

Fuel Oil News

 Incorporating DOWNSTREAM

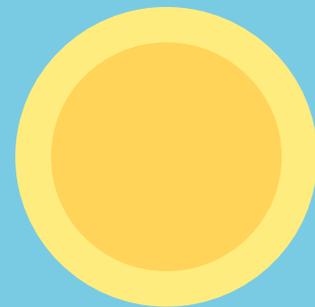
OCTOBER 2023

DECARBONISATION, COLLABORATION & DIGITALISATION

DEVELOPMENTS IN TELEMETRY

SOFTWARE INNOVATIONS





THE LAST THING ON HIS MIND IS WAXING DIESEL FUEL...

...because he's ordered **exocet[®] Anti-Wax** with every diesel delivery until mid-November to ensure any fuel stored in the winter months is fit for the cold weather.

| | EN590 DIESEL Summer 16th March – 15th Nov | EN590 DIESEL Winter 16th Nov – 15th March |
|--|--|--|
| CFPP* (°C) Specification | -5 | -15 |
| CFPP* (°C) Typically with Exocet [®] Additive | -18 | -24 |
| Treat Rate Additive: Fuel | 1:1,000 | 1:1,000 |

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*All fuel delivered from 16th November is winter grade, so no need to add the Anti-Wax after this date.

Is a rich man worth more than a poor man?

A stranger worth less than a friend?

I've flagged some pretty obscure 'blasts from my past' previously and this may be the most obscure yet.

Harking back to my happy, clappy, young peoples' fellowship days, it is a song sung to the strum of a guitar that asks the challenging questions of human value more usually faced by those with extremely tough decisions to make and extremely limited funds with which to make them. Emergency services making split second calls over who to treat first in a disaster or medical professionals choosing where to direct limited life-changing treatments.

The backdrop lends perspective to discussions around supply – demand balance for sustainable liquid fuels (SLFs) and yet, in many ways, it comes down to similar value judgements.

With the vital role SLFs will play in transport decarbonisation, rapid demand growth is anticipated. Uptake of EV passenger vehicles is strong, but heavy transport will take longer to electrify. As a drop-in replacement, SLFs can deliver faster fleet decarbonisation in the short term.

Aviation is another high demand

sector as design constraints limit options leaving an SAF / kerosene blend the route of least resistance.

With these two heavy-use sectors clamouring for this 'simple' fix, what about the 1.5m rural off grid homeowners hoping for just a small share of the same? Investment in new feedstocks will be necessary to meet future demand, and demand drives investment, making the immediate, deliverable and predictable consumption of off grid an attractive short-term proposition.

With little appetite for reduced consumption, it doesn't seem like anyone is giving up their personal transport or summer holidays anytime soon, but is low-cost use of personal vehicles more important than affordable hot water? Is flight more essential than heating homes?

Let's hope that those making these value judgements remember that a just transition is one that supports those who stand to lose economically.



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Fuel Oil News

The independent voice for the fuel distribution, storage and marketing industry in the UK and Ireland.

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On the cover

A Glen Fuels tanker passing Roundwood Reservoir, Co Wicklow while on its rounds. In our last issue MD Alan Keyes explained how tank telemetry had proved to be a game changer; pages 30 to 35 cover more industry-changing developments.

In this issue

Jay Nair, Mabanaft is our 'Industry Voice' on pages 18 & 19, talking transition, inclusion and diversity, while a special report on pages 25 & 26 considers how a partnership is improving the UK supply network to build transition resilience.

'End of an era' as popular industry figure retires

At the end of September, the team at FAST exocet wished colleague Charles Southan a very long, happy, and healthy retirement, describing it as the end of an era.

Joining FAST exocet on 1st August 2008 after Dr Bob Hall cajoled him into joining the company as its first employee, Charles was given the task of selling fuel additives.

Through his time with FAST Charles has become extremely well known and respected by all those who have dealt with him and has been a fundamental part of the additive company's success. Hitting the road with an enthusiasm and passion from the start that he has never lost, the company turnover has grown from £346,000 to over £3,000,000 in the 15 years Charles has



been part of it.

Wishing Charles a happy retirement, a spokesperson for FAST commented: "Charles, thank you for your friendship, stories, tales and passion. You have been a central part of FAST, but you deserve your retirement and, as you travel the globe, we know your tales of knickers (yes, Charles sold underwear before he joined FAST) and additives will be shared and enjoyed by many."

Fuel Oil News joins all those wishing Charles a very happy retirement.

Moorland Fuels celebrates 20 years and shares ambitious future plans

Devon-based fuel distributor, Moorland Fuels, is celebrating its 20th anniversary.

Founded in September 2003, with only two members of staff and one baby fuel tanker, the 100% employee-owned business now boasts a diverse fleet of vehicles ranging from an 8-wheeler tanker to a custom 4X4 ranger.

Moorland Fuels' transition to an entirely employee-owned company in 2022 was a game changer that has resulted in unwavering dedication, loyalty, and a shared commitment to excellence. The unique ownership model empowers every team member, from drivers to office staff, to have a personal stake in the company's success.

Abby Turner, director at Moorland Fuels comments: "We are immensely proud to reach this significant milestone in our company's history. Our journey has been one of continuous growth and innovation, and becoming an employee-owned company has been a pivotal moment. It has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility in our employees that continues to drive our success.

"As we mark our 20th anniversary, we would like to extend our gratitude to our loyal customers, dedicated employees, and supportive partners who have been instrumental in our success, and we look forward to continuing to serve the Devon and Cornwall communities with fuel solutions for their homes, farms and businesses for many more years to come."



Supporting customer transition

Over the past two decades, Moorlands has consistently delivered a high-quality service, distributing fuels such as domestic heating oil, commercial diesel, and agricultural gas oil.

Supporting customers through the energy transition, Moorland also promotes environmental responsibility through carbon offsetting schemes and renewable diesel alternatives like HVO (Hydrogenated Vegetable Oil).

Looking to the future, Matthew Crockett, managing director said: "We have ambitious plans for Moorland Fuels which include expanding the current fleet and broadening services by offering comprehensive heating oil tank installations.

"As the energy landscape is continuously changing, a large focus moving forward will be to support customers on their journey to net zero, this will feature as an important part of our future vision, and we are proud to be able to support homes and businesses with a range of carbon reduction strategies."

Industry EXPO launches theme to unite and empower

UKIFDA, has revealed 'Working Together in Changing Times' as the theme for its industry-leading 2024 event, which will take place on 10-11 April 2024 at the Liverpool Exhibition Centre.

The two-day event will, once again, bring together the whole liquid fuel distribution industry supply chain.

A rare opportunity

UKIFDA CEO Ken Cronin explains: "We want people to walk away from EXPO 2024 feeling empowered by their visit. It's a chance to accelerate supply chain relationships, identify and maximise new business opportunities and help solve the inevitable commercial challenges that come with these changing times.

"It's rare to be able to access so much industry innovation under one roof."

The headline sponsor is confirmed as Phillips 66, and Rupert Turner, managing director UK Marketing, said: "UKIFDA EXPO is a celebration of excellence that sits at the heart of the distribution industry, and, at Phillips 66 Limited, we are delighted to once again be the headline sponsor.

"Each year this unique event provides an opportunity for our community to come together and celebrate an industry we care deeply about. A chance to spend time with colleagues, forge new relationships and connect with customers.

"We look forward to working with UKIFDA EXPO and welcoming everyone to Liverpool in 2024."

An industry progressing together

Building on the broader topic format introduced at the successful one-day 2023 event, the 2024 Future Opportunities Conference Programme will explore the new commercial horizon and offer guidance and insight to help businesses future proof.

"Working together as an industry is what's delivering progress." Ken continues. "EXPO 2024 is the place to stay ahead of the curve, embrace the shift and collaborate for business resilience in these changing times."

Certas accelerates strategy with solar acquisition

Certas Energy has taken another major stride on its mission to empower businesses with their energy transition journey, following the acquisition of solar installer, Centreco.

Chorley-based Centreco is a specialist provider of commercial solar energy systems and has grown rapidly over the past decade gaining significant success in the commercial rooftop sector. Centreco is the first specialist commercial solar provider to join Certas Energy's growing portfolio within its Energy Solutions Renewables Division.

Steve Little, managing director of Certas Energy, said: "This acquisition represents a major milestone for both Certas Energy and Centreco.

"As demand for self-generated solar energy systems continues to grow, Certas Energy and Centreco will be perfectly poised to meet this need. Together, we can help customers to optimise and evolve their energy mix.

"We are delighted to welcome the Centreco team on board and have no doubt that their technical skills, business development and operational capabilities will further enhance our expanding range of renewable solutions and elevate Certas Energy's position



L-R Jon Williams, Managing Director of Centreco, Steve Little, Managing Director of Certas Energy, and Adrian Dunleavy, Chairman of Centreco

as the energy partner of choice."

Adrian Dunleavy, Chairman of Centreco, said: "We're excited to welcome a new chapter which will combine our compelling renewables proposition and in-house capabilities with a highly reputable and market leading energy brand.

Driving meaningful change

The partnership with Centreco closely follows the acquisition of Hafod Renewable Energy, and Freedom Heat Pumps by Certas as it delivers its strategy to become a leader in the UK's renewable energy installed services space.

"As a business, we have our sights firmly set on bringing together the UK's energy powerhouses to drive meaningful change and ensure our customers' journey to lower carbon operations is as smooth and seamless as possible," added Steve. "By expanding our portfolio, growing our renewables division and harnessing industry-leading expertise, we are confident that we can achieve, and exceed, this ambition."

Cross party support for renewable heating fuel obligation amendment

The most significant piece of energy legislation in a generation, the Energy Bill, was debated in parliament last month with the Government's Renewable Liquid Heating Fuel Obligation amendment passed without objection.

The amendment mirrors proposals put forward by George Eustice in response to the industry's Future Ready Fuels campaign.

Andrew Bowie, Minister in charge of the bill, addressed the new clause and the work of George Eustice in the opening of his introductory speech, indicating the importance with which this issue is now regarded.

There was significant MP support for the new clause across the parliamentary divide.

Following the Report Stage, the Energy Bill returned to the Lords where the amendment went unchallenged as the Bill progressed to Royal Assent.

In a joint statement Ken Cronin, Chief Executive of UKIFDA and Paul Rose, Chief Executive of OFTEC, said: "We are pleased that a renewable liquid heating fuel amendment to the Energy Bill, proposed by the new DESNZ Secretary of State, Claire Coutinho, following support from more than 30 MPs from across the political divide who supported George Eustice's amendments on rural decarbonisation, has been accepted.

"This amendment will require DESNZ to deliver a consultation on a renewable liquid heating fuel obligation within 12 months of the Bill receiving Royal Assent.

"We will work closely with the Department to make this happen and to ensure this process is delivered as quickly as possible and well within that timeframe."

Ken Cronin, CEO UKIDA, speaks further on this on page 20.

Highland Fuels looks to future growth as employee driven enterprise

Inverness-based Highland Fuels has successfully completed the transfer of a majority of company shares to employees.

With a heritage of investment and growth, the entrepreneurial spirit established from its formation still runs through the company over 65 years on. Geographical development has been vast, with the independent distributor now boasting 11 depots across Scotland as well as commercial reach into the north of England. The business operates a fleet of over 45 road tankers, owns 16 petrol stations and is supported by over 250 employees spread between its most southerly office located in Manchester to its most northerly office based in Lerwick, Shetland.

The perfect model

The Chairman and owner, George Shand has always been mindful of the loyalty of the staff and the company's roots. Having previously led a management buyout of Highland Fuels in 2001, George has again been considering the future of the company.

Working with his fellow directors, he was keen to find a business model that preserves the company's rich heritage and maintains continuity of operations and employment for the long term. The employee ownership route was identified as one to retain the core values and company purpose, whilst also further empowering the team to drive the company's growth into the future.

Managing director Stephen Rhodes added: "Employee ownership is perfect for us. It truly enables every single employee to benefit from the company's advancement and provides the right platform for us to realise a positive culture, high engagement and great performances as we progress to the future".



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THE LATEST UPDATES FROM OUR DISTRIBUTOR COMMUNITY

Craggs Energy's Employee of the Quarter is announced

Craggs Energy, the West Yorkshire-based distributor, is delighted to announce its latest Employee of the Quarter winner – Stefan Williams!

Consistently going above and beyond

David Damary-Thompson, general manager at Craggs Energy said: "We are so pleased to present the Craggs Energy Employee of the Quarter Award to someone who consistently goes above and beyond to help his colleagues and the business meet growing demand.

"Travelling to our sister company in Devon to help with vital deliveries and even coming in on his rest days to ensure our customers get their fuel delivered on time. This can be none other than Stefan Williams! Congratulations and thank you for all hard work."

Congratulations to Stefan from all of us at Fuel Oil News!



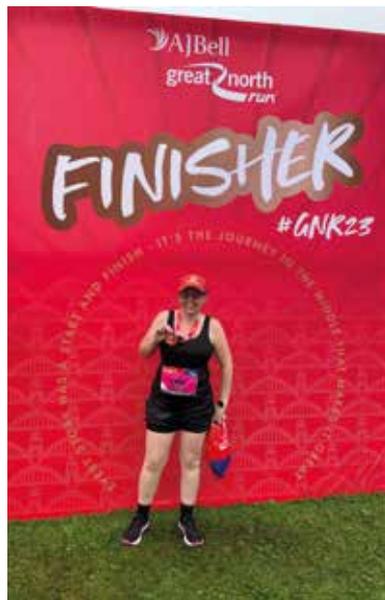
Centre Tank Services is enjoying quadruple celebrations

Centre Tank Services Ltd is a leading trade distributor of fuel dispensing, storage tank, AdBlue™ and lubrication equipment. This month, CTS is celebrating four times over as team members Claire, Charlotte, Rebecca, and Lauren all celebrate work anniversaries at CTS!

