

Fuel Oil News

SEPTEMBER 2023

DEVELOPMENTS FOR A GREENER SECTOR

PONDERING POLLUTION

INDUSTRY VOICES

FUEL THEFTS ON THE INCREASE



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Well, that escalated quickly...

What a month of media coverage of the challenge of decarbonising heat in the rural off grid sector we have had.

This latest frenzy began with an article in the Telegraph in which former environment secretary George Eustice described the proposed oil boiler ban as 'the rural community's ULEZ'.

Opening by acknowledging the unequivocal need to act, and to act swiftly, to reduce carbon emissions, Mr Eustice then highlighted the significant advances made on many fronts since the Government nailed its flag to the 'electrification first' mast in its Green Growth Strategy of 2017.

Six long years later, Government is under pressure to deliver clear policy backed by supporting legislation and the loudest voices have long argued that locking into one particular route to decarbonising heat in buildings is the way to deliver net zero. Mr Eustice argues that the reverse is true; 'the real risk to delivering net zero lies in locking in prematurely to the wrong policy'.

It's hard to believe this Government will lock in prematurely to anything, given we are almost 2 years on from the consultation on proposals

to phase out the installation of fossil fuel heating systems in homes off the gas grid with the silence of the Government response, so far, deafening.

However, if previously inclined to bow to the pressure of the electrification lobby, the snowballing media coverage of the 'rural revolt' following the Telegraph article may be making them think again.

In this column I have previously described the passionate members of our community as speaking with the 'still small voice of calm', turning away from the fruitless noise of information wars to deliver effective action.

That very action, to find a better solution, has led us to this critical point where the genuine concerns over the unfair financial impact of the boiler ban on our customers are finally being appreciated by all sides. The 'still small voice' has become a compelling roar.

The industry has delivered a solution for a just transition now and, finally, everyone is listening.



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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 striking image from Mabanaft sets the scene for our conversation with CEO, Jon Perkins on pages 23 to 25 where we hear all about this leading energy company's innovations in future fuelling and customer decarbonisation strategies.



In this issue

Our latest 'Industry Analysis', on pages 14 & 15, looks at future transport fuels, while page 21 focusses on wellbeing in the sector. On page 28 we hear from someone used to challenging gender diversity both within and without the industry.



Future proofing with depot relocation and renewable fuels investment

Lancashire-based Compass Fuel Oils has recently completed building a brand new depot that will help to future proof this forward-looking distributor.

Marcus Dandy, managing director, explains: "We have recently invested half a million pounds into relocating the business into new premises on the outskirts of Preston, whilst also adding new tank storage and loading infrastructure to begin offering HVO renewable diesel, helping to future-proof the business as customers transition to fossil fuel alternatives.

"The relocation involved developing land that was previously used to store thousands of beer barrels into a haulage yard with bottom-loading fuel tanker equipment and warehouse facilities as well as installing a new modular building for office staff.

"Now in the 14th year of trading, and operating a fleet of 10 vehicles, the new depot increases total storage capacity to 400,000 litres of multiple grades including white and red diesel, HVO, kerosene, industrial heating oil and C1 paraffin."

Growing and changing

"We're thrilled to be in a period of growth and delighted that we can now offer HVO to customers with the same reliability and excellence that they have grown accustomed to, and we look forward to playing our part in helping tackle climate change."

Fuel Oil News will be sitting down for a chat with the Compass team so you can read all about the new depot in detail next issue.

Oh, I wish it could be Christmas every day!

It's only 4 months to go until Christmas – hurrah! We would love to have a festive fun-filled December 2023 issue of Fuel Oil News, but we need your help.

What Christmas activities did you do in 2022? Christmas parties? Festive fundraising? What have you got planned for this year?

Andy Welch (Father Christmas!) of Sodbury Fuels was our wonderful cover star last year and we are on the look out for a festive front cover for this December so, if you have a particularly eye-catching image that is portrait rather than landscape and would allow for our masthead

and cover information then we would love to consider it. The more festive the better!

Feature in our festive special

With a deadline of 10th November don't miss out on featuring in our festive special – get your news and photos in now.

Our resident Christmas elf, Claudia Weeks, would love to hear from you with all your Christmas related news so please do get in touch: claudia@andpublishing.co.uk



Wolfe at Wimbledon

Alex Wolfe, regional director at Certas Energy, has had an incredibly busy summer in his other important role – as a line umpire on the professional tennis circuit.

As we all know, it's hard to go anywhere without bumping into someone you know from the fuel distribution community and Claudia Weeks, content editor for Fuel Oil News, was delighted to catch up with Alex when he was in action umpiring on Court 18 at Wimbledon!

"When not being a regional director for Certas Energy I enjoy my other profession as a tennis umpire," Alex explained. "My current qualifications have allowed me to do the Surbiton Trophy, Cinch Championship (Queen's), Hurlingham and Wimbledon as a line umpire. I am also a chair umpire at the lower professional level on the ITF World Series which is normally for players ranked from 200 through to 1000 in the world."



Chasing the dream

"My passion for tennis started aged 9 when my mum took me to Wimbledon, and we saw John McEnroe and Michael Stich on their way to the men's doubles title. My passion was made permanent aged 18 when I slept overnight so I could get tickets for the last ever Wimbledon men's Monday final in 2001 for Goran Ivanisevic vs Pat Rafter.

"The final push to becoming an umpire was watching the Eddie the Eagle film and his dream to ski at the Winter Olympics, after that I knew I wanted to go to Wimbledon.

"Since 2017, I have been fortunate to officiate at 4 Wimbledon, 3 Queens and 2 Eastbournes. I have been on court with the majority of the top 100 players and have been watched by Catherine, Princess of Wales (Patron All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club), Prince Edward, Duke of Edinburgh (Patron British Paralympic Association), Hugh Grant and Fuel Oil News' very own Claudia Weeks!

"Tennis officiating is great to do and, if you are interested, apply through the LTA website!"



Industry name changes reflect move towards more sustainable fuels

The past month saw two leading industry organisations announce rebrands that reflect the evolution of the downstream sector in the UK.

Essential to net zero

The downstream oil sector's leading trade body began a new phase as Fuels Industry UK to demonstrate its evolving remit to champion low carbon fuels as well as traditional petroleum products.

Previously known as the United Kingdom Petroleum Industry Association (UKPIA), the change reflects its members' ambition to manufacture and supply the biofuels, low carbon hydrogen and other low carbon fuels needed to meet the UK's ambitious net zero targets.

Fuels Industry UK CEO Elizabeth de Jong commented: "Our name change reflects that the sector is essential to UK Government achieving its net zero targets by manufacturing and supplying the low carbon fuels needed.

"Fuels Industry UK members are

increasingly manufacturing and supplying low carbon fuels such as renewable diesel, biofuels and Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF), which use non-petroleum feedstocks."

