US-based CTC Global Corporation has developed and owns the rights to the highly efficient ACCC (aluminium conductor composite core) technology. With a presence in India for the past six years, CTC recently completed its 100th ACCC conductor project here. CTC Global today has a footprint spanning an impressive 16 Indian states with a total deployment of 8,000 km of ACCC conductor. In this exchange, J.D. Sitton expresses his satisfaction on CTC’s performance in India, and explains why the subcontinent would be a key market for CTC worldwide. An interview by Venugopal Pillai.

As of today, CTC Global does have an impressive record in India with a footprint that spans almost the entire geography. Tell us about your cumulative achievement in India, in terms of number of installations and the associated km of transmission line.

Earlier this year, CTC and its partners booked the 100th ACCC conductor project in India. These projects now span across 16 Indian states totaling nearly 8,000 km of ACCC conductor. Over 75 of these projects (nearly 4,500 km of ACCC conductor) have already been installed and commissioned and are serving companies like Tata Power, Torrent Power, UPPTCL, MSETCL, PGCIL, KPTCL, OPTCL, WBSETCL, Cairn Energy, TS Transco and others, in voltages ranging from 22kV to 220kV.

CTC Global last year appointed its third stranding partner. Tell us more. Are you in negotiation for more partnerships?

Through the collective efforts and hard work of CTC Global and its authorized manufacturing partners—Sterlite Power Transmission Ltd and Apar Industries Ltd, the market in India has grown to the point that a third authorized manufacturing partner (AMP) is warranted. CTC has always respected Gupta Power and its team and in mid-2018, Gupta acknowledged the legitimacy of CTC’s intellectual property and expressed its willingness to become CTC’s third AMP. Things moved quickly and the market response has been very positive. CTC is a long-term investor in the Indian market. And from this perspective, my colleagues and I will continue assessing the market’s need for competent, qualified and respectable manufacturing partners.

Much of India’s power transmission grid is in the hands of government utilities that are not in the best of financial health, preempting them from experimenting with new technology. Despite this, CTC Global has recorded an impressive performance even with state-owned utilities. How has the experience been?

CTC has an extremely enviable track record in India and around...
India has achieved much in terms of adding electricity connections (in both rural and urban areas) under the Saubhagya scheme. India’s power distribution network, therefore, will become even more loaded. In such a scenario, how do you see prospects of an energy-efficient solution like ACCC conductor?

The 33kV distribution (sub-transmission) system provides a very important link between generation facilities and power delivery to residential, commercial and industrial users. Due to the magnitude of the challenge, Indian utilities will need to upgrade heavily-loaded 33kV lines with high performing conductors such ACCC to help increase line capacity and reduce line losses. Reductions in line losses can reduce operating costs, fuel consumption and associated green house gas emissions. This also serves to free up generation capacity that is otherwise wasted, essentially reducing the need to build new generation resources – which can save huge amounts of money.

Speaking of South Asia where India is CTC Global’s major market, how do you rate opportunities in Bangladesh where you have made your debut, as we understand?

The deployment of the ACCC conductor in Bangladesh is a remarkable story. In the last 12 months or so, Power Grid Company of Bangladesh (PGCB) has already completed over a dozen ACCC conductor installations, replacing both ACSR and AAAC conductors. Currently PGCB is working on more than a half dozen other ACCC projects, one of which is a 160-km quad bundle 400kV line.

Please summarize your outlook on India over the next 5-7 years, and also the subcontinent’s role in CTC Global’s business worldwide.

The Indian government’s schemes like Saubhagya (electricity to every household), UDAY, etc. are driving the growth of power T&D in India and as utilities look to develop new transmission lines and upgrade existing lines, they are leveraging modern technologies such as the high-performance, energy-efficient ACCC conductor.

Our experience in India and Bangladesh suggests that as other South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) countries work to improve access to and delivery of electricity, CTC Global and its partners will have excellent opportunities to provide good outcomes for the utilities and people in those countries.