Managing director, Matthew Terry, was keen to offer his thanks and appreciation to all four colleagues:

- "Claire's efficient and fantastic customer services skills have been ever present for CTS over the last 17 years. Her customer interactions and product knowledge make her the preferred contact for a select few of both historical and current customers. Claire is well recognised within the CTS customer base. Well done Claire on this service achievement!"
- "Charlotte originally joined CTS 6 years ago in sales admin. She progressed into an account manager role, where she has built up some great solid relationships with key customers. To show evidence of Charlotte's progression and importance to CTS, she now holds the sales team leader title alongside her account manager role. Great job Charlotte!"
- "Rebecca joined CTS 4 years ago in sales admin. She has been involved in training support for new starters in sales admin and is currently part of the customer service team who offer first line support to CTS's valued customer base. Thanks for your support, Rebecca."
- "Lauren joined the marketing department 9 years ago. With her eye for design and her computer-based graphics expertise, it allowed CTS to start taking parts of its outsourced design in house. Lauren now gives flexibility in design offerings to the varied customer bases across the CTS Group, which can be provided in a timely manner. Congratulations Lauren."

If you have any colleagues celebrating a work anniversary that you'd like to share, then please do get in touch: claudia@andpublishing.co.uk



MechTronic Ltd – Emma completes the Great North Run

Emma Allinson, marketing coordinator at MechTronic Ltd, the Leeds-based metering and gauging fuel delivery system experts, successfully completed the Great North Run to raise money for Blood Bikes.

Emma said: "I absolutely smashed my target and raised £525 for the Blood Bikes – I am so grateful to everyone that sponsored me for such a worthy cause!

"People have asked if I would do it again... I have to say the GNR was brutal, I stood for

90 minutes in 24 degrees heat before I even crossed the start line, Mo Farah had finished before I'd even set off, there were so many hills and I had hamstring pain, and 800m before the finish line, a monsoon hit and we had to walk four miles back to our friend's house (with three young boys all complaining they were cold and that their legs were hurting!) as South Shields was flooded.

"But YES, I would, I met two fantastic girls and we ran together and got each other round. We saw Bill, the 102-year-old gentleman who was doing it, and so many people running in some awesome (and heavy!) costumes – one man was carrying a washing machine on his back! And so many people running in memory of someone or for a charity that meant the world to them.

"Yes, I would absolutely put myself through that torture again, although I am in no rush to do it anytime soon!"

What a race! Congratulations Emma!



New Era Fuels enjoying summertime fun

New Era Fuels, the Essex-based fuel distributor, had a wonderful time celebrating at a summer party held at Chelmsford Racecourse.

Amber Geggus, project director at New Era, said: "New Era Fuels' summer party at Chelmsford Racecourse was an absolute blast!

This unforgettable day featured a delightful blend of thrilling races, sumptuous cuisine, live entertainment, and valuable networking opportunities, making it a day to remember for all who had the pleasure of attending!"



LCM Environmental team survive Tough Mudder

LCM Environmental Services Ltd, the Lancashire-based, fuel, energy, and infrastructure specialist, is delighted to announce that the team successfully completed the Tough Mudder challenge in support of the SSAFA – the Armed Forces Charity.

Richard Wallace, LCM’s CEO, said: “I am very happy with our team’s incredible accomplishment in completing the 5K Tough Mudder challenge.

“Their dedication, teamwork, and unfaltering spirit not only represent our company’s culture and values, but also demonstrates the impact we can achieve when we come together with a shared goal.

“Moreover, I’m grateful for the overwhelming support we’ve received in surpassing our fundraising target for the SSAFA Charity.”



There for each other

Kremena Bozhilova, LCM’s brand manager, added: “Challenging as it was, completing the 5K Tough Mudder challenge pulled us closer as a team and showed that we’re there for each other when it matters.

“At the end of the day, business is business; it’s the company culture and the people you spend your days with that make or break your resolve to push forward and achieve your goals.

“Our whole team has demonstrated time and time again that we have each other’s backs, in and out of office hours. I’m happy we got the chance to raise funds for a worthy cause and surpass our targets – we’re beyond grateful for everyone’s support and generosity!”

Congratulations to LCM!



Manx Petroleum is proud to support vital local charity

Isle of Man-based fuel distributor, Manx Petroleum, is proud to announce that it has recently donated to a local charity – the Rob Vine Fund.

David Carridge, Manx Petroleum, said: “During July, Manx Petroleum made a donation of £3,000 to a local charity, the Rob Vine Fund, which provides the best possible medical rescue care, equipment and training during Isle of Man motorsport events, including the TT Races.

“During May and June (the months during which the TT Races fortnight takes place) Manx Petroleum committed to making a cash donation for each and every litre of Super Unleaded sold from its chain of branded forecourts over the period.

“This is the second year that Manx Petroleum has supported the Rob Vine Fund and we look forward to supporting the charity going forward.”

Your NRG supporting Age UK

Your NRG recently donated its preloved office furniture and equipment to charity. The donation will be distributed to Age UK shops across the Northeast to help raise money to support older people in need.

Chris Hall, project manager at Your NRG, said: “We are delighted to support Age UK and the great work that they do, as the UK’s leading charity for older people. Our donation is not only giving life to our preloved office furniture, but it is also helping to enrich the lives of the older people in the communities that we live in and serve.

“We are delighted, as part of our commitment to give back to the local community, that our donation will contribute towards Age UK shops raising funds, to keep their services and support for older people going.”

We know that many of our distributor businesses contribute to charities. We would love to hear about the charities you are supporting. Please contact claudia@andpublishing.co.uk.



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DfE sets up renewable biofuels stakeholder group

With much higher levels of oil use for heating in Northern Ireland, OFTEC believes that sustainable biofuels like HVO can play an important role in decarbonisation and has had the opportunity to share this message at the inaugural meeting of a new group established by the Heat Policy Branch of the Department for Economy (DfE).

The first meeting of the DfE's biofuels stakeholder group took place in September (pictured) with OFTEC pleased to have a seat at the table.



Commenting on the meeting David Blevings, Ireland Manager at OFTEC and

executive director at Northern Ireland Oil Federation, said: "It was a constructive first meeting and an important forum where OFTEC can highlight the benefits of biofuels in helping to decarbonise heating in Northern Ireland's homes and buildings."

Biofuels are considered to be low-carbon alternatives to fossil fuels with DfE developing a call for evidence on the roles that HVO and renewable biofuels can play as work continues towards developing NI's approach to decarbonising heating under the Energy Strategy – The Path to Net Zero Energy.

West Cork school makes history as Ireland's first to be heated using HVO

The primary school is Ireland's first to transition to the low carbon biofuel from kerosene to fuel its heating system. To celebrate this important step, staff and pupils from St. Enda's National School in Dunmanway broke their summer holidays to gather at the school in August and were joined by representatives from Tria Oil, Firebird Heating Solutions, Carbery Plastics and CMcC Services.

The school has long been teaching climate responsibility, and the children were delighted with the action being taken, speaking passionately of their own desire to protect the planet by finding ways to reduce their climate impacts.

Liam Cotter, school principal commented: "We have been saving energy in the school, recycling and saving water; now we can say that we are saving CO2 emissions as well."

The cost of conscience

"The price (of the HVO fuel) is dearer (than kerosene)," Liam continued. "But it is hoped that it will drop as it becomes more common, and the environmental savings are the important long-term benefit."

The decision to switch to the greener fuel was made when the school's previous boiler packed up earlier this year. Seeking a solution to heat the 160-year-old building in a more sustainable way, the school discovered that GD+HVO offered them an immediate 90% reduction in CO2 emissions. Made by leading UK biofuel supplier Green Biofuels Limited (GBF) who announced the launch, in February, of Ireland's first renewable biofuel terminal, the fuel presented the rural school with a cost-effective way to reduce environmental impact with minimal disruption.



A Firebird HVO boiler, installed by service engineer Concubhar Mc Carthy, offered the ideal solution for the older building as an air to water heating system wasn't suitable due to the building's structure.

Describing the switch as 'a remarkable milestone', a spokesperson for Firebird said: "Together with Concubhar McCarthy, Tria Oil, Carbery Plastics, OFTEC and the St. Enda's N.S. team, we've successfully integrated HVO into St. Enda's National School in Dunmanway, taking a huge leap towards a greener future for the school."

A cost-effective and smart decision

Pat Murnane, operations director for Tria Oil, whose Tria Green fuel will deliver an immediate reduction of 90% in the school's CO2 emissions from heating as well as up to 30% reduction in harmful NOx particulates, added: "We are extremely proud for Tria Green to be part of this initiative.

"Kilnadur National School has made a cost-effective and smart decision to continue with a liquid fuel heat system, that offers a 90% saving on CO2 emissions, without a huge cost in retrofitting!"

ROI consults on renewable heat obligation

The ROI government has agreed to the introduction of an obligation on the heat sector to include renewable heat by 2024.

Several policy measures aimed at decarbonising the heat sector have already been implemented and the obligation is intended to further incentivise suppliers of all fuels in the heat sector to ensure that a certain proportion of the energy supplied is renewable. As Ireland imports most of its fossil fuels, the heating sector is a significant contributor to Ireland's high energy import dependency and the renewable heat obligation (RHO) is also seen as a route to help reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels and strengthen energy security.

No final decisions have yet been made in relation to the structure of the obligation, or how it will be administered. The Government has carried out a scoping exercise to examine potential structures and parameters and has sought feedback on these from interested parties in a recent consultation.

Feedback received as part of the consultation process, that closed at the end of September, will directly inform final decisions taken as part of the overall development and design process.

Controversial oil terminal redevelopment plans approved

NORTHERN IRELAND'S NEED FOR FUEL SUPPLY SECURITY WAS HIGHLIGHTED AT A PLANNING MEETING THAT SAW AN OIL TERMINAL REDEVELOPMENT APPLICATION GIVEN THE GO-AHEAD DESPITE 400 LETTERS OF OBJECTION.

The controversial planning application for £30m redevelopment of the Cloghan Point oil terminal on the shores of Belfast near Whitehead, Co. Antrim was approved by Mid and East Antrim Borough Council's Planning Committee.

Transition takes time

Addressing a meeting of the committee, Paul Duffy, the council's head of planning, suggested that transition to a renewable source of energy will 'take time' and highlighted Northern Ireland's need for a reliable source of fuels given its dependence on the import of fuels such as gas and oil.

One of Ireland's largest energy companies, Cookstown-based LCC Group, bought the terminal from AES Power in a multi-million pound deal in 2017. Operational since 1979, the terminal was constructed to facilitate distribution of heavy fuel oil to two power stations and currently stores part of ROI's strategic reserve of diesel and gas oil.

The planning application, submitted to the local authority in December 2018, seeks proposed works for the redevelopment of an existing terminal and jetty for an import, storage and distribution facility for petrol, kerosene, gas oil and diesel as well as the import, storage and blending of biofuels. It also includes the demolition of some of the existing buildings and the chimney on the site and infilling of part of the existing site for four new



storage tanks, road loading gantries and a new operations building.

Redevelopment will increase the capacity of the facility to a total storage capacity to 246,300 tonnes and also includes proposed jetty head modifications including the installation of new pipes along the jetty to facilitate off-loading of fuel from tankers.

End user savings

In application paperwork, LCC says the deepwater jetty will be able to accommodate "up to 120,000 tonne vessels". Most tankers docking in Irish ports are 15,000 to 20,000 tonnes in capacity and the energy group suggested in its application that increased capacity "will bring significant benefits to consumers and industry in the long run, as the

increase in supply logistics and efficiencies should lead to a reduction in price that can be passed on to the end user."

Boost to local jobs

Mr Duffy went on to say an environmental statement includes an assessment of alternative sites which he said have been "discounted for various reasons".

He noted the proposed redevelopment of an existing site meets policy requirements and would have "no significant impact on the rural character" adding that relocation of the terminal would not be possible.

He also indicated the "significant contribution to the local economy" a £30m redevelopment of the site would make, leading to the creation of 30 full-time jobs.

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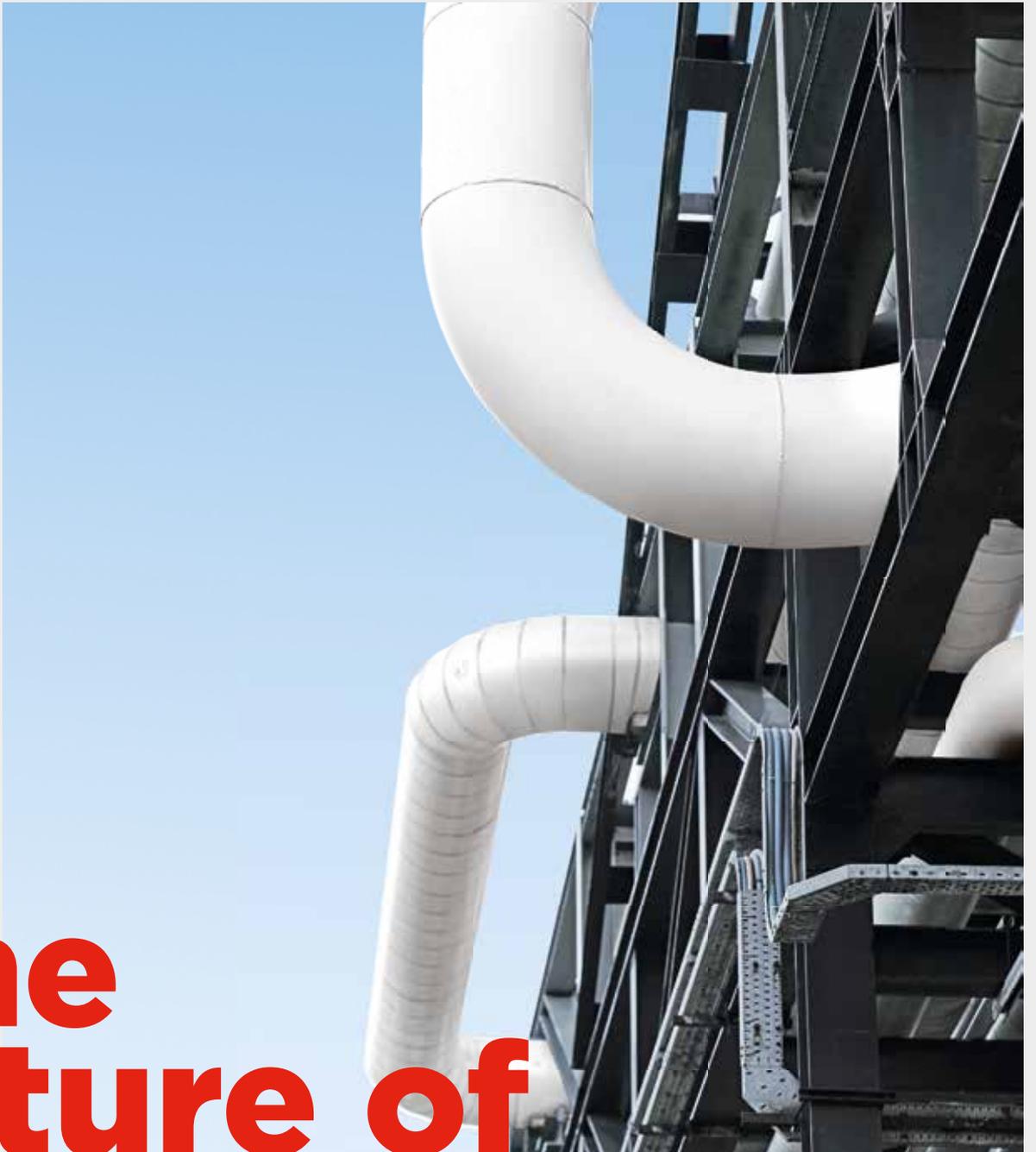


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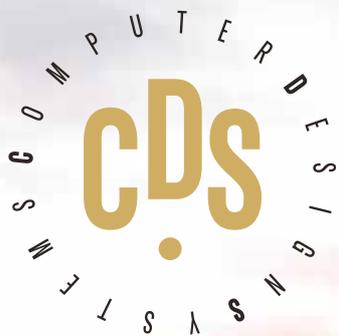


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CDS: 50 years of powering customer success

CDS HAS BEEN DELIVERING INNOVATIVE SOFTWARE, TECHNICAL SUPPORT, AND CUSTOMER SERVICE TO THE DOWNSTREAM OIL AND LPG INDUSTRIES FOR 50 YEARS.