Recognition of evolution

The Downstream Fuel Distribution Forum (DFDF), formerly known as the Downstream Oil Distribution Forum, has also changed its name with Peter Oakford, chair saying: "At the heart of the rebrand is the recognition of the evolution of the sector as it plays its part in the energy transition.

"Our core focus has always been, and will continue to be, centred around the promotion of high levels of safety and competency across the fuel distribution sector, and this change reflects that ambition. To that end, we look forward to continuing to work closely with all DFDF members to address the training and competency needs of the industry well into the future."

More details on both can be found at www.fueloilnews.co.uk

Are you a Fantasy Football manager?

Do you think you can beat the FON community?

There are prizes to be won if you succeed! Join the Fuel Oil News mini-league for the 2023/24 Fantasy Premier League season and you could win some fantastic prizes, thanks to our sponsor ESL Fuels, a family business that designs, blends, processes and supplies a range of fuels for the road, heating and marine markets as well as producing innovative and environmentally sustainable liquid fuels.

You've got to be in it to win it

Joining couldn't be easier. Simply go to the 'Join leagues' option in the Fantasy Premier League app and enter the unique code for the Fuel Oil News mini-league: g71ag6.

With fantastic prizes to be won by those in the top 5 places at the end of the season, including a pair of hospitality tickets to a Premier League game next season, football shirts and other great prizes, make sure you're in! All your points will be carried into the league whenever you join.

There are already 58 teams entered and it doesn't matter if you haven't even created your team yet as there is also a £50 Amazon voucher to be won by each month's highest point scorer and there's even a special prize for the best team name!

Get yours in now – we are all looking forward to playing against you this season!

Biomass Strategy acknowledges off grid challenges and role for HVO but lacks detail

The unique challenges facing rural off-grid homeowners have been given greater acknowledgement in the UK Government's Biomass Strategy published last month.

Recognising renewable liquid fuels as a pathway to decarbonise domestic heating, the strategy has made disappointingly little progress in delivering detailed analysis of availability and demand.

Listening to concerns

Following public debate around the proposed 2026 'boiler ban', proponents from both sides of the fuel divide have highlighted the deadline as 'unfair' while the liquid fuel industry has long argued the unfairness of net zero measures, suggesting they penalise rural communities, resulting in a risk of homeowners

being left with no affordable heating solution.

The Future Ready Fuels campaign has argued for a technology-agnostic approach in a bid to deliver greater consumer choice as well as a swifter route to the decarbonisation of domestic heating.

Greater understanding, little progress

The strategy suggests the Government has listened to these concerns with its acknowledgement of off-grid challenges as well as the important role for renewable liquid fuels in the future off-grid energy mix.

It does, however, indicate a disappointing lack of progress in addressing the issues of availability of sustainable feedstocks, cost, and conflict with demands of other sectors such as transport, given that these fuels have long been



viewed as fundamental to the decarbonisation of transport, aviation and heating.

Whilst the Biomass Strategy 2023 appears to signal a welcome move away from the 'one size fits all' approach seen so far, the devil is in the detail and, despite the time already invested by the Government in this strategy, there is disappointingly little of that.



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Innovative new metering system launched by Trident Technics

Bringing a revolutionary new design to market, Trident Technics Ltd, powered by Road Tankers Northern, Tasca Tankers and Fairfax3D Design, gives fuel distributors access to an effective, automated and innovative metering package designed and built in the UK.

Frank Newell from Road Tankers Northern, Shaun Harte from Tasca Tankers and Trevor Poulter from Fairfax3D Design have over 125 years' experience in the fuel and oil industry between them and are constantly innovating and developing in the sector.

Born out of experience

Frank says: "All three of us are keen to take our customer feedback and design a new product that suits their needs. Working with Trident we can share our wealth of knowledge and experience to design and manufacture innovative solutions."

Trevor has a wealth of experience in the fuel sector having designed four previous fuel delivery systems for rigid vehicles from 2001. Before embarking on Trident Technics, he pioneered a new venture with Michael Foord in 2016 opening Fairfax3d Design. Spearheading the research and development of the new Trident system, Trevor has pulled together the top engineers in the industry to produce a

ground breaking product.

Working together, the dynamic quartet have pooled all their knowledge and experience to create this innovative new metering system. Trevor, with his mechanical engineering background, and Ronald Sousa the production director from Trident Technics, whose career spans 20 years in electronics and robotics, have designed a fully automated and efficient fuel delivery system.

Trevor explains: "I've always been driven by innovation and designing new products that result in efficiency and cost savings for the fuel distributor. The new metering system will improve productivity, saving time and money for our clients."

Seamless integration

Leading UK tanker manufacturers, Frank and Shaun, have also played an integral part in the development of the new system, ensuring that it fits seamlessly into the tanker design.

Shaun comments: "Frank and I will bring Trident to market, offering this new metering system to new and existing customers. Trident system is fully flexible and future proof therefore can be adjusted to meet our client's needs quickly and efficiently."

Trident system includes a new smart driver interface, which learns from the driver



inputs, with easy-to-use controls and anti-contamination software ensuring clean fuel deliveries. Automatic line changes and multi-compartment deliveries are easily enacted upon setup. The manifold and collector are designed for clean and efficient product changes, resulting in unrivalled flow rates. A proportionally controlled pump allows the driver total control of the flow rate at the delivery point underpinning safety. 4G connectivity uploads system information to cloud-based software which is accessible through the Trident Portal on-line.

Michael Foord from Trident Technics adds: "At Trident we are driven by research and development. Our in-house team are continuously innovating new products to enhance efficiency, automation and safety to push the industry forward."

With the team confident in the benefits offered by the new system, demonstrations can now be booked through either Tasca Tankers or Road Tankers Northern.

Fundraising success through playing a round (or four!)



Successfully completing his golfing challenge, Ben Firth, sales engineer at MechTronic Ltd, has raised a significant sum for a vital children's charity.

Ben took part in the charity golf day, held on Saturday 29th July, to raise money for the Childhood Eye Cancer Trust (CHECT). The charity has supported and helped Ben's family directly, as his son is currently dealing with Retinoblastoma and has undertaken 6 rounds of chemotherapy.

Up before dawn for a first tee time of 5.30am, Ben completed 4 rounds of golf at Dewsbury District Golf Club. His last tee time was 6pm and he was finally finished by 10pm!

Summing up the experience Ben said: "It was a tough 16 hours, and I ached for a week afterwards, but it was all for a great cause!

"I am immensely proud of the amount raised for the Childhood Eye Cancer Trust (CHECT) and would like to thank everybody who has donated and supported me. The amount raised currently is £2,920 and my page will remain open until the end of September.

