We also have extensive experience in the sampling and assaying of Ceramic Monoliths and Metallic catalysts used in the automobile sector.

Our electronic sector business covers the entire range of electronic scrap from PCB's ,mainframes, components, capacitors ,chips and connectors etc

How according to you will the demand scenario for industrial sector by 2020. Do you see any technological shift in usage of precious metals (competition from other metals?)

The demand applications for

precious metals, platinum group metals in particular, are in a dynamic state. That is to say it is always shifting and our business strategy mirrors those changes. The PGMs are a good example and we work closely with businesses involved in the autocatalyst, jewellery, chemical catalysts. electronics, glass and medical fields in managing their precious metal inventories - especially when it involves reworking it through one of the world's refineries. By 2020 we would expect that global manufacturing will be back on its feet and this has prompted us at Alex Stewart International to invest significantly in laboratories, plant and people for that outcome. It would be wrong for us to comment specifically upon technological shifts in PM usage, which we do closely observe in a number of industrial sectors because our clients would expect a high degree of discretion from us in these matters.

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Are you providing any services to LBMA, like assessing the quality standard of LBMA's Good

Delivery List?

We are very pleased to announce that Alex Stewart International has recently been formally accredited as an Associate Member of the LBMA also an Affiliated Member of the LPPM.

We have also been accepted by both the LBMA and the LPPMas one of their Approved Good Delivery Supervising Companies which enables us to perform the Pro-Active Monitoring of refiners listed on both the LPPM Platinum & Palladium Good Delivery List and the LBMA Gold and Silver Good Delivery list.

Your expert view on PGMs & future prospects (be it in jewellery usage or industrial)

We are not normally asked to give forecasts but these are my thoughts. We are clearly in a bull cycle for commodities and the PGMs have been a beneficiary of that. Notwithstanding weak global industrial production - and that should infer weaker prices for metals like PGMs - we think the market will continue to be supply constrained, which is compounded by potential problems in Russia as PGM stocks run close to zero and in South Africa where there may well be further tensions at the mines over wages and possibly even nationalization. With that in mind we remain quite bullish for PGMs but I prefer not to give you a price forecast ... we will leave that to the experts.

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