CLAUDIA WEEKS, CONTENT EDITOR FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, VISITED THE CDS HEAD OFFICE IN MANCHESTER AND SPOKE WITH **GRAEME LEA**, CEO, AND **SIMON CLAYTON**, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE BUSINESS, CURRENT OPERATIONS, AND EXCITING PLANS FOR THE FUTURE.

A potted history

CDS is proud to be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2023; it was founded in 1973 at the University of Liverpool by a lecturer, Arthur Britch, and Bill Lea, a post-graduate student.

Graeme Lea, CEO, explains the beginnings of the business: "It has been a long journey which we are incredibly proud of! Bill was a civil engineering and computer aided architectural design graduate, so CDS started out as a company writing CAAD software.

"After a period of research, Bill and his lecturer set up an office in Manchester which happened to be next door to a Chevron Oil distributor, Keturn Oil. This was the 1970s, so when this huge and mysterious looking computer appeared, visible through the traditionally fronted shop window, it attracted attention from the owner of Keturn Oil!

"He was interested in procuring a computerised sales order processing system for his business which, unsurprisingly, did not exist. Working with this distributor, Bill wrote software which would allow the creation of customer records, entry of orders, printing of stationery and posting of financial transactions; the seed of what CODAS would become, was planted."

Milestones of growth and change

Graeme reflected: "A lot has happened in 50 years. The business has adapted to match demand and has taken advantage of new and evolving market opportunities and advancing technology, and we have also survived the odd recession or two!

"Following the company's inception and those first steps writing software for fuel distribution, CDS really started to take off and software sales followed to the Authorised Distributor networks for UK oil majors Shell, ESSO and BP. Occupying much of our time through the 1970s and 80s, the work we did writing and implementing software for those businesses stood us in good stead for partnering with independent distributors.

"By the late 1990s, the commercial adoption of the internet had happened, a development that was truly world changing! Vast improvements in communication coupled with the ability to offer remote support enhanced nearly every aspect of our partner relationships.



And, of course, CODAS itself benefitted enormously from the ability to interface to a multitude of now web-connected systems.

"Moving into the new millennium, growth continued in terms of number of employees and customers, and CDS today is a product of succession plans we've implemented across the whole business."



An understanding and supportive employer

Graeme looked back on his introduction to the business: “I joined CDS in 1997 at 21 years old as a trainee in the support team, a team which 10 years later I was promoted to manage. Back then we had around 25 employees, 8 of whom are still with us now. Most of those who no longer work with us saw their careers at CDS through to retirement, which we like to think is, at least partly, due the culture we foster here.

“We work hard to be an understanding and supportive employer and to provide the best working environment possible for our people; after all, they are CDS and CODAS!

“CDS provides both the software and associated services required by CODAS users, so in 2010 we began building an organisational structure aligned with recruitment to support our growth. We did this by appointing department heads for each business unit, favouring internal promotion wherever possible. As part of these changes, I was appointed to the Board as operations director in 2013, then to managing director in 2015, with Bill taking up the role as chairman (a role he still occupies now).

The number of employees has continued to grow at CDS: “We currently stand at 70 people,” Graeme explains. “That’s having recruited to meet the requirements of our growing client base and to resource development of our next generation CODAS platform, CODAS 7. In 2020, we also moved premises, for the first time in 35 years, to a modern new office space in Exchange Quay, Salford Quays.”

Business growth doesn’t come without hard work, and Graeme was keen to acknowledge the effort and dedication of his team: “CDS now has a group of people which combines decades of industry expertise and experience with detailed knowledge of new technologies, cutting edge skills and modern, adaptable ways of working. It is a group I feel fortunate and enormously proud to be a part of.”

The big 50th celebration

To give back and say thank you to the team, a huge celebration was planned in December last year: “CDS turned 50 in January 2023 and, since it was so close to Christmas, we decided to combine birthday celebrations with our 2022 Christmas party. Everyone in the company, including their partners, celebrated together at Cranage Hall in Cheshire.

“We hired rooms for the night too so everyone could really let their hair down without worrying about needing to travel home late at night. We started the evening with a champagne reception, speeches and long service awards for employees who have been with CDS for 20 years or more – there were 14 of us!

“We then celebrated in the time-honoured fashion of a meal and drinks together followed by throwing shapes on the dancefloor into the small hours!” It sounds like quite the celebration!

Word of mouth is key

With such a deep commitment to its customers, it is no surprise that CDS is highly praised and spoken about warmly.

“We have fantastic customers who we work hard to look after, and they look after us in return when we’re introducing a new product to market or trying to win new business. Word of mouth is key for us.

“Many of our customers have gone to great lengths for us by talking about their CODAS journey, inviting prospective clients into their business, and demonstrating areas of the system to them.

“There are too many to mention here but I really can’t thank our customers enough!

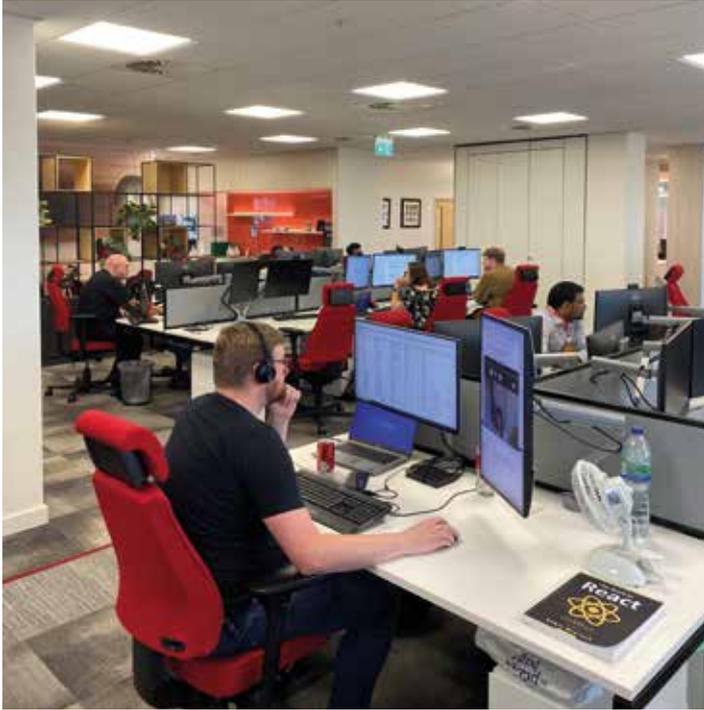
“We have become better at marketing ourselves in recent years through our website: www.codas.com, email bulletins, LinkedIn and advertising in Fuel Oil News, plus we have our stand at the UKIFDA Expo where we get the chance to meet our customers, partners and friends face to face.

“We also visit our clients at their premises at least once per year to check-in and get valuable feedback, regardless of whether we are actively working on any new projects together.”

Client relationships are paramount

“In terms of customer base, CDS has gained 18 new customers over the past 5 years, with fleet sizes ranging from 5 to 100 vehicles. Most importantly we have made sure we retain all our existing clients too.

“Our customers usually tell us they choose CDS and CODAS due to a combination of factors: reputation, longevity, stability, expertise, professionalism, and commitment to them and the industry. Again, this is



down to the fantastic CDS team and the relationships we nurture with our clients which are of paramount importance. I like to think our customers are in safe hands with us.”

CODAS 7 – more great software

After lots of planning and development, there is much excitement in the CDS office about the launch of CODAS 7.

Graeme explains more about it: “The most important core CDS operation is, of course, making great software. The whole business, particularly our development team, has been heavily engaged in building CODAS 7 over the last couple of years, our major update to CODAS.

“Since it is such a comprehensive suite of software, we are following the tried and tested roll out approach of delivering discrete areas of functionality in CODAS 7 as they are completed and ready to deploy.

“We are also developing this new product in conjunction with our clients, inviting them to quarterly demonstration workshops where we show what we’ve built and seek feedback from our users prior to release. This has been enormously beneficial both to our process and the product and has already produced great ideas for our development roadmap.

“Our principal marketplace will remain the provision of software and services for downstream fuel distributors in the UK and Ireland; however, our new architecture dramatically improves flexibility and agility, allowing us to explore options in other markets previously closed to us. The inherent ability to provide multilingual support is a perfect example of a step change in versatility for CODAS in the near future.

“Being a clientless web app, CODAS 7 brings with it dramatic improvements to the user interface; it will also be much easier to deploy, maintain and enhance moving forwards.

“The development program for CODAS 7 will run for an extended period; however, the first iteration of CODAS 7 functionality will be installed and in use at our beta site by the time your readers have this edition of Fuel Oil News – another considerable success for us!”

A time of transition as an industry

As we all know, the industry is in a transitional phase and Graeme was full of praise for the industry and how everyone is responding.

“The industry is in a period of transition and a great deal of uncertainty remains around future fuels and the electrification of heating, transport and more. Like everyone, we try to keep abreast of new developments and changes in the law so we can make informed decisions about the future for our business.

“I’ve been seriously impressed by the way the industry has responded to the government’s net zero challenge, demonstrating the ready viability of liquid fuels like HVO as a drop-in renewable alternative to fossil fuels, presenting the scientific, financial and political arguments for their much wider adoption and pinpointing the legislative obstacles to doing so.”

CDS and CODAS will be there to support the industry now, and in the future

“One thing I can say for sure is that CDS and CODAS will be there to support the industry now and in the future, come what may. We still see a very strong appetite for our software and services year on year.”

The best parts of the industry

And finally, we had to ask Graeme what he enjoys the most about working in this industry: “How to choose, there are so many things! Definitely catching up with clients, especially face to face, to share news and learn about upcoming plans or changes in our respective businesses. Working together for such a long time we have many contacts in the industry we can call friends now, so it’s nice to catch up with them in a social setting too when we get the chance.

“At CDS we offer many opportunities for promotion through learning and taking on new challenges and responsibilities, so I also get a huge kick out of seeing our own people develop and grow.

“As to your question about the future, it’s difficult to predict where we might be in another 50 years, but we certainly aren’t slowing down; we have plans to do much more, so we won’t be going anywhere anytime soon!”

It was an absolute pleasure to meet with Graeme, Simon, and the team. Fuel Oil News wishes CDS a very happy 50th anniversary and looks forward to covering the centenary!

Jay Nair of Mabanaft: transition, inclusion and diversity



IN OUR SEPTEMBER ISSUE WE SPOKE WITH JON PERKINS, CEO OF MABANAFT, WHO SHARED HIS THOUGHTS AROUND TRANSITION – HIS OWN, THE COMPANY’S AND THAT OF THE SECTOR. WITH THIS ISSUE FOCUSING IN ON THE SUBJECT OF DIVERSITY, WE NOW TURN TO UK MANAGING DIRECTOR, **JAY NAIR**, TO HEAR HIS OWN THOUGHTS ON THE TRANSITION AS WELL AS INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY AND THE WAY THE MABANAFT BRAND RESONATES WITH THE CHANGING FUEL INDUSTRY.

Jay begins by explaining his own route into the energy sector: “I graduated in Singapore and joined Shell at their Singapore trading desk. A few years of trading in Singapore and London, both at investment banks and energy houses, saw me moving to corporate management in 2018.

“Prior to joining Mabanaft I was head of risk at Intercontinental Exchange overseeing their global energy risk portfolio.”

How does energy compare with other trading sectors?

“There has been a paradigm shift in the way energy distribution has evolved. From being a market with information asymmetry 10 years back, information is now equally available to traders, wholesalers and household customers, eliminating the high profit margins previously seen.

“The move to zero carbon will see another upheaval in the distribution sector over the next 10 years with various energy sources competing to become a dominant fuel. Hydrogen, electricity, e-fuels – all are in the mix which will create a period of volatile markets in the near future.”

Challenge and change

Joining Mabanaft as head of risk in April 2020, Jay took a key role when CEO Jon Perkins initiated a programme to transform the group from oil company to an energy one. Assuming the role of head of UK last summer Jay’s remit was to maintain business continuity while developing a low carbon portfolio. Jay reflects on the variety of roles he has had as he considers the highlight of his time with the

company so far.

“I have been fortunate enough to have experienced multiple roles at Mabanaft. I joined at the peak of the covid crisis when crude oil prices were falling through the roof and trading desks around the world were either making a lot of money or losing a lot of money and Mabanaft was no exception.

“My first role was as head of risk, a role that carries a responsibility to ensure there are controls and limits in place around trading such that the overall risk at a company stays within pre-agreed limits relative to the balance sheet. Soon after I moved internally, taking on the role of chief of staff, responsible for governance, board agenda, projects and implementing overall strategy for the group which was a steep learning curve for me, but an exciting period.