"If anyone would still like to donate to my fundraiser, please head to www.justgiving.com/page/benfirth-teamharvey"

New Era Fuels backs Lauren's fight for glory

An Essex-based distributor is supporting a hugely talented boxer in her quest for success.

"New Era Fuels is thrilled to announce our sponsorship of the talented and determined female boxer, Lauren Parker," said a spokesperson. "As the

current IBO Inter-Continental Super Flyweight champion, Lauren's incredible skills have captured our hearts, and we're proud to support her on her journey towards her European Title fight in September!

"Lauren's dedication and passion for the sport truly embodies the spirit of a champion, and we are honoured to be a part of her successful journey. With her hard work and unwavering commitment, we have no doubt that she will shine brightly in her upcoming title fight.

"At New Era Fuels, we believe in empowering individuals who strive to make a mark in their respective fields, and Lauren is an outstanding example of that. Her determination, grit and drive are an inspiration to all. We are delighted to sponsor Lauren in her drive for success."

Good luck to Lauren for her fight in September!



PEOPLE MOVES



Daniel Brain has joined **Prax** as UK General Manager, with responsibility for Retail, Commercial & Industrial, Aviation, Logistics and Terminals businesses.

Commenting on his appointment Daniel said: "It's a huge honour and an amazing opportunity with a super group of people and a quality asset base."



Alex Wolfe has started a new position as Regional Director for **Certas Energy**, responsible for Certas Energy customers, colleagues & assets in Greater London, Northamptonshire & East Anglia



Steven Lea has started a new position as UK Operations Manager at **Certas Energy Lubricants**.

Hydrogen pioneer **Ryze** has appointed three new senior managers. The additions to the team include a new Chief Executive in **Neil**

Isaacson, Ryze's new Managing Director – Infrastructure Delivery, **Garry Birmingham**, and Service Solutions Director **Carl Buckingham**.



Oilfast has announced that **Jonathan Stewart** has joined the business as Group Finance Director.

A spokesperson said: "Jonathan brings a wealth of knowledge and experience, this will be a huge asset as we continue to build our brands across the UK."



Suttons Tankers has recently appointed **David Heath** as Head of Fuels and Powders.

Essar Oil (UK) Ltd has announced the appointment of **Ramesh Kande** as Head of Engineering, Reliability and Maintenance Support and **Rajat Mehta** as Financial Controller for Essar Oil UK, both operating from the Global Capability Centre (GCC).



Tim Doggett, CEO of the **Chemical Business Association (CBA)** has been elected to the

Trade Association Forum's (TAF) Board of Directors.



Mark Bailey has joined **Moorlands Fuels** as Transport Manager. Bringing with him a wealth of experience, Mark will be supporting the drivers and transport team to keep deliveries running smoothly.



The Solent Cluster, the first major decarbonisation initiative that would substantially reduce CO2 emissions from industry, transport and households across Southern England, has appointed **Anne-Marie Mountifield** as its Chair.



Jake Swanson has joined **Fox Insights** as an International Account Manager and will be working with partners in the UK market to enable them to use the company's telemetry systems to optimise their business processes using data-based decision making.



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THE LATEST UPDATES FROM OUR DISTRIBUTOR COMMUNITY



Compass Fuel Oils – delivering 500l of kerosene to a lucky winner!

Compass Fuel Oils, the Lancashire-based fuel distributor, has announced the winner of their recent competition from their first exhibition at The Royal

Lancashire Show.

Not only did the competition mark Compass Fuel Oils' inaugural participation at the show, but it also gave a memorable experience to a deserving individual. The lucky winner, Anita Sherwood, expressed her excitement and gratitude upon receiving delivery of her prize.

"I could hardly believe it when I received the news that I had won," said Anita. "I have never won anything before, and to have 500l of Kerosene delivered to my doorstep is truly amazing. I am extremely grateful to Compass Fuel Oils for this incredible opportunity."

Those attending the show were invited to visit the Compass Fuel Oils exhibition stand and submit their details for a chance to win the competition, which showcased the company's commitment to excellence in providing heating oil to the local area.

"We are thrilled to have had the opportunity to participate in The Royal Lancashire Show and give back to our community through this competition," said Marcus Dandy, managing director at Compass.

Congratulations to the lucky winner!



Craggs Energy – sponsors of a charity tractor run!

Craggs Energy, the West Yorkshire-based distributor, is delighted to sponsor the Calderdale Charity Tractor Run 2023.

The much-anticipated event is set to return on the 24th of September 2023. Sponsored by Craggs Energy Ltd, Craggies Farm Shop, Vocation Brewery, and MUD-UK Ltd, it promises to be a fun-filled day for participants and spectators alike, all in support of a great cause – Calder Valley Search and Rescue.

"We are so pleased the Tractor Run has returned this year and, of course, we are more than happy to get stuck in," said David Damary-Thompson, general manager of Craggs Energy. "The search and rescue team are a fantastic set of people who deserve all the support we can give."

To promote environmental responsibility, Craggs Energy Ltd will be carbon offsetting the entire event, reducing its carbon footprint and demonstrating their commitment to sustainability. The Craggs Energy office will be used as the registration point, raffle prizes will be donated, and lots of staff have volunteered to help on the day!

Here's to a successful event!



Exswift Fuels – racing to success

Exswift Fuels, the Essex-based fuel distributor, is proud to be sponsoring racing driver Scott Sumpton for the upcoming TCR season.

CEO Chloe Crofts commented: "At Exswift we love nurturing potential, so sponsoring Scott Sumpton for his 2023 season in the TCR series as part of the Restart Racing team seemed an ideal fit.

"We are incredibly proud of his progress. He was recently selected to join the JAS Motorsport Driver Development programme which sees him hone his skills further out in Italy. He is definitely one to watch!"

The best of luck to Scott for the upcoming season!



LCM Environmental – taking on the Tough Mudder

Lancashire-based LCM Environmental Services Ltd is excited to announce that the team is about to take on the Tough Mudder challenge in support of the SSAFA – the charity that provides lifelong support to the Armed

Forces and their families.

Richard Wallace, LCM's CEO, said: "As leader of LCM Environmental, I am incredibly proud of our team's remarkable initiative and drive in attempting the Tough Mudder challenge. Their dedication, teamwork, and unflinching spirit not only represent our company's culture and values, but also demonstrate the impact we can achieve when we come together with a shared goal.

"This undertaking not only supports a cause that is close to our hearts, but also strengthens our sense of unity and commitment at LCM Environmental. Our team's determination resonates through our business, and reminds us that challenges can be overcome, and positive change is always within our reach.

"We kindly invite you, as some of our industry partners and peers, to support this noble cause by contributing to the SAFFA Charity through our dedicated fundraising campaign.

"Your generosity will mean the world to families facing challenging circumstances and provide much-needed hope and assistance."

If you would like to donate, please visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/page/lcm-environmental-1689169659666>

Good luck to the team from all at FON!



Proudly celebrating a decade of driving dedication

New Era Fuels is proudly celebrating a very special anniversary with employee Stuart Fisher, a Class 1 driver who has recently clocked up 10 years working with the

Essex-based distributor.

Dan Sefton, head of transport, said: "Stuart has been a pivotal member of the fleet since the day he joined. Ten years later, Stuart is still fully committed to his job, and is a pleasure to work with for both the transport and routing departments. We look forward to many more years with Stuart as our Class 1 driver."

James Hunt, managing director, added a message for Stuart: "Thank you for being on this journey, your years of loyalty, dedication and hard work over the last 10 years have not gone unnoticed."

Congratulations on your milestone Stuart from all at FON!



Par Petroleum – sponsoring the next generation of football stars

Par Petroleum Ltd, the North-East based fuel distributor, is proud and excited to be sponsoring the Herrington Football Club Under 6s team!

Leanne Hardy, managing director, said: "We're thrilled to be able to help Herrington FC Whites and think they look smashing in their new strips. The club started just 3 years ago and has grown rapidly, now operating 18 teams for boys and girls of all ages.

"Thanks to the dedicated coaching team, the young people of our community have the opportunity to keep fit and have fun whilst developing their football skills."

Good luck to the Under 6 squad for the forthcoming season!

Read all these stories and more in full at www.fueloilnews.co.uk and send your latest news to claudia@fueloilnews.co.uk or margaret@fueloilnews.co.uk

21st July 2023

"ICE Gas Oil continues to trend higher off the base at \$750/t. with \$800/t. in sight and \$850/t. a risk."

19th July 2023

"ICE Gas Oil continues to consolidate and is building a base just above \$750/t. with risks to the upside."

11th July 2023

"ICE Gas Oil is trending towards resistance at \$750/t."

5th July 2023

"ICE Gas Oil is building a base above \$700/t. with the risks to the upside. During May and June ICE Gas Oil has posted a series of "higher lows" on the oil price graph and has broken above resistance at \$700-710/t. We believe the risks are to the upside and our target price is \$790-800/t. as detailed in the OMJ Point and Figure Chart Pack."

3rd July 2023

"ICE Gas Oil is pushing above resistance at \$710/t. The future closed above \$700/t. in June which is a bullish development"

2023 Pricing for ICE Gas Oil Futures

Source: ICE



The Oil Market Journal helps clients take advantage of oil price spike in July 2023

During July 2023 the price of oil spiked sharply higher due to production cuts by Saudi Arabia and a series of refinery problems in Europe.

The ICE Gas Oil Future rallied 28% to over \$900/t. from under \$700/t. During the month of July, OMJ provided clear guidance in the "market open" at 6.30am and the daily morning reports at 11am each day, giving clients the insight they need to navigate oil markets and profit from the price rally. In addition, the monthly OMJ Supply and Demand report which was published on 13th July 2023 warned...

"The latest EIA STEO is bullish for oil prices, which could rise sharply in Q3 2023 on the back of Saudi and Russian supply cuts. The EIA are now expecting a supply / demand deficit for the first time this year. The supply / demand balance was revised sharply lower from 362,500 barrels per day surplus to -52,500 barrels per day deficit."

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KEN'S CORNER



No one likes a ban, but everyone likes an EXPO!

“Ban = To Prohibit”

In mid-August, George Eustice, the Cornish MP, wrote an article in the Telegraph, “Here is the key ingredient that could help rural homes reach net zero”. In the main, an entirely positive piece about how our rural customers could swap their fuel and reduce their carbon emissions, a position I am sure the vast majority of our industry would totally support. Entirely positive because it would go some way to meeting Government net zero commitments at reduced cost and disruption.

In the same edition there was a different headline, “Tory revolt against ‘premature’ net zero ban on new oil boilers”. At the time of writing, we have not seen the Government’s reaction, but they were warned that their policy would bring real hardship to rural communities in areas where their vote was strong. The policy, in comparison to the 2035 urban (gas) deadline, was always going to prove deeply unpopular. So, the second headline was not a surprise.

The articles were followed up in most mainstream newspapers and there was a lot of social media traffic. What I found most interesting was not the attention-grabbing headlines or the usual characters giving their top ten reasons why bio-oils (as they called them) are not a good idea. Rather, it was the posts in the commentary section below the articles, principally from our customers. Ultimately these are the important ones – these are the people that are affected the most.

What came across very strongly was the utter hatred around the imposition of a ban and, secondly, the cost of the alternative. It is quite clear that no one likes a ban. No one wants to lose their freedom of choice, especially when the

alternative is so costly.

The maths is, ultimately, very simple. An average kerosene heated home uses c1,800 litres annually (c18,500kWh). At the current price (65ppl), this equates to an annual heating bill of £1,170. Taking the most up-to-date research and data (boiler efficiency 90%, 22% reduction in consumption due to associated insulation and a heat pump energy conversion factor of 2.8), a heat pump would consume c4,700kWh of electricity. At the current price (c30p/kWh), this equates to an annual heating bill of £1,410.

There are so many recent examples of bans proving deeply unpopular. In Scotland, the Deposit Return Scheme and the marine conservation orders are two. But even more in general day-to-day life – banning something like a book or a song has the opposite effect – more sales. I suspect that if the ban continues, then 2025 could be a bumper year for oil boiler sales!

I read somewhere that politicians often implement bans to solidify support from a particular group of their voters. In my opinion, the current government has not succeeded in this regard and may even be doing the opposite.

While I am not a psychologist, there is a much more important point here. It all started with a positive article about what we could do, how we can do it quickly and cheaply, and what is needed next, i.e., an alternative to a ban. The narrative needs to change towards finding a pathway to decarbonisation that works and maintains fundamental freedom of choice. I am hopeful that, at the time of publication of this column, the Government has taken into account those comments and given careful consideration to presenting things more positively in the future.

Thank you

The article written by Mr Eustice was prompted by our Future Ready Fuel campaign, which went into top gear at the start of the summer when the Cornish MP put forward an amendment to the Energy Bill, which supports the use of Renewable Liquid Fuels for home heating.

I would like to thank the industry for stepping up and supporting UKIFDA and OFTEC. We know that thousands of letters have been sent to local MPs and this has had a significant impact.

EXPO: “Changing Times = Future Opportunities”

This month we have launched EXPO 2024 in Liverpool (I can’t quite believe it has been 18 months since the last one!).

We have themed the event Changing Times = Future Opportunities to reflect where the industry is now. In the rear view mirror is the pandemic and the impact of the invasion of Ukraine. However, there is plenty in front of us, plenty of thinking to be done and plenty of opportunity, and I hope we can bring this together in Liverpool.