“A change within the UK business, resulted in me heading up the UK division as well as overseeing the Scandinavian and UK operations of the Mabanaft group – a role that was both very challenging and very fulfilling and a great learning opportunity.

Currently, I am the managing director of Mabanaft UK and Onroute truckstops, which is our commercial road transport division. Responsible for business development, acquisitions and strategic direction, I also develop our next generation of leaders either internally or by recruiting in the best talent.

Life at Mabanaft is always exciting. We are going through a massive reorganisation within the group, and we are also in the midst of a heightened geopolitical risk scenario. This obviously creates challenges, but also delivers opportunities for the group to lead the way

into the new fuel era.

“As Jon explained in his interview (Fuel Oil News September 2023), our strategy is to invest in the right assets, bring in the best talent and expand our fuel portfolio to continue to meet our customers’ future energy needs.

A changing sector

“The energy distribution sector is undergoing its biggest change since the advent of fossil fuel. Over the next 10 years we will see a plethora of fuels offered to, and tested in, the market. We believe electricity and hydrogen will play a huge role, with one becoming the dominant fuel for the retail sector and the other for commercial road transport.

“A successful and sustainable decarbonisation strategy for transport, heat and commercial is highly likely to involve a diverse mix of renewable energy sources and energy storage technologies. However, there are some strong contenders to be major future players.

“Electricity from green sources is likely to power the majority of personal use vehicles in the future due to the favourable regulatory environment and reduction in the price of battery technology in recent years. There will also be a seismic shift in the commercial real estate sector where the primary energy source will move from fossil/electric to electric/hydrogen or other fuels. Similarly, I believe the high consuming commercial transport sector will go through a staged transition with electricity being a major source over the next few years followed by green hydrogen in the longer term.

“That’s why, for me, electricity and hydrogen will lead the emerging fuel pack.

“Market consolidation will continue as well as new firms emerging in line with emerging fuels. With the advent of AI, I also expect technological upheaval with significant automation of sector processes delivering efficiency gains.”

Against this backdrop of change, Jay considers his own direction: “As someone motivated to deliver long-term strategies, more than day-to-day or near-term, I see myself moving into a business development role more focussed on the long-term horizon. But, first, I need to make sure we have the right team in place and aligned with Mabanft group objectives to take over the day to day.”

Collaboration key to inclusion and diversity

There was a lot of activity in the sector this year around International Women’s Day, but the industry remains on the back foot in terms of both inclusion and diversity. As someone who places a high importance on attracting and retaining the best talent and creating the strongest teams Jay sees this as issues the industry must urgently address and considers which comes first – inclusion or diversity.

“I believe both are equally important. To effectively address the challenges and biases in the energy industry, it is crucial to foster both diversity and inclusion simultaneously. However, in terms of prioritisation, I think creating an inclusive environment should come first, mainly because inclusion drives engagement and productivity which, in turn, supports diversity retention.

“I believe that having an inclusive workforce amplifies the benefits of diversity which can lead to organisational change. Make no mistake though, even though inclusion should come first, it’s important to note that diversity and inclusion are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.”

“I think the main obstacles to achieving greater inclusion and diversity are related to lack of awareness and understanding, combined with insufficient representation in leadership. This problem is exacerbated with a lack of a diverse talent pipeline.

“Collaboration among industry stakeholders is vital to accelerate progress. Industry associations, networks, and advocacy groups can work together to share best practice, develop industry-wide initiatives, and hold organisations accountable. Transparency and public reporting of diversity metrics can also drive accountability and promote healthy



competition among organisations to improve their inclusivity.

“Work-force diversity is hugely important to Mabanft, and the company has a defined inclusion and diversity framework. We have a diverse workforce, with people from a very broad range of backgrounds and have industry-leading women heading up Mabanft’s sister companies, Thomas Silvey Ltd. and BWOC.

“However, there is always more we need to do to get us nearer to the benchmarks we would demand of ourselves, and we are working to ensure that our future talent pipeline reflects a diverse and inclusive workforce to continue to transform our organisation.”

Facilitating future fuels

As well as planning for delivery of the future workforce, Mabanft UK, as a key player in the energy distribution industry, has a significant role to play in facilitating the shift to future fuels as Jay explains.

“We have an immense opportunity to play a pivotal role in driving the industry’s transition to future fuels. We are investing in infrastructure across the UK to facilitate their provision. Our Truckstop portfolio increases every year, and we are working to deliver continued strategic growth as well as discussing partnerships with technology firms investing in hydrogen refuelling and electric charging. Our active regulatory engagement and advocacy will also influence development of supportive policies and regulations for future fuels.”

Mabanft is clearly working hard on many different fronts to facilitate the transition, but many other factors impact on progress as Jay highlights.

“Current global, political and economic conditions have affected the transition to future fuels. The shift towards renewable energy sources and adoption of new energy technologies largely depends on the policies and regulations set by government, as well

as availability of funding and incentives for research and development.

“Economic conditions, such as the price of oil and other fossil fuels also play a significant role in determining the feasibility and competitiveness of alternative energy sources. Additionally, geopolitical tensions and changing international relations can impact exports and imports, further shaping the transition.”

Commitment to the customer journey

Resonating with the direction of the sector, sustainability frames the Mabanft brand and Jay emphasises the importance of this being experienced by customers.

“I believe that sustainability being a customer-facing aspect of the Mabanft brand is vital to meet customer expectations, build trust and loyalty, differentiate us from competitors, attract new customers, enhance brand reputation, and meet stakeholder expectations. This can only be achieved through effective communication to ensure our customers are also aware of our investment in delivering a sustainable future.

“One of the best pieces of advice I have received is: ‘Be a good listener and treat others as you would like to be treated.’ It’s a powerful reminder of the importance of kindness and empathy in our interactions with others. By treating others with respect, compassion and dignity and being a good listener, we can cultivate long lasting relationships, build trust and grow as an individual.

“With a desire to listen, I am looking forward to attending industry events to meet with customers as well as collaborate with industry experts and to being actively involved in shaping the regulations and policies around the energy distribution in the UK.

“We value our customers and strive to deliver exceptional service that exceeds their expectations. Our commitment is to provide services tailored to our customers’ needs and to walk with them on their fuel transition journey.”



A step in the right direction

THE ENERGY BILL AMENDMENT IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AS THE INDUSTRY PREPARES FOR WINTER.

On September 5th I was delighted to see the industry's hard work receive the recognition it deserved when the Government put forward an amendment to the energy bill that grants the powers to introduce a Renewable Liquid Heating Fuel Obligation (RLHFO), similar to the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO). I am also pleased to report that the amendment was passed without any objections.

During the Bill's passage through parliament, we received significant support from nearly all political parties. This gives us confidence that, regardless of the outcome of the next election, we will be able to help our rural customers decarbonise their home heating.

This amendment has been made possible thanks to the considerable amount of correspondence submitted by rural constituents to their MPs highlighting the cost and disruption of achieving the net zero challenge. Additionally, the input from local fuel oil distributors, along with the numerous meetings held by industry trade bodies OFTEC and UKIFDA with MPs and other important parties, has contributed significantly to this outcome. The Government now recognises the importance of a technology-neutral approach for rural communities.

However, this is only the end of phase one. Our attention must now turn to how, and when, this legislation can come into force. In reality, more work and influencing are probably required to achieve this.

What does the amendment actually do?

In putting forward the amendment, the Government recognised that the RTFO has been a very successful piece of legislation and it proposes to replicate it for heating oil. The amendment (detail below) grants the Government pre-ordained powers to implement an RLHFO through regulations rather than legislation, expediting the parliamentary process.

What next?

The amendment suggests that there will be a consultation. The minister was pressed in parliament regarding the timing of this, and

he indicated that it would take place within 12 months, with a possibility of it being scheduled sooner rather than later. Given the upcoming general election, it is imperative that we urge the Government to set the consultation date as soon as possible.

I anticipate that the consultation will detail what an RLHFO will look like, and it will seek answers to questions about obligation levels, feedstock availability and costs. UKIFDA and OFTEC have already started work on this and will be putting together a number of different workstreams for which we are likely to require expert help from the industry. In addition, the position of Northern Ireland needs to be resolved. The legislation only applies to Great Britain, but the Government has committed to consulting with the province. This approach appears counterintuitive since the RTFO is a mechanism that applies to the entire UK. We have already communicated with our partners to address this matter.

“OUR ATTENTION MUST NOW TURN TO HOW AND WHEN THIS LEGISLATION CAN COME INTO FORCE.”

When is a RLHFO likely to start?

It is too early to tell. Much will depend on how quickly the Government can launch the consultation and respond. We will work closely with our partners in the coming months to prepare a thorough response to the consultation.

Detailed powers provided by the amendment

The amendment provides the Secretary of State with a power to make regulations:

(i) imposing on off-gas grid heating fuel suppliers an obligation in respect of renewable liquid heating fuel that corresponds to or is similar to the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) provided

for in the Energy Act 2004 and:

(ii) making provision connected with that obligation which corresponds to or is similar to provision made by, or that may be made under, Chapter 5 of Part 2 of the Energy Act 2004. The RTFO obligates suppliers of relevant transport fuels in the UK to produce evidence showing that a percentage of the fuel that they supply comes from renewable sources.

It would also give the Secretary of State the following powers:

- Establishing and appointing an Administrator to administer the obligation (corresponding to sections 125-125C of the Energy Act 2004).
- Making provision about how amounts of heating fuel are to be counted or determined for the purposes of the obligation (corresponding to section 126 of the Energy Act 2004).
- Making provision for the Administrator to issue certificates evidencing supply of renewable liquid heating fuels. The regulations may authorise transfers of certificates between persons (including for consideration) (corresponding to section 126 of the Energy Act 2004).
- Making provision for a supplier to pay a specified sum to the Administrator if they do not fulfil their obligation to supply the specified amount of renewable liquid heating fuel (corresponding to section 128 of the Energy Act 2004).
- Providing for the Administrator to impose civil penalties on persons who contravene specified obligations (corresponding to section 129 of the Energy Act 2004).
- Providing for a procedure for individuals to object to penalties and appeal against penalties to the courts (corresponding to sections 130 and 131 of the Energy Act 2004).
- Providing for HMRC to disclose specified information to the Administrator, impose constraints on the further disclosure of such information and make it an offence to wrongfully disclose such information (corresponding to sections 131A to 131C of the Energy Act 2004).



Winter campaign launches

KEN CRONIN ALSO SHARES NEWS OF THE INDUSTRY'S VITAL 'BE WINTER WISE' CAMPAIGN.

As we head into winter (hard to imagine given the extremely warm weather recently), our industry needs to consider several key themes. With the ongoing war in Ukraine, the fuel supply will probably remain unpredictable, and prices are likely to be volatile, exacerbated by exchange rate fluctuations. To address these issues, UKIFDA will be working closely with the UK government to ensure that data is readily available, providing the opportunity to detect early warning signs and take action.

The unpredictable weather and ongoing cost of living challenges are also significant concerns. To help customers, UKIFDA and OFTEC have recently introduced the "Be Winter Wise" winter campaign, which aims to encourage customers to plan ahead and avoid last-minute orders. It also offers information on where to seek help for those struggling with their bills.

'Be Winter Wise' is a five-point plan that assists heating oil users in preparing for and navigating winter 2023-2024. It provides guidance to the 1.7m off gas grid households, offering practical advice to help them save energy, get the most out of their heating, and prepare for uncertainty.

Furthermore, the campaign contains

The infographic features the UKIFDA logo at the top. Below it, the title "Be Winter Wise & Prepare For Winter" is followed by "5 Point Plan". Five numbered points are listed, each with an icon: 1. Keep your system maintained (clock and warning sign); 2. Book your heating oil delivery early (hourglass); 3. Sign up for the Cold Weather Priority scheme (house with hands and "COLD WEATHER PRIORITY" text); 4. Helpful payment guidance (hand holding a coin); 5. Choose a UKIFDA-accredited distributor (truck and location pin).

information about UKIFDA's Cold Weather Priority (CWP) scheme, which identifies those most at risk from the cold and takes proactive steps to prioritise their deliveries. UKIFDA customers aged 75 or over are eligible to join the CWP scheme at no cost.

For heating oil users who are struggling to pay for their heating oil, the campaign includes resources such as the *Government's Help For*

Households initiative and its *Help With Your Energy Bills* guide, which offers helpful advice on this year's Winter Fuel and Cold Weather payments.

Working together is a developing theme at UKIFDA (more on this in another issue). So, I invite industry members to join the "Be Winter Wise" campaign to support our customers together!

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A DAY IN THE LIFE...

Abby Eames

WELCOME TO OUR FEATURE WHERE PEOPLE FROM MANY DIFFERENT ROLES IN THIS INDUSTRY WILL TAKE YOU THROUGH A TYPICAL DAY IN THEIR WORKING LIFE. THIS MONTH, FUEL OIL NEWS SPEAKS WITH *ABBEY EAMES*, DEPOT MANAGER AT NWF FUELS, AND WINNER OF THE UKIFDA DEPOT OF THE YEAR AWARD, TO DISCOVER HOW ABBEY SPENDS A TYPICAL DAY.



MY ALARM GOES OFF AT...

06:30am – the early bird catches the worm!

THE FIRST THING I DO IS...

Have a cuppa – I'm very fussy when it comes to a cuppa. I am a nightmare to make a drink for!

I like a cuppa that's made in a rush, not too milky, one sugar and definitely not brewed!

I PREPARE FOR THE DAY AHEAD BY...

Call me old fashioned, but I love a paper diary. If it's in the diary, it's getting done.

I CAN'T LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT...

My handbag, which has everything but the kitchen sink in it.

MY TYPICAL DAY – The one thing I have learnt from my experience as a depot manager, is that no two days are the same, which makes the job interesting and eventful!

Sometimes it's a case of 'how many plates can I spin at once?'

Typically, I have a catch up and a natter with my team before work officially starts.

I then start my daily tasks which involves routing, ordering in product, managing my own customer portfolio, depot management and other key tasks.

My working day wouldn't be half as good if I didn't have great people around me.

MY MOST MEMORABLE WORK MOMENT...