These events are only as good as the support in the room, and I am very grateful to the 60 companies that have already agreed to exhibit, and we have secured a number of top draw sponsors.

There is still room to fill, and many opportunities, which we will promote across the next few months.

We have built so much momentum as an industry working together over the last few years, and I’m sure this event will act as the next super booster stage on our journey.



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A DAY IN THE LIFE...

Helen Rawsthorne

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 **HELEN RAWSTHORNE**, SALES ADMINISTRATOR AT WCF FUELS NORTH WEST, AND WINNER OF THE INAUGURAL UKIFDA CUSTOMER SERVICE AWARD, TO DISCOVER HOW HELEN SPENDS A TYPICAL DAY.



MY ALARM GOES OFF AT...

As I'm happily married to a farmer, the alarm is always set for 5am, so it's always an early start for all.

THE FIRST THING I DO IS...

Put the kettle on to have my one and only coffee of the day. We also have an adorable Black Patterdale Terrier called Meg to feed and walk.

I am very lucky to be living so close to the depot which means that it is only a short, 10-minute drive to work every day.

I CAN'T LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT...

My mobile phone, food for the day and a smile!

MY TYPICAL DAY –

Working within the sales team, my job role is quite varied. I am responsible for submitting the daily prices to my colleagues and looking after the sales emails – they may consist of

orders or customer queries. I take inbound calls, putting through orders from domestic customers, farmers, and commercial customers.

It is great to speak to various customers, who all have their own individual needs and requirements. They can be quick 1-minute calls to 10-minute calls. I also run a Feefo Review Platform on a weekly basis in the hope that we get plenty of positive feedback from our customers – which, I am pleased to say, we certainly do!

We really do appreciate our customer reviews. We always strive at giving excellent service and giving the best customer service we can.

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB...

Working for part of the WCF family, an employee-owned business, does give you the opportunity to make a real difference. It is also a great feeling when you receive such lovely feedback from our customers.

Working within a small team here at

Carnforth, with such great colleagues, certainly gives you the motivation to come to work every day. I also really enjoy taking part in charity days at work such as Red Nose Day.

I RELAX AFTER WORK BY...

Walking the dog, watching catch-up TV, cooking dinner and spending quality time with my husband.

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

I love Italian food, but try not to eat too much pasta...

ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE IS...

Mobile phone and glass of water

THE LAST THING I DO EACH DAY IS...

Set the alarm for the following day!

I'M NORMALLY IN BED BY...

9.00pm ready for the early start.



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Greening the sector: Dover Fueling Solutions considers the future for fuels



DOVER FUELING SOLUTIONS (DFS), A WELL-KNOWN NAME IN THE FUEL AND CONVENIENCE RETAIL INDUSTRY, HAS A CLEAR STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE. **LISE-LOTTE NORDHOLM**, VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER OF CLEAN ENERGY AND GLOBAL PLATFORMS, SHARES HER THOUGHTS ON THE FUTURE FOR FUEL WITH CLAUDIA WEEKS, CONTENT EDITOR FOR FUEL OIL NEWS.

Can you tell us more about Dover Fueling Solutions?

Dover Fueling Solutions (DFS) is part of Dover Corporation and is a leading provider of advanced energy dispensing equipment, electronic automation and payment systems, automatic tank gauging and subscription solutions to fueling and convenience retail customers worldwide.

Comprised of the brands Wayne Fueling Systems, Tokheim, OPW Fuel Management Systems, ClearView, ProGauge, Fairbanks, AvaLAN Networks and LIQAL, DFS is dedicated to offering a broad range of vehicle power solutions that include both conventional fuel as well as clean energy products with solutions such as gasoline, diesel, biodiesel and ethanol as well as LNG, H₂, LPG, CNG and EV charging.

Headquartered in Austin, Texas, DFS has a strong global manufacturing and technology development presence that includes facilities in Brazil, China, India, Italy, Poland, Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

At DFS, we're driven by our values and a shared purpose, but what really fuels us is our people. They're the heart of our company. We're taking fueling and convenience retail to the next level, and we are passionate about cultivating excellence in our products, our solutions, and our people.

What is the DFS mission statement?

Our mission at DFS is clear: we are a leading global provider of advanced customer-focused technologies, services and solutions in the fuel and convenience retail industries. We are enabling the evolution of the consumer experience in fueling and convenience retail.

We're a team committed to doing great things, collaborating to deliver exceptional business results for our customers.

What has been your own journey to your current role?

I'm currently vice president and general manager of Clean Energy and Global Platforms at Dover Fueling Solutions. I moved into this role at the beginning of this year following on from previous roles where I've been leading Dispenser Engineering and our Dispenser Business Unit.

I've been in the industry for more than 15 years now and my background in marketing, product management and project management has served as a core asset throughout.

In my current role, I lead the strategy and vision for developing new and innovative products and solutions for clean energy and component platforms for conventional fuels – around the world.

How is DFS enabling the move towards decarbonisation?

We are dedicated to offering cleaner and more environmentally friendly ways to power vehicles. To help contribute to a greener planet, we have invested in a broad range of products and solutions that support the infrastructure build for a variety of clean fuels, including LNG, H₂, LPG, CNG and electricity, alongside conventional fuel dispensers that have a lower impact on the environment e.g., AdBlue®, additive etc.

DFS has provided dispensing solutions for the retail fueling industry for over 130 years, and clean energy has always played a big part in our product offering.

We are dedicated to supporting our customers, regardless of the energy types they work with. This requires us to follow market trends closely to make sure we have the right solutions in place at the right time.



A manufacturer of CNG fuel dispensers for European markets for decades, where does DFS see the place for CNG within the transport sector?

Statistically, CNG is 30% more efficient than petrol, with a vehicle able to travel the same distance on 6/7 litres of CNG compared with 10 litres of petrol. As with any fuel, pricing is subject to global market conditions, but it remains the cheapest non-renewable energy source. Its nozzle-to-pump refuelling method is also a clear user benefit.

There are currently approximately 4,159 refilling stations across Europe, which makes it more of an option for fleet owners as opposed to the everyday motorist. This is not to say that CNG doesn't have mainstream potential, with the fueling option accepted in Europe for passenger vehicles.

There is a lot of discussion about replacement trucks and what the future fuels will be. What should distributors be investing in when replacing fleet trucks?

As motorists continue to embrace greener transport, many drivers will be considering which clean fuel is best for them. For fleet managers and sustainability directors, many will be wondering which is best for business.

The fuels leading the way include hydrogen, electricity, CNG and LNG, each with their own advantages. However, it all comes down to the business sector, government legislation and initiatives and available infrastructure per country.

Hydrogen would appear to be a strong choice for long-haul, heavy-duty vehicles and other commercial transport, and we are starting to see the first fuel cell trucks appearing on the European market.

To fully flourish, however, greater infrastructure is needed to support future fuel development. Hydrogen investment is growing but not as quickly as that of electric vehicles (EVs). Market leaders, Germany, provide a neat case study with total German hydrogen refueling stations expected to reach 85 by 2025 and 300 by 2030. Despite this, cumulative hydrogen investment lags behind that currently made in EVC.

One other thing to note, when it comes to this future fuel, is cost. In Germany, the average price of fuel per 100km is 7.60 euros for hydrogen, compared with 9.05 euros for diesel and 11.74 euros for petrol.

Being a cleaner fossil fuel, LNG is another strong alternative, producing 40% less CO₂ than coal and 30% less than oil. It's clean and quiet burning, while its familiar refilling method



appeals to drivers.

LNG infrastructure may be embryonic, but it is fast growing. There are around 635 LNG stations on the continent, with the bulk concentrated in Western Europe, and its cost-competitive benefits means it has strong potential for commercial transport.

When it comes to electric vehicle charging (EVC) it is predicted in various reports and studies that, by 2030/2035, every second car sold across Europe will be powered by electricity.

Massive investments are being made across EMEA as countries pour billions into charging infrastructure. Dependable, renewable, energy infrastructure is required to feed the grid with a need to create a consumer-centric recharging model that serves the practical needs of EV drivers. As local governments begin to embrace EVC technology, companies can deliver high-quality fast chargers to the market.

Over the next few years, what do you see as major challenges to the industry, and what are the positives?

As the world, and the transport industry, move towards net zero, it is likely all four energy

options (hydrogen, electricity, CNG and LNG) will be an integral part of the decarbonisation mix, each with its own distinct benefits.

These will vary from country to country depending on infrastructure development and investment, as well as government initiatives and legislation.

It's clear that there is certainly a move toward a more environmentally conscious consumer, and we are seeing our customers actively investing in lower-carbon fuels. This trend will undoubtedly continue, but we should also note that the transition of a car fleet takes many years.

So, for us at DFS, it's important to stay focused on conventional fueling products and solutions at the same time as we work to support the new energy types entering the market.

What was the best piece of advice you have been given in this industry?

There is a long list to choose from, but I think the best piece of advice, which I like to repeat, is to always make sure you really understand what the customer needs.

I believe this applies to most, if not all, industries but it should always be at the front of your mind.

And finally, what do you enjoy most about working in this business?

This is a business that has always presented great variation but even more so now with decarbonisation and the clean energy movement.

This variation presents a lot of opportunities, as well as challenges, and I really enjoy the close collaboration with our customers, partners, and internal teams as we work to bring new products and solutions to the market.



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Chris Bingham,

CEO of Craggs Energy Group

WITH CRAGGS HAVING RECENTLY CELEBRATED THEIR 10TH ANNIVERSARY, ALBEIT BELATEDLY DUE TO THE IMPACT OF COVID, FUEL OIL NEWS LOOKS AT THE HISTORY, GROWTH, DIVERSIFICATION, AND TRANSITION OF THE COMPANY.

CHRIS BINGHAM, CEO, TALKS CLAUDIA WEEKS, CONTENT EDITOR, THROUGH THE SEVEN DIFFERENT BUSINESSES HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED IN INSTIGATING DURING THE COMPANY'S 12 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE ENERGY SECTOR CULMINATING IN THE CURRENT DAY SET UP OF A BROAD PORTFOLIO OF ENERGY-RELATED BUSINESSES GEARED TO A LOW CARBON ENERGY FUTURE.

Talk us through the beginnings of Craggs and how you came to be involved

Having sold a software business in late 2010, we were looking for new areas in which to invest and develop businesses. Having purchased a derelict hillside farm to convert into a rural business park, we decided to launch three new businesses, Craggs Serviced Offices, Craggs Personal Storage and Craggs Energy. All three were focused on providing services to the rural and farming communities.

Tell us about the growth of the company from those early days

The ambition for fuel was very limited. Three vehicles (a 4-wheel tanker, a baby tanker and a Landrover), two drivers (both still with us) and three staff in the office. From memory, we shipped 600,000 litres in the first year and lost a ton of money. I do remember thinking how much easier it was to run a profitable software business. We now have around 200 staff in the various businesses, and I think, across them all, a budget this year of around £200m – somewhat beyond my ambition in 2011.

What's the first example of the company diversifying?

Around 6 months after we launched, we were asked by a company called Clovemead Fuel Services if we could partner with them to transfer, and clean, fuel across the UK for one of their largest corporate clients. We built a fuel recycling plant to support the project and spun off Craggs Environmental within a year or so. Several acquisitions later (including Clovemead), LCM Environmental is a major business in the fuel infrastructure sector.

Do you see the energy transition as a threat or an opportunity and did you always feel this way?

By the time we entered the fuel industry in 2011, it was clear that the direction of travel was to move away from fossil fuels – the only question was when and how on earth could we manage it. This challenge was really what attracted me to the industry in the first place as my background was in fast moving technology and I could see the scale of the opportunity for change.





What do you think it is about you that makes you so ready to take the business on this journey?

I'm not very good at running businesses; I have an outstanding senior team who do that for me, but I do seem to have a knack for figuring out what opportunities are likely to come along in the future and what we need to do to build a business model that might win. This means that, in a very slow-moving industry, I would be very little value to anyone but, in a fast moving, complex and risky environment, I am much happier!

Tell us about the different businesses that have been launched over the last 12 years and how they came about?

Craggs Business Park was the foundation, a derelict ex-battery chicken farm we bought in April 2011. We then launched Craggs Energy in the July, which extended to our second depot in Padiham, near Burnley, in August 2012. We launched Craggs Environmental in 2013 and, during that year, Craggs Fuel Cards and finally Antha, which was our software-based broker fuel sales and marketing business.

Are they all still current businesses?

Craggs Business Park is now a decent sized commercial property development business, with a number of local sites and more in the pipeline, Craggs Energy acquired Moorland Fuels post Covid and, having merged the two businesses together, we undertook an Employee Ownership Trust which means the long-term benefit is to the staff who run the business.

LCM Environmental is now a fast-growing, stand-alone business headed by Rich Wallace and his team and, finally, the Antha and Fuel Cards businesses were merged some time ago to form the foundation of Greenarc Ltd, which works to ease the world's transition to clean energy.

Any mistakes along the way?

Too many to remember, and some I would rather forget. I always hold up 2016 as the biggest mistake when I took my eye off the ball and we lost a ton of money; all of it was my lack of focus on the business's basics. I borrowed heavily (again) and risked everything (again) but decided to step back from the day-to-day running of the business and bring in some very highly skilled (and highly paid) senior managers to help me deliver the next phase of the business.