Last year I graduated from Staffordshire university, gaining a distinction in my level 5 apprenticeship.

I am very proud of this achievement and grateful to NWF for supporting me and encouraging my personal development.

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB...

Sometimes there are just not enough hours in the day.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB...

The best part of my job is working with my team and the relationships I have made over the years with customers.

I RELAX AFTER WORK BY...

I really enjoy walking and socialising with friends and family.

MY FAVOURITE MEAL IS (breakfast, lunch, or evening meal)...

A beef roast dinner, with loads of gravy!

ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE IS...

A book and a lip balm.

THE LAST THING I DO EACH DAY IS...

I do love a bit of telly; I go from one extreme to another. I can find myself watching TOWIE and then onto This Week on the Farm.

I'M NORMALLY IN BED BY...

20:30pm to try to switch off.



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Improving the UK's fuel supply network

EARLIER THIS YEAR, OIKOS STORAGE AND ESSAR OIL FINALISED A SIGNIFICANT DEAL TO EXPAND THE LATTER'S FUEL DISTRIBUTION INTO THE SOUTH EAST OF THE UK. THE AGREEMENT LEVERAGES OIKOS'S STRATEGIC LOCATION ON THE THAMES ESTUARY AND CONNECTIVITY TO THE UNITED KINGDOM OIL PIPELINE (UKOP) AND EXOLUM PIPELINE SYSTEM BY ENABLING ESSAR TO BUILD A NEW POSITION IN THE THAMES REGION AND GRANTING ACCESS TO THE LARGEST MARKET IN THE COUNTRY.

ESSAR'S **CARLOS ROJAS** AND OIKOS'S MANAGING DIRECTOR, **ARUN SRISKANDA**, SIT DOWN WITH MARGARET MAJOR, MANAGING EDITOR OF FUEL OIL NEWS TO DISCUSS THE DEAL, ITS IMPLICATIONS, AND THE WIDER HEALTH OF THE UK'S FUEL SUPPLY SYSTEM.

The market backdrop

The deal fulfils both company's near-term objectives and aligns with how they anticipate future fuel trends will develop. It enhances the UK's fuel connectivity and supply chain resilience, while improving site capability in preparation for the low carbon transition.

"While demand for ground fuels has remained strong, even through the pandemic, there have been significant changes to our supply ecosystem, primarily as a result of trade sanctions imposed on Russian hydrocarbons", Arun explains. "This has invariably put a strain on suppliers safety stocks: diesel is now coming from further afield, so transit times are longer, and the profile of the vessels carrying the product has had to change, too." Arun, who has worked in hydrocarbon supply and trading, adds that 'current distillate market structure is also placing less incentive on suppliers to hold excess inventories, which places further strain on supply chains'.

While diesel has remained buoyant, customers are also turning to more sustainable options and Government mandates for SAF and sales of EVs are due to come into effect in 2025. Both Oikos and Essar are acutely aware the mix of fuels customers demand is changing.

"HVO is certainly proliferating more into the traditional diesel market as a drop-in replacement", Arun notes. "The challenge, which of course is well documented, is the lack of supply and the subsequent impact this has on price."

A boost to Essar's downstream ambitions

For Essar, the agreement represents a significant step in their strategic downstream ambitions. Imports of middle distillates will now be pumped from Oikos to Northampton and the Midlands region, providing significant supply resilience and increasing Essar's security of supply proposition.

"We are delighted to be working with Oikos", Carlos explains. "Supply resilience and security of supply are paramount for our customers, and this deal will boost Essar's capacities and ability to meet demand in Northampton and Kingsbury."

"While working with Oikos will of course complement our strong supply proposition in the Midlands", Carlos adds. "Essar is now able to leverage its strong automotive fuel expertise in new markets, across London and the South East, too."

"Opening new supply routes between our terminals in the Midlands and Northampton with Oikos, via UKOP, is a significant step", Carlos



concludes. "We are simultaneously improving the diversity and resilience of our supply offering and extending our winning customer offering to new customers in the UK's largest market, the Thames region."

Broader benefits for the supply ecosystem

For Oikos, the long-term contractual agreement with Essar plays into the great synergies between their operations with the site's advantaged marine logistics and access to major cross-country pipelines.

"The immediate benefactors here are Essar's customers," Arun explains. "By connecting our site with Northampton, via the UKOP, they can operate with a lower tonne mileage (vs Stanlow), which reduces the logistical carbon intensity of their current flow. Essar will also have the ability to pump to Kingsbury, adding contingency to their inland supply, thereby improving the robustness of their supply system, while connection to the Exolum pipeline system will give them opportunities to optimise their jet supply to Essar's aviation network."

"By connecting additional tankage to the UKOP system, Oikos also benefits," he continues. "We are improving our terminal's ability to egress product onto the pipeline, while making product movements within the terminal more efficient." Arun also explains how, in turn, this will free up smaller, currently more suitably sized tanks for Oikos to hold important new grades of fuel, such as HVO.

Arun concludes, however, that the benefits of the deal are best

viewed holistically. “Essar is taking steps to improve their supply logistics which – given their market share – will ultimately improve the UK’s supply chain resilience.”

Arun has worked with Essar for over five years now and says they have been ‘consistently ambitious and entrepreneurial’. This deal is ‘the latest example of their ambition and will have positive implications for the wider supply ecosystem’.

Future resilience

Moving forward, Oikos and Essar are optimistic for the future of the UK’s fuel resilience but recognise that the net zero transition presents a unique set of challenges. They both share a commitment to playing a key role in the decarbonisation of the UK economy.

Essar has ambitious plans to build an energy transition cluster in the North West of England, and is leading the charge in the UK by developing projects in refinery decarbonisation, biofuels, and new energy logistics to help deliver energy transition ambitions.

Support for low carbon fuels

Oikos is similarly exploring partnerships to upgrade their site’s capacity to store and distribute low carbon alternative fuels. “We have previously installed the first generation of diesel blending with FAME,” Arun explains. “Along with the more recent HVO import system.”

The Oikos terminal also has plans to introduce further biofuels with the support of its customers to help with their Renewable Transport Fuel Obligations (RTFO).

Renewable fuels will play an important role in meeting the UK’s climate change commitments, and Oikos and Essar say they welcomed the Government’s consultation on the Low Carbon Fuels Strategy. They are confident that the Government’s response and final strategy will support industry in making the right choices to transition to low carbon fuels when it is published.

The two organisations share the view that terminals and suppliers are prepared to rebalance their existing infrastructure for the low carbon future, but they believe current fuel networks will be vital during the transition.

Traditional fuels operate within a well-developed supply chain with a history of successfully servicing the UK’s transportation requirements, and Arun points to the number of supply routes into the South East as evidence of this.

“As the transition gains pace, investment in existing fuel infrastructure will be crucial to maintain resilience and support the shift to less proven supply chains.”



Association stats show steady progress towards net zero

THIS HAS BEEN ANOTHER PERHAPS SURPRISING AND CHALLENGING YEAR IN THE UK FUELS SECTOR, WHETHER IT BE THE NECESSARY MOVE AWAY FROM RUSSIAN DIESEL AND CRUDE OIL, THE CONTINUING PUSH TOWARDS LOW CARBON FUELS AND NET ZERO, OR THE LINGERING EFFECTS OF COVID. HERE WE TAKE A MORE IN-DEPTH LOOK AT THE TRENDS AND CHANGES OF THE PAST YEAR WITH **ELIZABETH DE JONG**, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, FUELS INDUSTRY UK.



It’s been an exciting year of progress which saw our name change to Fuels Industry UK from UKPIA, to reflect our evolving remit to champion low carbon fuels as well as traditional petroleum products. We also seized the opportunity to change the name of our annual statistical publication series, now called Fuels Statistics, which has been updated and refreshed to provide stakeholders with all the most important facts on the sector, including a continued emphasis on renewable as well as traditional fuels.

Growth in renewable fuel consumption

Among the headline findings this year is that renewable fuel use, which on average has an overall greenhouse gas (GHG) saving of 82% compared to fossil fuel counterparts, saw continued uptake led by the increasing targets outlined in the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO). The RTFO is playing its part by helping to reduce the UK’s cumulative carbon dioxide emissions as we move towards net zero in 2050.

To break this down further, we can see that used cooking oil now accounts for some 55 percent of all biofuel feedstocks in the UK and is used to produce 93 percent of UK biodiesel. China is currently the largest source of renewable fuel feedstock, accounting for 25 percent of the market share, with much of the imports in the form of used cooking oil.

Also of note is that bioethanol has increased its renewable fuel market share since 2020 following the introduction of E10 petrol as the standard (premium) grade of petrol in Great Britain initially, before the introduction into Northern Ireland in 2022. Bioethanol and Biodiesel ME (also referred to as fatty acid methyl esters) had 32 percent and 49 percent of the total share respectively in 2021, compared to 22 percent and 62 percent in 2020.

Electric vehicles

An important part of the net zero mix is electric vehicles (EVs), and we have seen charging infrastructure continue to roll out at increasing speed, growing by 31 percent in 2022 with Ultra Rapid chargers increasing by 75 percent year on year. In addition, the total number of on-street chargers increased by a significant 38 percent in 2022.

Reflecting these changes, we can see that new hybrids and battery EVs car registration increased by 25 percent and 40 percent in 2022, with their market shares of sales at 20 percent and 16 percent respectively.

Away from the cold stats, it's worth reflecting that our consideration of the future of mobility in the UK shows that a range of technologies will be needed to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions at the scale required to meet net zero. No single low carbon technology such as EVs can fully meet all the energy needs of transport, heating and power generation.

Charging infrastructure is growing but not yet quickly enough to give us confidence that we can get where we need to be by 2030. In addition, we mustn't forget about the greater operational challenges of electrifying heavier goods vehicles as well as decarbonising transport at sea or air. The EU this year acknowledged this challenge by stating that the use of low carbon fuels, like synthetics, can also meet sustainability requirements and offer all combustion engine vehicles a route to net zero.

Russian situation

Perhaps the biggest story of 2021 in the fuel supply chain was the same one that dominated global affairs – the invasion and repercussions of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. UK importers took early action to phase out Russian oil before the ban came into force in December 2022. The pace of phasing out Russian imports, however, was not the same for different oil products with Russian crude replaced first and diesel taking an extra two months to be phased out.

Most Russian crude imports were replaced with American crude which is typically sweet and light (low sulphur and low density) and favoured by western refineries. Such refineries have lower sulphur recovery capacity and tolerance compared to those in America and Asia.

Unlike crude, Russian oil products -especially diesel and gas oils – were replaced from a large mix of countries, notably India, Kuwait, Belgium, Saudi Arabia, and the US.

The repercussions from the war in Ukraine continue to reverberate for fuel suppliers but it has shown that even the most intractable of issues can be overcome through close cooperation between industry and UK Government.

Recovery from Covid

While the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic has seen demand for oil products increase in the years since 2020, demand levels are yet to fully recover with the amount of crude processed still a few percentage points down from 2019.

Rising demand caused by a faster than expected recovery from Covid-19, coupled with the disruptions in the global energy supply chains caused by the conflict in Ukraine, led to pricing pressures on crude oil and oil products globally in 2022. The Competition Markets Authority acknowledged this in the recently published UK Road Fuel Market Study.

In response, HM Treasury reduced fuel duty by 5p per litre in March 2022 to ease financial pressures for consumers. Despite this, total UK

Government fuel tax receipts were higher than ever and surpassed pre-pandemic levels due to a surge in VAT revenue from higher fuel prices. Income and margins will be vital to potential investment in future decarbonisation projects, with the publication showing our member companies' involvement in decarbonisation clusters for the first time.

Low carbon technology

In 2022 we saw continued effort from the UK fuel sector to reduce emissions through planned investments in low-carbon technologies such as renewable fuels, hydrogen, SAF, and CCUS. The inclusion of our members in industrial decarbonisation clusters across the UK greatly boosts the effectiveness and cost efficiencies of these developing technologies. Examples include ExxonMobil in the Solent Cluster in the South to Petroineos in the Acorn Cluster in Scotland with projects like HyNet North West and Net Zero Humber and Teesside in between.

These are vital early steps on our journey to net zero and it will be interesting to see how investments ramps up in future years, depending on the relative attractiveness of the UK compared to competitor countries. These, and other factors, will continue to impact on the sector in next year's publication as the fuels industry gradually moves closer to net zero in 2050.

Elizabeth De Jong is the CEO of Fuels Industry UK and has over 20 years' experience in a range of advocacy, stakeholder engagement and business planning roles covering the diverse interests of operators, government and supply chain companies. Previously, Elizabeth was Director of Policy at Logistics UK and has also worked for the DfT and the Rail Delivery Group.

The advertisement for Tankquip features a large, 3D-style logo at the top. Below the logo, there are two columns of images: a white tanker truck on the left and a white fuel tanker truck on the right. The text is arranged in a grid-like fashion, with contact details in the top left, company name in the top right, and contact details in the bottom right. The background is a mix of red and blue.

Tankquip

Call Dave Stanley on
01636 816151
07803 618944

FUELS & ENERGY

ROAD TANKERS

Or e-mail
dave@tankquip.co.uk

Find us at www.tankquip.co.uk

Technology advancements supporting the sector

Future market demands for tank level monitoring

In our last issue we spoke with Alan Keyes of Glen Fuels to find out more about the role tank telemetry is playing in delivering excellent customer service. As we continue to explore the evolving landscape of tank level monitoring, it is clear there is a growing demand for innovative solutions that cater to the unique needs of customers. Talking to Fuel Oil News, Shankar Ganesh Jayagopi, CEO of Magnus Monitors, highlights the importance of efficient tank level monitoring and talks through the market trends that indicate several key areas where customers are looking for advancements:

Versatility across tank sizes: Tank level monitoring systems that can cater to a wide range of tank sizes, from small to large, are in high demand. Customers appreciate versatility that allows them to use a single system for various applications.

Integration and accessibility: The ability to seamlessly integrate with existing ERP/CRM systems and provide accessible data through mobile applications is becoming increasingly important. Customers value solutions that simplify data management and accessibility.

Future-ready connectivity: With the proposed shutdown of 2G networks, customers are looking for solutions that embrace next-generation connectivity options like Narrowband IoT (NB-IoT) and LTE-M. These technologies not only ensure future compatibility but also reduce battery consumption and extend the lifespan of monitoring devices.