Rich Wallace (LCM), Matthew Crockett (Craggs / Greenarc) and Jason Sharp (CFO) now run the various energy businesses and are significant shareholders, and my ever-suffering wife Heidi, runs the property business. I try to keep out of the way and focus on what we do next!



Where have the ideas come from over the years to expand / diversify the group?

I think, at heart, I'm really a bit of a day dreamer. I seem to spend quite a bit of time just running through scenarios and ideas and how they might play out. I also have a very low attention span and constantly want to look for new ways to do things. I know this infuriates those around me who have to deliver some of the plans I come up with.

Have you found the staff happy to come on the journey with you or has there been reluctance to embrace change?

I think in the early days it shocked some of the team who had worked in the fuel industry before joining us. I would come in with a brand-new idea and eyes would roll. I also came to understand that asking a small team to change tack several times per month was not compatible to building a solid business so, over time, I held back ideas until I thought we were ready to implement.

With the scale and breadth of the operations now, I have people around me to run projects in a way that does not create confusion within the business, they also say no to me, which is something that didn't happen enough in the early years and is a huge step forward for us all!

Talk us through the employee ownership trust scheme and if there are plans to expand to other parts of the business.

I'm very proud of the EOT. It was suggested by one of our Corporate Finance advisors when we were looking at the longer-term strategy for the whole group. I suppose it is a bit like a management buyout, but involves all staff, not just the senior team.

The funding comes from the business itself, hence none of the staff need to borrow any money. I don't think I did a great job of explaining it when we launched the scheme 18 months ago, although Jo Ritzema from WCF, a company that is also employee-owned, assured me this was quite usual.

After a year, we tried again, and I hope we did a better job. Part of the issue is that some of the staff could not figure out why the shareholders would agree to sell the business, using the profits from the business. In reality, this is how all businesses are sold, it's just that the seller generally gets the money up front, hence our only risk was that it will take some years to pay the old shareholders. I think this is now understood by most, if not all.

The whole team now get annual EOT tax free bonuses, which is a taste of what is to come and, once the shareholders are fully paid out, the EOT profit share will be a very significant annual bonus for all the staff. I have definitely seen a shift in culture as the whole team now recognise

the business belongs to them and each and every member of the team is accountable to each other for its long-term success.

For the other businesses, we opted for share options as a better way to share the long-term success of the business with the staff. This has been equally well received and means that, across the group, we have staff invested in the long-term interests of the businesses they work in.

How long do you feel it would be feasible to go on distributing fossil fuel products without any diversification at all?

In the discussions with my peers in the distribution industry, I can't think of one who is not accepting of the change that is happening. I think the debate is how quickly and how we evolve to make the most of the upsides of the changes, rather than focus on the downside of what will be lost.

I think the work by Ken Cronin at UKIFDA to shift the political debate around Future Fuels has been a game changer. Three years ago, I thought the future for fuel distribution looked very grim as we had no voice and no strategy to be part of the solution for decarbonisation. Now we have a credible voice and answers to many of the questions that government needs to tackle as we move away from fossil fuels.

If we can continue to be part of the solution, then I think the long-term future for liquid fuels is very strong, be that HVO, hydrogen, or any number of synthetic fuels that will come to market in the coming years.

There are several UKIFDA members who have been very active in supporting Ken's vision for future fuels, and I think we need far more to engage to ensure the health of the industry beyond the next 10 years.

Where do you see the next opportunity for Craggs?

We are always looking at ways to develop the business. HVO has been an area we have invested in heavily and I think this will continue. I also see that the industry, as a whole, has shifted to become much more partnership focused and less insular, and I see working with other fuel businesses to deliver services for large customers as a major opportunity.

What are the key things you have learned about the energy distribution sector along your journey with Craggs?

I think the industry does a remarkable job to deliver high levels of service to its customers, which is more impressive when you realise how many factors seem to be working to make this more difficult. Ever changing prices, credit issues, wars, covid, regulations and, of course, the weather – despite all of this, I think we should be very proud of what we do.

On a personal level, having come from a very corporate IT software

and sales background, I have enjoyed working with many of the big characters in the industry and a night out with the owners of many of these businesses is never boring.

Is there anything you would change if you could go back?

No, never look back, only forward.

What are the biggest challenges facing the industry?

They are all tied up with the transition from fossil fuels. Not only how do we manage the change, but how do we encourage the next bright young minds into this industry to make sure it has the people and skills to thrive over the next decade?

And what are the opportunities?

The same transition – if we can get it right, the changes to new fuels will open all kinds of opportunities for the businesses that are willing and able to invest in the future and adapt to whatever the world throws at us. We all know that standing still is not an option.

What will success look like for you over the next 5 years?

I have made no secret that I am looking to step (even further) away from my various business interests over the next 5 years, as Heidi and I have spent more than 20 years building businesses and risking the house (more than once!). So, now, moving to the next phase is very much my focus.

This next 5 years is all about ensuring that the various businesses can grow and thrive once I am no longer there.

What's the best bit of advice you were ever given?

I was part of a business peer group called Vistage for many years and the way I have approached business over the past 15 years has been deeply influenced by what I learned from the other business owners in my group (one of whom is also a major figure in the industry and a good friend).

The single most important lesson was that, as an owner, if you want to really grow your business, you must be on it, and not in it. I can't think of anything more profound that has impacted me.

We look forward to seeing the next 5 years unfold for Chris and the Craggs Energy Group and to find out what they hold.

With their ambition, determination and forward-thinking drive, the future looks to be very bright indeed.

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Improving employee welfare: what steps can the sector take?

AS WELL AS DEALING WITH INCREASING SCRUTINY REGARDING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT, THE DEMANDING NATURE OF THE OIL & GAS SECTOR CAN TAKE ITS TOLL ON BOTH THE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING OF EMPLOYEES. THIS PLACES A HUGE IMPORTANCE ON EMPLOYEE WELFARE, KEEPING IT FRONT OF MIND FOR INDUSTRY ORGANISATIONS. WITH THIS IN MIND, **STEVE ELLIS**, MANAGING DIRECTOR OF FPE SEALS, A DISTRIBUTOR AND MANUFACTURER OF SEALS AND HYDRAULIC CYLINDER PARTS FOR FLUID POWER SYSTEMS, CONSIDERS WHAT STEPS CAN BE TAKEN TO HELP MANAGE EMPLOYEE WELFARE, AND HOW THEY CAN BE IMPLEMENTED.

Training and education

Training and educating employees on dangers inherent in the industry and how they can minimise risk is vital. But training doesn't just mean a course at the beginning of employment or at the start of a new job. Regular refresher courses are important to remind employees of their responsibilities, and to keep them safe.