Leading the way

As highlighted in the case study in our last issue, Magnus Radar Monitor is a pioneer in the sector of battery-driven radar tank level monitoring and is a company committed to constant innovation and enhancing customer value earning it a loyal customer base in the UK and Ireland. Shankar explains how the innovator's close relationship with its customers has enabled it to continually stay ahead of the market.

Serving all tiers of distributors

"In today's dynamic landscape, small, medium, and large fuel distributors need to be sure they have a reliable partner," Shankar explains. "Our cutting-edge technology allows distributors to proactively address the needs of both homeowners and business customers, ensuring they never run out of fuel.

"We are constantly looking for ways to improve our product and our latest hardware innovations have delivered what we believe is the "most responsive" tank level monitor to date.

"The monitor is able to measure tank levels in near real-time, swiftly responding to significant changes. This capability not only helps identify routine top-ups but also provides a vigilant eye against potential incidents like theft."

Efficiency without compromise

We asked Shankar whether this level of monitoring means additional demand on the battery.

"Being the "most responsive" monitor doesn't equate to compromised battery life," Shankar assures us. "Through the ingenious application of machine learning techniques, the monitor intelligently discerns between periods of actual usage and inactivity.

"This adaptive approach allows it to fine-tune its remote update frequency, significantly conserving battery life to up to 10 years."

Fast-track-GPS capability

Another significant advancement in monitor technology has been the addition of an optional fast-track-GPS tracking feature. Shankar elaborates: "With its 'hot start' functionality, a monitor with this feature can pinpoint precise GPS coordinates within seconds, outperforming other GPS devices that might take an entire minute to do the same."

AI-driven efficiency and reduced CO2 emissions

"Our AI-based platform takes tank level monitoring to a new level," Shankar enthuses. "The use of AI enables it to comprehend the unique usage patterns of each individual tank in a deployment with thousands of monitors.

"This knowledge is leveraged to provide oil distributors with a meticulously planned schedule for tank top-ups, not only liberating them from the cumbersome task of manual monitoring but also, importantly, aligning with sustainability goals by contributing to significant reductions in CO2 emissions."

Sector digitalisation

Whilst tank telemetry is one of the most rapidly evolving sector technologies it is not the only aspect of the fuel distribution industry that is benefiting from increased digitalisation and technological innovation as Howard Marriott, group transport manager for Barton Petroleum confirms.

"With digitalisation everything seems easier," Howard shares. "All transactions are recorded digitally so it is easier for storage.

"Technology is moving at pace in this industry over the past five years – we've never seen anything like it. We never thought we would see drivers walking around with tablets typing things out and attending to things electronically. But it is the way of the world."

In a case study on page 31 of this issue, we hear how Barton Petroleum worked with DreamTec Systems to find the right solution to take advantage of these developments in industry software. Paul Foley, CEO of DreamTec further highlights how digitalisation is benefiting the sector.

"It has been said that good management starts with precise measurement," says Paul. "In the digital age, we are able to capture and communicate an immense amount of measurable data instantly, automatically and error-free.

A progressive leap for the industry

"Digitalisation", in a nutshell, is about harnessing our technological capabilities to capture precise and critical information automatically and in real-time. This, in turn, allows for easier administration and more informed decision making.

"Digitalisation of the fuel industry is a progressive leap towards increasing operational efficiency, accessibility and transparency with automated and paperless systems, and provides the tools for proactive risk management."



PORTLAND MARKET REPORT

SEPTEMBER
IN VIEW

A COUNTRY WHOSE STRENGTH ON THE PITCH IS ECHOED IN THAT EXHIBITED IN ITS ENERGY POLICY DELIVERY

The Rugby World Cup (RWC) is now well under way and in a 'tradition' that goes back to the 2012 London Olympics, we will link this month's report to a major global sporting event. As hosts and joint favourites to win the tournament, the French rugby team combines power, technical prowess and an uncharacteristic dose of on-field discipline. Does France's energy sector have the same characteristics and have two wholly unrelated subjects ever been so clumsily linked?!

As one would expect for the world's 7th largest economy (GDP), France has a mature and competitive petroleum retail sector, with over 11,000 petrol stations (this compared to the UK's 8,500). As you'd also expect from a developed western economy, petroleum products in France are heavily taxed! At 69 cents per litre (equivalent to 59 pence per litre – 59ppl), French duty on petrol is notably higher than in the UK (53ppl) and this results in a price for gasoline (167ppl) that is around 15% higher than in Britain. When it comes to diesel, France is in line with almost every other country in Europe, whereby excise duty is applied at a lower rate to petrol. Therefore, French diesel buyers pay 61 cents per litre tax, which is in fact about the same as the UK's 53ppl, contributing to an overall diesel price of around 160ppl per litre in both countries.

**“AN INCREDIBLE 93%
OF FRENCH ELECTRICITY
IS GENERATED BY
'EMISSIONLESS'
SOURCES.”**

Unlike its North Sea neighbours, France has no indigenous oil production. Instead, the country is one of the largest importers of crude oil in the world, bringing in over 665,000 barrels (105m litres) per day, predominantly from Norway, USA and the Middle East (obviously Russia prior to 2022). Processing all of this is the once mighty French refining industry, now reduced to only 6 refineries – that is down from 12 only 10 years ago. All but 2 of today's refineries are owned by France's energy giant

Total Energies, a company that enjoys almost monopolistic power in France's fuel sector and is run by the no-nonsense Patrick Pouyanné.

This engineer son of a customs officer (born in Rouen, but raised in France's deep South-West), Pouyanné became CEO in 2014 and has successfully transformed the company from a one-trick exploration pony (which many saw as little more than a supplementary arm of the French foreign office), to a truly global energy colossus. It is the 3rd largest 'Big Oil' company on the planet (after Exxon and Shell), with revenues over \$185 billion and annual profits of around \$16bn (twice that of BP). Since 2014 it has provided the highest level of shareholder returns in the 'oil major' community, with a whopping 75% return since 2014 (by comparison, Shell sits at 50% and BP a lowly 30%). Such success has placed Pouyanné under considerable public scrutiny in his home country, but there are few signs that 'Le Boss' is craving either affection or praise. In 2022, he publicly bemoaned the fact that "all politicians seem to have only just discovered that the price of electricity is linked to the price of gas". Moreover, he has been unapologetic in his views around continued oil and gas exploration, even though the company has low carbon investments to the tune of around \$35bn – twice that of the industry average. Nonetheless, Pouyanné is insistent that only continued oil and gas exploration can generate the necessary returns to pay for new renewable energy projects.

The other energy company in France that comes close to monopolistic status is Electricity de France (EDF). Generating over 80% of the country's electricity, EDF runs every single one of France's 56 nuclear reactors, which account for over 70% of France's electricity. Developed in the 1950s, but rapidly expanded by the French Government after the 1974 oil shock, France's nuclear power sector is the most developed nuclear industry in the world and this position of global nuclear leadership is something the French Government is very keen to maintain; they have plans to build up to 14 new nuclear generators by 2050. Whether nuclear is a truly green industry is a debate for another day, but if you lump nuclear generation

in with energy from hydro power (11%), wind (7%), solar (3%) and bio/waste (2%), you end up with an incredible 93% of French electricity being generated by 'emissionless' sources – an unprecedented state of affairs anywhere in the world. It also results in France having one of the lowest carbon footprints in Europe. Only 6 tonnes of CO2 are emitted per person per annum, compared to coal-hungry Germany (9 tonnes, ie, 50% greater) and Britain at around 7.5 tonnes.

**“THE COUNTRY'S
NUCLEAR INDUSTRY
DELIVERS A LEVEL OF
LOW CARBON ENERGY
INDEPENDENCE, THAT
MOST DEVELOPED
NATIONS WOULD DIE
FOR.”**

To this observer, France's energy policy (along with their 2023 RWC squad) looks pretty formidable. The country's flagship oil and gas company makes billions in profits and is run by a grounded technocrat who neither shirks from the realities of energy complexity, nor engages in the tedious world of greenwashing. At the same time, the country's nuclear industry delivers a level of low carbon energy independence, that most developed nations would die for.

We may be loath to admit it but, not only do France's Rugby team look very possible winners of this year's tournament, successive French governments have also done pretty well in various Energy World Cups!

For more pricing
information,
see page 38

Portland
www.stabilityfromvolatility.co.uk

Latest software developments supporting the sector

In recent years, the advancement of supply chain technologies means customer expectations on the availability of order information is much higher. This is also true in the fuel distribution sector where customers increasingly want to know what's happening with their order in real time and, if there is a problem, what is it and how to resolve it.

In response to this demand for greater insight as well as supplier feedback, BoilerJuice has introduced new functionality to its software. The addition of its Order Management system significantly bridges the customer information gap whilst reducing the effort for the supplier to provide it.

We spoke with Zoe Blackhall, head of supply for BoilerJuice, to find out more about this new system and how it is contributing to a greatly enhanced customer experience.

The background

Zoe explains what led to the introduction of the new system: "We want to make working with BoilerJuice as easy as possible, and we listen carefully to our suppliers to drive focussed improvement. Feedback over the last couple of years has highlighted concerns over query response times, clarity of communication and order visibility so we launched a 12-month development project to address these.

"Firstly, we recognised the need to provide our suppliers with much greater order visibility, offering simplified views to quickly identify orders needing further attention. With cost reduction a key driver in any business, we also introduced intuitive functionality to reduce the admin burden around order management as well as additional tools to make it as easy as possible to manage, track and fulfil orders or queries."

Benefits to the customer

"As in all businesses, our focus starts and ends with the customer and, if it's difficult for the supplier, then the customer will no doubt feel the pain of that. To deliver the best customer experience we need the support of our 180+ suppliers in upholding exceptional levels of service and communication is key to achieving that.

"Order Management gives suppliers the tools to deliver the best possible service by unlocking improved prioritisation and communication to resolve issues quickly, with a simplicity that was previously lacking."

For the supplier

"We also added functionality that enables suppliers who don't have integrated software to update order status in a simplistic way. This enables us to keep the customer well informed about their delivery which also reduces failed/wasted journeys."

The addition of Order Management plays to the BoilerJuice Supply Team ethos of supporting each and every supplier to get the best from the platform. And there is always more to come as Zoe explains: "I am a strong believer that by continuing to collaborate and work in partnership with our suppliers we can push even further forward with enhancing customer experiences."

Industry feedback

The software update certainly seems to have hit the spot with suppliers as **David Damary-Thompson of Craggs** shares: "The new system has really improved the handling of orders, and especially supported in those individual moments when speed is crucial.

"When dealing with issues or problems that could impact both party's brand image this new system has allowed quick information sharing and cut out the lost admin hours of waiting for replies etc. It is certainly a good implementation that has made the day-to-day working easier between partners easier."

Ben Leworthy of New Era

also welcomes the new system: "The communication between our team and the CS team has greatly improved and all parties are on the same page with a customer's order. I believe they are looking at continuous improvements to the system as well and we are thoroughly looking forward to seeing the next stages of development. Well done, BoilerJuice."

Worth the effort

For those who regard themselves more

'old school' the system takes a little bit of adapting to but is worth the effort invested, as **Ruth Everitt of Fuel Oils** explains: "The new order management system was a bit of a shock at first as it seemed to have a lot of information that didn't quite cover my requirements. We are busy enough with day-to-day queries as it is without the need to decipher the various options.

"I must admit I am a people person and set in my ways and will always prefer to talk or email queries directly, but now I am familiar with this new portal, it is so much better, as it sends more detailed updates on the progress of the customer's order automatically.

"As we get nearer our insanely busy period this will hopefully prove very beneficial, but only time will tell."

A very happy customer

Chris Taft of Certas is unequivocal in his approval: "I LOVE IT!! The new order management system is a fantastic upgrade to the BoilerJuice website! Not only is it very well designed and easy to use, but it is saving me so much time and helping me manage the order book in a much smarter way.

"Being able to see immediately what's on load, delivered, late or requires action, all by individual depot, has helped immensely – not only does it help with customer service issues such as dropped tickets, delivery instruction requests etc., but it allows me to spot an issue very easily whether with an individual order or a depot.

"I can also, very happily, confirm a big difference in the number of emails received too. These have decreased dramatically, especially regarding late/dropped tickets.

I can now report an issue much faster, and the customer receives an email as soon as I report a dropped ticket. This is an incredible help as it keeps them fully updated in real time – such a huge benefit! Also, price reductions are automatic now and this has reduced the number of emails too.

"I am already a huge fan of this new system and knowing it's still in first stages shows how much hard work and effort has already gone into it. We can't wait to see what's coming next – 10/10!"

A case study: the benefits of finding the right software solution

AN INTERVIEW WITH **HOWARD MARRIOTT**, BARTON PETROLEUM,

“The top benefit of introducing DreamTec Systems is the transparency of knowing where the vehicles are, what sort of stage they are through the day, as well as knowing stock levels. It’s the whole package really.”
Howard Marriott, Group Transport Manager

Barton Petroleum is an independent, family-owned fuel supplier with over 50 years’ experience. Supplying a range of fuels, lubricants and oil products to customers right across the country, their success is anchored in strong customer relationships, delivering top-notch service and ensuring efficiency and reliability that their customers expect.

Distribution Network: England, UK
Fleet: 45 vehicles, 5 depots
Integration: Range of Alpeco Meters and Codas ERP

The challenge

As Barton Petroleum’s business grew, the company proactively explored strategies to maintain a constant headcount even as volumes increased year on year. They needed a solution which could streamline processes, whilst enhancing their performance and maintaining leading customer service levels.

“In our previous manual system, one depot with 10 vehicles and 10 drivers could produce in excess of 200 or 300 tickets each day to manually enter and process whereas, now, it’s done electronically.”

This has cut our admin time from 4-5 hours to 1 hour on stock reconciliation, giving our office staff time for other tasks, including making sales calls.”

The solution

In 2011, Barton Petroleum introduced DreamTec’s Meter Tracking system, moving to the full Mobile Fleet Management system in 2022.

As a result Barton Petroleum has experienced many advantages, including improved route management, a significant reduction in administrative workload, and increased visibility of stock levels and



80% of paperwork has disappeared for our drivers.”

System highlights for Barton Petroleum

- Faster, more accurate stock reconciliation.
- Greater transparency across the business.
- Less paper, less admin time.
- Enhanced driver productivity and route optimisation.

In support of Barton Petroleum’s commitment towards delivering at an exceptionally high level, the new systems provided avenues for improved customer service and enhanced operational efficiency. This has been achieved by facilitating the seamless and immediate transmission of work assignments directly to drivers through the DreamTec tablet system.

“Even if we change a drivers’ load around during the day, we can do it in the background and resend straight away. With DreamTec we can prioritise run outs or we can squeeze drops onto an existing load.”

The experience

The DreamTec team collaborated closely with the client throughout the process. Once the system configuration was finalised, installation was carried out across the depots following a strategic rollout plan.

“DreamTec Systems has sped up almost every one of our processes, but maintained the complexity and quantity of information captured.”

operational activities across the business.

“We have much better visibility on stock levels now. Not only is stock reconciliation being done quicker, but it is also a lot more accurate.”

The results

In addition to streamlining the company’s day-to-day distribution activities and order management, Barton Petroleum has also benefitted from improved driver satisfaction and productivity. Drivers previously performed their daily 38-point vehicle check manually. With the introduction of DreamTec, daily vehicle inspections are performed electronically on the tablet and instantly submitted to the office, with defects being flagged directly to the applicable person in the office.

“Since introducing DreamTec Systems,

The UK's leading fuel EPOD solution

TouchStar Technologies Ltd has been supplying mobile computing solutions to the fuel distribution sector for over three decades and continues to dominate the market through constant innovation and unrivalled customer service.

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Driving customer satisfaction through digitalisation:

a case study with FoxInsights and NWF Fuels

FOR MONTHS NOW, THE DOWNSTREAM MARKET HAS BEEN DISRUPTED BY VARIOUS INFLUENCES. IN RESPONSE, DISTRIBUTORS ARE ADAPTING, AND EMBRACING TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS IS ONE ROUTE TO THEIR ABILITY TO REMAIN COMPETITIVE AND MEET THE EVER-CHANGING DEMANDS OF THEIR CUSTOMERS.

Background

NWF Fuels supply a diverse range of customers, from domestic to agricultural, commercial and retail sectors. With an unwavering commitment to customer service, the leading fuel supplier, has earned a reputation for reliability and excellence. However, in the face of ever-evolving customer expectations and market dynamics, the need to harness innovative technology became evident.

Looking to optimise

Recognising the potential to enhance their services, improve customer experiences and optimise sales and logistics, NWF Fuels decided to invest in a digitalisation project and, in 2020, forged a partnership with FoxInsights, European market innovator in remote monitoring intelligence for heating oil, diesel, lubricants, LPG, pellets, and waste oil.

The partnership with FoxInsights presented the opportunity that NWF was seeking to enhance their offering and streamline operations. The primary objective was to provide added value services to customers while simultaneously optimising sales and logistics processes. The key to achieving this was data—more specifically, data-driven decision making.

The outcomes

By leveraging FoxInsights' remote tank monitoring technology, NWF Fuels gained valuable insights into customer tank fill levels. This data was then carefully analysed, enabling NWF to make more accurate business decisions. For the sales department, this meant proactively contacting customers at precisely the right time, catering to their specific fuel needs, and fostering stronger relationships.

The fill level overview provided by the app ensures customers never run out of fuel unexpectedly, eliminating inconveniences and potential downtime. One of the most valuable results of the partnership with FoxInsights for



Jake Swanson FoxInsights

NWF has been the introduction of Automatic Refill Agreements. The new service, empowered by the data-driven insights, has been a game changer for customer convenience.

The experience

Lucy Jenkin from NWF Fuels shared: "At NWF Fuels, we utilise the products and services provided by FoxInsights to enhance our "Priority Club" customer experience in which our customers put their fuel supply into our hands.

"The FoxRadar device gives us, as a business, the ability to allow our customers to have a 'hands-off' approach and to take a step back from the worry of their home heating. This has proven popular with our customers and allowed us to reach a wider demographic



Lucy Jenkin NWF Fuels

with our domestic fuel supply. It is a pleasure working with FoxInsights, and their support aids us in providing the high standard of customer service that we strive to achieve at NWF Fuels."

As businesses across various sectors seek to adapt and thrive in the digital age, the NWF Fuels and FoxInsights collaboration is a great example of how technological advancements and data-driven strategies can revolutionise sectors. To remain competitive and future-ready, it is imperative that companies embrace digitalisation. The fuel distribution industry, in particular, can draw inspiration from NWF Fuels' success story, and the potential investment in technology has to drive efficiency, enhance customer experiences, and create a sustainable future.



TRANSITION TALK

“Decarbonisation will continue to be a key priority and embracing collaboration and digitalisation are key to delivering it. You may find yourself surprised at the additional benefits for your organisation.”

DOWNSTREAM FUTURE: DECARBONISATION, COLLABORATION AND DIGITALISATION
IN THIS ISSUE WE CONSIDER SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENTS THAT ARE SUPPORTING THE INDUSTRY ON ITS EVOLUTIONARY JOURNEY. HERE **GORDON HYLAND**, SALES DIRECTOR OF TOUCHSTAR TECHNOLOGIES, CONSIDERS THE LINK BETWEEN DECARBONISATION, COLLABORATION AND DIGITALISATION AND THE INCREASING CONTRIBUTION OF TELEMATICS TO THE INDUSTRY TRANSITION.

There are three topics that are being discussed a lot in our industry right now. They are decarbonisation, collaboration and digitalisation.

Not only are they being discussed a lot, but it is very rare for one to be mentioned without the other two; they are intrinsically linked. And they are not just topics of debate within our sector, they are also important in upstream and midstream as well as other industries and wider society too.

However, the focus is at its sharpest for the oil and gas sector, particularly in the run in to COP28, which is being held in the United Arab Emirates later this year.

Ahead of the conference, president-designate Dr. Sultan Al Jaber, has urged the oil and gas industry to create a new narrative about itself. He wants the sector to “*take this opportunity to step up, flip the script and show the world once again how this industry is an important part of the solutions we need.*”

But what does this mean, and how can you get involved?

Decarbonisation

Let’s start with decarbonisation – the key driver for all elements of this discussion. Across all industries, and all walks of life, people are looking at ways to decarbonise – both personally and professionally. Society is demanding it, and that demand is supported by new rules and laws from regulators and governments.

The oil and gas sector is at the centre of any calls for decarbonisation. In fact, a recent International Energy Agency (IEA) report – ‘Emissions from Oil and Gas Operations in Net Zero Transitions’ – highlighted the need for the sector to make immediate changes.

If pressure from industry bodies isn’t enough, there is also financial pressure from banks and investors who are under scrutiny to ensure their portfolio is as ‘green’ as possible, leaving them more reluctant to back oil and gas companies and projects. Earlier this year HSBC announced it would no longer fund fossil fuel projects.

What is decarbonisation?

Before asking what we can do, we first must understand what it is we’re trying to achieve.

Quite simply, decarbonisation is the removal or reduction of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. So, any action that reduces the amount of CO₂ released can be considered decarbonisation.

Across the entire oil and gas sector, decarbonisation strategies include, among others, investment in renewable energy, adoption of cleaner refining technologies and development of low-carbon fuels as well as the development of technologies for carbon capture, utilisation, and storage (CCUS) to mitigate remaining emissions.

So, what can you do?

The first and most important thing is to do



something. To start.

Starting means looking at methods that can reduce your business emissions and, once you have started, you need to assess progress. Decarbonisation is an ongoing process – constantly looking to reduce emissions. Once you have made reductions, you can measure those and develop ways to reduce still further, setting new targets. Decarbonisation is a process of constant improvement.

Why do it?

The key reason is that it is the right thing to do. Societal and regulatory pressures, mentioned above, are also good reasons. However, there are also direct financial benefits. Increasingly, your customers – and your customers’ customers – will start to define businesses by their green efforts as much as by their price or level of service. Highlighting decarbonisation efforts throughout the whole supply chain will soon be as important to a business as its prices. In fact, in some instances, it will be more important as customers become willing to pay more to support decarbonisation.

Collaboration

Collaboration is possibly the easiest to define of the three terms, but the hardest to truly understand or embrace. Quite simply, collaboration is about working together – a simple definition that hides lots of complexity.

Firstly, who we should be working with? Internally it will involve different groups,



departments or P&L divisions and not worrying if the 'P' goes to them, or the 'L' comes to you. It is also about collaborating across companies, working together to create best practice for the industry and, even, across industries. On a macro scale, it is about working across nations with governments collaborating to affect global change.

But, even if we understand it, achieving it can be extremely difficult.

Collaboration will often involve cultural change within organisations. Most organisations, and by extension, most people within organisations, are not natural collaborators. They prefer to keep their ideas, knowledge and expertise to themselves, sharing or revealing just enough to get the task done.

True collaborations start from the opposite end of the scale – sharing everything to determine the best way to get the task done, or even to determine the true nature of the task.

Collaboration is possibly considered the easiest to solve, especially in the wake of COVID-19. During the pandemic we came together, as a global society, to work for the greater good. Wider society now expects us to be able to come together again, collaborating to solve the environmental issues that are facing us all.

Digitalisation

Digitalisation brings the other two aspects together. In many senses, digitalisation, in our modern society, is what makes both

decarbonisation and collaboration possible as it provides the tools and methodologies.

For many the pandemic also made life more digital. When we couldn't leave our homes, we used digital tools to communicate – all those Zoom calls, quizzes and get togethers – because that was the only way we could.

As a result, we are now far more aware of the digitalisation of life and work and, of course, digitalisation is not new to the oil and gas sector. Digital tools and practices, such as customer relationship management (CRM), resource planning and energy trade and risk management (ETRM), are common in the sector and have been joined, more recently, by the internet of things (IoT) and artificial intelligence (AI).

For the downstream sector, the key use of digitalisation has been in planning and optimising deliveries, delivering efficiencies that not only help to decarbonise, but also save time and money.

By bringing together data from different sources, such as the tachograph, flow metre and valve control from the driver, along with electronic proof of delivery – that also reduces the need for paperwork – and by combining it with back-office and tank telemetry systems, jobs and routes can be planned more efficiently. These digital tools increase the proficiency of the whole process.

A case in point

This is not abstract theory as Touchstar clients are already investing heavily in digitalisation.

A perfect example is the national energy supplier, Flogas. Flogas has sought to break down silos and promote collaboration across its supply chain. Previously relying on fixed delivery cycles or an algorithm that predicted when they were going to need gas, the company



has now invested millions implementing tank telematic systems, providing regular readings of their customers' consumption and tank levels. By obtaining this vital information in real-time, Flogas has been able to centralise its orders, meaning it can now draw volume at quieter times, outside of peak periods.

By investing in a computer-based scheduling system, Flogas is also able to implement seven-day, rolling scheduling, increasing visibility. Additionally, demand sensing enables Flogas to fulfil requests across its forecasting operations, while also taking a more detailed look at customer consumption to extrapolate three months of rolling forecast data.

The Fuelstar on-truck computing system, supplied by Touchstar, ties all this together. Scheduled routes go out to the driver and, when they complete a job, an invoice goes out in real-time. If Flogas doesn't deliver on that day, it goes back to the order pot for immediate rescheduling.

This increased efficiency automatically delivers decarbonisation through fuel and resource savings as well as the significant benefits of going paperless. We estimate that our existing client base saves 83 million sheets of paper (the equivalent of 20,000 trees) simply by eliminating the hard copy POD and invoicing.

Unexpected benefits

In addition to decarbonisation other benefits include:

- Improved cash flow and better oversight of productivity levels
- Enhanced safety and easier-to-manage compliance
- Customisable tools and reliable data transmission
- Increased customer satisfaction

Decarbonisation will continue to be a key priority as societies and governments will demand it and embracing collaboration and digitalisation are key to delivering it. You may find yourself surprised at the additional benefits for your organisation.

Gordon Hyland has almost thirty years' experience supporting customers with complex, field-based, technology solutions. He has been with Touchstar Group for six years and became head of the Fuels Division in 2019. In his spare time, he enjoys family life, and his main passions are travel and skiing whenever possible.

The UK CCS announcements: what do they mean for job prospects and the transition away from fossil fuels?

THE WORLD'S CLIMATE SCIENTISTS ARE BROADLY PESSIMISTIC AS TO WHETHER THERE IS ANY HOPE LEFT THAT WE WILL MEET THE GLOBALLY AGREED GOAL OF KEEPING TEMPERATURE RISE BELOW 1.5 DEGREES. THE ONE THING THEY HAVE UNDERLINED IS THAT IT IS NO LONGER ENOUGH JUST TO KEEP GROWING THE CLEAN ENERGY INDUSTRIES, WE MUST ALSO NOW START, THROUGH CCS PROJECTS, TO CAPTURE CARBON THAT IS ALREADY BEING PRODUCED BEFORE, OR EVEN AFTER, IT IS EMITTED. THE UK GOVERNMENT'S CLUSTER SEQUENCING PROCESS HAS, THROUGH THE CCS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND, £1 BILLION TO PROVIDE INDUSTRY WITH THE CERTAINTY REQUIRED TO DEPLOY CCUS AT PACE AND AT SCALE. HERE WE CONSIDER THE IMPLICATIONS, FOR BOTH THE ENERGY TRANSITION AND SECTOR JOBS, OF THIS COMMITMENT TO CCUS TECHNOLOGY.

A growing sector

While the CCS projects that can achieve this that are currently operational are still nothing to talk about in terms of numbers, there are a significant number of proposed and planned projects, and growth in this sector is rapidly accelerating.

It is worth considering briefly the two different technologies under consideration: carbon capture and storage (CCS) and direct air capture (DAC). In the first the carbon is captured before it is emitted from industrial processes such as power plants, and factories such as cement concrete, steel and chemical plants. Use of the second technology captures CO2 directly from the air.

CCS is by far the most widespread technology and comes in several shapes and forms, with its sister category of carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS) also frequently adopted and the approach used by most of the proposed UK projects. CCS would just capture the carbon and store it in the ground whilst CCUS involves capture and storage for utilisation in materials like concrete and cement.

Overview

The Government's 10 Point Plan, published in November 2020, established a commitment to deploy CCUS in a minimum of two industrial clusters by the mid-2020s, and four by 2030 at the latest. The East Coast Cluster (ECC) and HyNet were named as the UK's first two clusters under Track 1.

In July of this year, Prime Minister Rishi Sunak announced the selection of another two carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects, to further enrich the development of Britain's carbon capture, usage, and storage (CCUS) industry. These two clusters, which are part of Track 2, are expected to be up and running by 2030.



Major UK industrial cluster emissions

The announcement attracted some scepticism, especially as it was reported in conjunction with a series of new North Sea oil and gas licenses. That compounded the argument made by critics of the technology that it is just an excuse to continue using fossil fuels on a business-as-usual trajectory.

However, if done correctly, CCS can be a critical component in reducing emissions as well as delivering increasing investments in clean energy technology. In fact, both the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and The International Energy Agency (IEA) agree that CCS will be a necessary component to give us a chance to meet climate targets.

What is the UK doing?

In the July announcement, the UK government identified two CCS clusters which they said contributed to their ambition to capture and store 20-30 megatonnes per annum (Mtpa) of CO2 by 2030 describing the Acorn and Viking transport and storage (T&S) systems as being best placed to meet the UK's CCUS targets.

This is, of course, only a fraction of the 331.5 Mtpa the UK currently emits.

While many CCS projects have been announced across the UK, the largest and

most significant one opened last year. Tata Chemicals Europe's (TCE) site in Northwich, Cheshire, will be the first in the world to purify and liquefy carbon dioxide as a raw material to make bicarbonate of soda. There are currently no active commercial applications of CCUS in the UK.

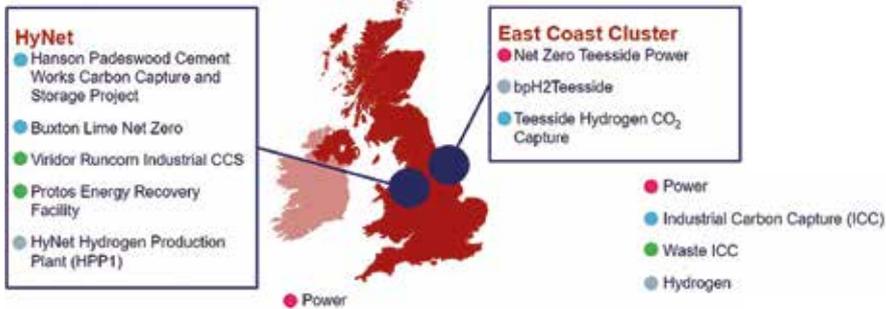
Opponents of carbon capture projects

There are, of course, many critics of carbon capture projects, ranging from the ones who say they do not work, to the ones who argue that, by putting such projects forward as a viable solution to net zero, we are just prolonging the use of fossil fuels and granting the fossil fuel industry a license to continue to pollute and business as usual.

It is important to underline here that even proponents of CCS and CCUS projects acknowledge that, with today's technology you cannot, at least not yet, capture all of the carbon, meaning that there will always be a level of emissions. With this in mind, the long-term priority should still be to phase out fossil fuels and CCUS should not, in any way, slow down the clean energy transition. It is, instead, to be seen as a measure that buys us time.

While excited about the potential of the technology, for Laurence Brown, Partner at Intellectual Property law firm EIP, the main criticism was the timing: "The announcement was made hand-in-hand with new oil and gas licenses as if it's a free pass for increased fossil fuel emissions. Of course, it isn't, but the potential for UK CCS is huge and the government is right to pursue it.

"There's enormous development needed to reach the 20 to 30 million tonnes per year target by 2030. If the technology can work on that scale by the 2030 deadline, it opens up much opportunity. The latest patent filing data shows that the industry is stepping up to the



Track-1 CCUS clusters for the mid-2020s

challenge, with more patents for CCS filed than ever before in 2021.”

Future jobs, training and the prospects for oil and gas professionals

Away from climate targets, getting CCS and CCUS projects off the ground is seen as a key component of an industrial strategy for the UK that has never been more important as the sector attempts to ‘find its feet’ post-Brexit.

Along with offshore wind, floating offshore wind and electric car and battery innovation, carbon capture can bring many new jobs to the UK. It can be seen as a perfect mixer for phasing out fossil fuels, as many of the skills offshore oil and gas workers have could be deployed offshore in the carbon capture clusters

announced in the North Sea.

While it is critical that new skills development and training plans are put in place, in particular when it comes to workers in the oil and gas sector, CCS and CCUS projects have been earmarked as the perfect transition sector. A recent survey identified that over 90% of oil and gas personnel have medium to high skills transferability. This puts them in a strong position to work within related energy sectors such as carbon capture technology.

While oil and gas workers will be in high demand to work in the soon-to-be booming carbon capture sector, it does not stop here. Workers in engineering, finance, operations, HR, HSE, commercial, business development, marketing, procurement, supply chain

management, project management and technicians would also be well positioned to transition into carbon capture technology.

Start now

With CCS and CCUS projects expected to boom in the coming decade, at the same time that the fossil fuel sector will gradually be phased down, it is more likely there will be a shortage of workers due to the surging demand rather than a rise in unemployment due to lost oil and gas workers. The demand created by the surge in CCS and CCUS is likely to be so high that workers transitioning from the oil and gas sectors will not be enough to meet it and a new workforce will be needed. It is critical to start now with the training of young people for careers in carbon capture technology and all the supply chain jobs that are vital for the sector to thrive in the UK.

CCUS is already becoming a major part of the energy and manufacturing sectors and, with a host of carbon capture clusters now announced across the UK, this growth shows no signs of slowing down. It is now a question of not if but when this sector so critical for emission reductions will explode. When it does it is critical that UK workers are ready for the jobs and opportunities will be plenty.



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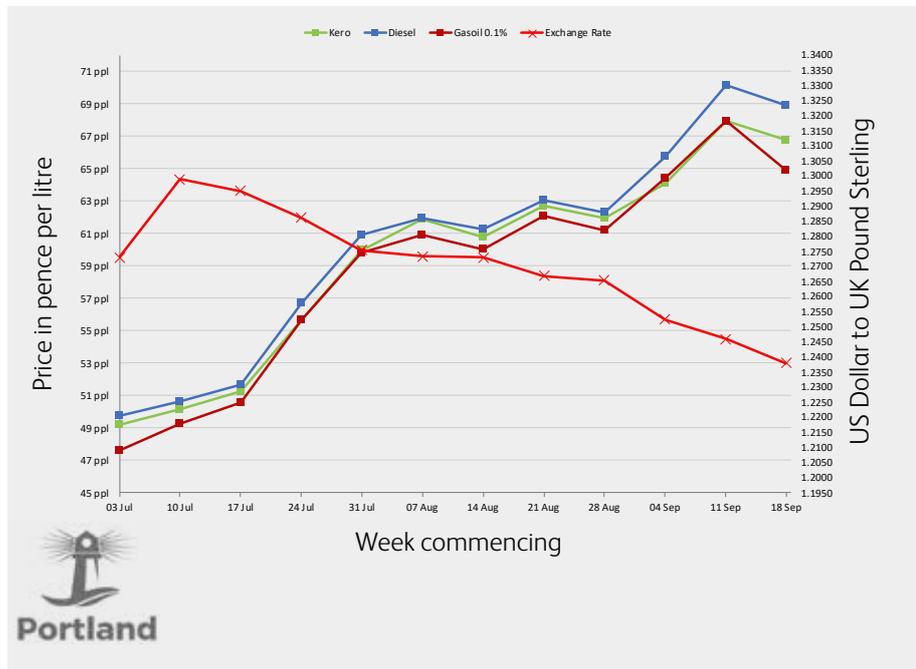
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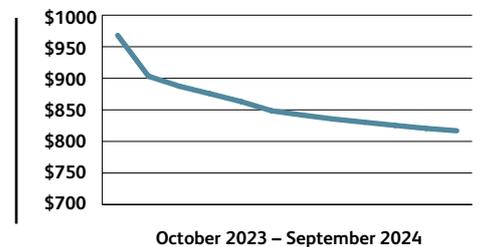
Wholesale Price Movements: 19th August 2023 – 18th September 2023

| | Kerosene | Diesel | Gasoil 0.1% |
|----------------------|----------|--------|-------------|
| Average price | 64.40 | 65.64 | 64.08 |
| Average daily change | 1.12 | 1.26 | 1.38 |
| Current duty | 0.00 | 52.95 | 10.18 |
| Total | 64.40 | 118.59 | 74.26 |

All prices in pence per litre



Gasoil forward price
in US\$ per tonne



The Fuel Oil News Price Totem

| | Trade average buying prices | | | Average selling prices | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--------|--------|------------------------|--------|--------|
| | Kerosene | Gasoil | ULSD | Kerosene | Gasoil | ULSD |
| Scotland | 66.37 | 77.95 | 122.61 | 75.66 | 83.29 | 127.41 |
| North East | 65.32 | 76.58 | 121.69 | 78.31 | 81.58 | 125.22 |
| North West | 66.89 | 79.18 | 124.08 | 75.80 | 83.81 | 127.23 |
| Midlands | 65.39 | 77.11 | 122.15 | 74.16 | 82.02 | 125.98 |
| South East | 65.49 | 77.07 | 122.13 | 83.58 | 85.63 | 125.45 |
| South West | 65.84 | 76.91 | 121.97 | 77.49 | 81.81 | 125.01 |
| Northern Ireland | 65.95 | 78.28 | n/a | 74.55 | 84.27 | n/a |
| Republic of Ireland | 79.71 | 83.71 | 123.55 | 87.13 | 88.66 | 127.46 |
| Portland | 63.70 | 74.63 | 118.84 | | | |

The price totem figures are indicative figures compiled from the Portland base rate using calculated regional variances.

Buying prices are ex-rack. Selling prices are for 1000 litres of kero, 2500 litres of gas oil and 5000 litres of ULSD (Derv in ROI). Prices in ROI are in €.

Wholesale prices are supplied by Portland Analytics Ltd, dedicated providers of fuel price information from refinery to pump.

For more information and access to prices, visit www.portlandpricing.co.uk

WELCOME TO OCTOBER'S EDITION OF OUR SPECIAL MONTHLY FEATURE WHICH GIVES YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO 'MEET' AN INDUSTRY FIGURE AND, HOPEFULLY, TO DISCOVER ANOTHER SIDE TO THEM BEYOND THE WELL-KNOWN FACTS. THIS MONTH WE CHAT WITH **ADAM FRANKLIN**, CEO GREENERGY FLEXIGRID.



“BUILDING A BUSINESS PROVIDES A PLATFORM FOR THE SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE PEOPLE WHO WORK FOR YOU.”

ADAM FRANKLIN

Give your career history in 25 words or fewer.

35 years operational, functional and general management roles in the logistics industry across multiple sectors with NFC, Tankfreight, Exel, DHL and now Greenergy Flexigrid.

Describe yourself in 3 words.

Driven. Resourceful. Supportive.

What were your childhood / early ambitions?

I think it was to be a Naval Commander (I've no idea why) – but as I got older, I soon realised a life in the forces was not for me.

Describe your dream job (if you weren't doing this?)

Running an endurance motorcycle racing team at Le Mans, Spa etc. – which I was lucky enough to be involved in for a few years in the late 80s / early 90s.

What's the best business advice you've ever received?

Take your opportunities – courtesy of a former Exel colleague.

Share your top tips for business success.

Developing the best team around you that you can, helping them realise and release their talents, and galvanising everybody towards clear business objectives.

What's your most recent business achievement of note?

From a Flexigrid perspective is to have been part of helping it double in size, cementing a really strong customer service proposition whilst also developing

a diversified 3PL offer.

As I get older though, I reflect more that building a business provides a platform for the success and achievements of the people who work for you and the development of their careers as a lasting achievement target.

Tell us your greatest fear.

The complexity and pressures my children face in the modern world – and the pernicious side of social media – It seemed so much simpler when I was a lad!

Which is most important – ambition or talent?

If the objective is to progress as far as you can, then you need both – though it could be argued I've done well enough with not that much of the latter!

What's the best thing about your job?

Logistics is such a great space for people to be able to achieve direct and tangible outputs from their inputs – and there are so many dimensions that can appeal to different people. The best thing about my job is having such a variety of potential outcomes.

Which is the quality that you most admire?

Real care for others.

What are you most likely to say?

Better to be approximately right, rather than precisely wrong.

What are you least likely to say?

That's a stupid idea.

Describe your perfect day

Starting the day with the kids harmoniously presenting themselves ready for school five minutes earlier than they need to, followed by one of those days where I manage to spend personal time with everybody in the office that day and yet still get home early enough to spend some quality time with my wife sipping a glass of wine relaxing in the warm summer evening sun.

Ultimately though, the perfect day will come when I can look back on having been part of delivering a lasting legacy to the business and the people within it.

Do you have a favourite sports team?

Of all time – the Rugby World Cup Winning side of 2003. But delivering 'joy' on a more lasting basis, it's a close call between Ipswich Town and Leicester Tigers.

What's the biggest challenge of our time?

From a logistics perspective it's how we meaningfully address and navigate our way through the energy transition. At societal level, not letting social media replace real relationships.

Cheese or chocolate?

How about cheesy chocolate? But it's cheese for me!

Share your greatest personal achievement

I always try and look forward, not backwards – so it will be seeing my children fulfilling their ambitions and finding their way in life.

If you were on 'Mastermind' what would your specialist subject be?

Bad dad jokes.

If you were elected to government what would be the first law you'd press for?

Something that properly transitioned the provision of affordable housing to provide the same sort of opportunity to younger generations that my generation enjoyed.

If your 20-year-old self saw you now what would they think?

You've done alright but let yourself go a bit there matey!

But more probably 'I never thought you'd have three daughters!'

What is number 1 on your bucket list?

To ride from Anchorage to Miami on a motorbike tour with my wife.

What 3 things would you take to a desert island?

Ray Mears, a micro brewery and a telescope to star gaze.

Tell us something about you that people would be very surprised by

One of my favourite feel-good films is Muriel's Wedding

Who would you most like to ask these questions of?

Through the magic of time travel – Winston Churchill – just the opportunity to talk to such a pivotal and sometimes divisive character would be amazing.

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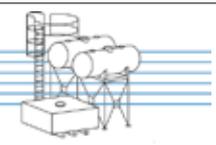
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