It is also important to deliver engaging training; think interactive sessions, rather than just having employees read a handbook or listen to a talk for hours on end. More interactive sessions and greater employee engagement will lead to a better understanding of what is being taught and a reduced chance of risk and injury as a result. Employees will also perceive a greater effort invested by the company, making them feel more valued in an industry where training and safety protocol is of the highest importance.

Health and safety

Improving health and safety standards to reduce the risk of incidents is essential. The nature of work in the sector means that any incident can be very damaging to the environment, equipment and even life. Health and safety goes far beyond simply 'hard rules' written for people to follow, although these do form the basis of training and give employees something to work from and refer back to.

Regular assessment and monitoring as well as immediately dealing with incidents, are all paramount to increasing industry health and safety standards, and improving employee welfare. It is also vital to learn from mistakes or accidents, have regular feedback and build this into relevant training programmes.

Take care of mental wellbeing

In the industry, as in life in general, mental health is extremely important. Upstream workers can spend long periods of time away from friends, family and home comforts and, at times, may feel isolated. Making sure



employees can stay in contact with their friends and family is vital, as is ensuring they have access to items to keep them occupied and entertained during any downtime. Good quality food and access to a gym or exercise equipment also contribute to mental wellbeing and is something employers should consider offering as standard.

It is not just the big things that make a difference. The introduction of what may seem relatively small steps has proven to have a very positive impact in the case of Shell Egypt, and their 'Care for People' programme. Based on worker feedback prior to the launch of a project, Shell introduced changes including improved living conditions to enable rest, good food to promote physical health and wellbeing, and Wi-Fi to enable workers to communicate more easily with their families to alleviate homesickness.

Appreciating the steps taken, workers felt more engaged and aligned with the company. As well as delivering an excellent health and safety record with zero Lost Time Injuries, the project was completed ahead of schedule, with reduced staff turnover and improved productivity.

Ensure equipment and machinery is well maintained

With operations in the sector reliant on the use of vast amounts of machinery, it is vital to keep this well maintained and in good working order.

Timely servicing, with the regular replacement of key parts such as piston rings and cylinders, not only prevents costly breakdowns and enforced downtime, but also prevents a malfunction that could cause an injury, or worse.

There is also an impact on overall productivity and output, as well as welfare, since extended, unplanned downtime may leave workers with very little to fill their time and could, potentially, impact them financially.

Summary

There are numerous ways to manage employee welfare, including seemingly small and simple steps.

Value your workers, engage them in as much of the business and as many processes as possible, train and educate them and show a human, empathetic side. The industry can be harsh, lonely, and brutal so, importantly, businesses should show they care and keep their employees safe.

It is incredibly important for a company to effectively manage the welfare of employees as an end in itself. It is an added bonus that doing so will reduce turnover of staff, result in a more productive businesses and create a better working environment for everyone.

STEVE ELLIS has been managing director of FPE Seals, manufacturer and distributor of essential industry equipment, since he joined the company in June 2020 from the LoneStar Group, where he was managing director of LoneStar Fasteners and LoneStar Sealing Technologies.



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TRANSITION TALK

“I believe our role is to offer options that work today, but to also go on a journey with our customers that helps them to fully decarbonise over time.”

WITH OUR CONTINUING FOCUS ON TRANSITION WITHIN THE ENERGY SECTOR, WE NOW HEAR FROM **JONATHAN PERKINS**, CEO OF MABANAFT. JOINING IN 2019 AS THE GROUP'S CFO, AFTER ROLES AT BOTH GAZPROM MARKETING & TRADING AND MORGAN STANLEY, JON TOOK OVER AS CEO OF MABANAFT IN 2020 AND NOW SHARES HIS THOUGHTS HERE ON BOTH HIS OWN TRANSITION AND THOSE OF THE COMPANY AND THE SECTOR.

Asked how he ended up in commodities trading, Jon explains how the vital connection between the transaction, product and client drew him to the sector.

How did I get into commodities? It's a good question. I certainly didn't take a traditional route in, I spent the first 10 or 11 years of my career working in or connected to investment banks, and I spent eight years working at Morgan Stanley in London with a finance operational slant.

Getting involved in a couple of commodity transactions I found that I was able to connect with the transaction, product and client in a way that I hadn't with purely financial transactions. So, having decided, for a variety of reasons, to move on from Morgan Stanley I began looking at commodity trading companies – keeping the trading expertise I had but starting to apply it specifically to commodity companies.

Fundamentally, my first move was still connected to trading, but I started to get a bigger understanding of the role of commodities which plays significantly to one of my life passions. I'm very interested in history and energy and resources, and their connection with how humans have developed and continue to develop. I find it fascinating; I love the topic, so to work in it is great!

Your enthusiasm is interesting considering the way the fuel sector is currently regarded – as a necessary evil, perhaps?

Energy is absolutely a necessity, and we certainly need to evolve the industry and our sources of energy. And that's probably the biggest challenge of working in commodities and fuel but is also what I like about it – it is a necessity of everyday life for everyone and that's why the current environment is such a challenge...

There is a realisation of the need to transition, and I believe it's natural for an energy or fuel company to be part of driving that. We

are already involved in energy distribution and supply so who better to understand what a customer really needs to transition?

Unfortunately, there is no magic wand to get to the solution, so you have to face the reality on the way. It's fine to have an ambition to no longer use oil products, but how do you go from where you are today to that ambition? It's a fascinating challenge and one I believe Mabanft can play a part in.

How did this transition of yours lead you to Mabanft and the role of CEO?

After my time at Gazprom, I left intending to take a short career break, but received a call about Mabanft from the then CEO. Hearing all about a 75-year-old Germany-based family company with a desire to change, and set a more sustainable future, I was fascinated.

It wasn't the obvious next step for me but there was something about the business; the shareholders have the desire to do something different and it is compelling.

With the size of the UK business, I wonder how many realise that the business is part of an even larger group or that it is still family-run?

You could be right, but it still is. It was built on the backbone of importing product, storing it, transporting it, and supplying it to customers and, through our petrol stations, truck stops, last mile distribution and wholesale businesses, that's still, fundamentally, what we do today. Over the last 75 years we've expanded this model from our home in Germany into other North West European countries, including the UK.

We benefit enormously from our long history and strong foundation





of loyal customers, assets, and skilled people. They are the backbone of what we do today and fundamental to our ability to meet evolving customer needs.

To deliver a sustainable business, as we continue to supply our customers with energy, our products will, similarly, need to evolve.

Moving to your current role amid some of the biggest challenges of our time, what are you hoping to deliver, both to the business and to customers?

It's vital that we remember what we are and what our strengths are. We are operating at various points along the downstream value chain, with the ability to access supplies in various locations. We've got terminals, we've got logistics infrastructure and we've got end customers. Where we could see an opportunity for improvement was to increase business effectiveness across our value chain.

Our purpose is two-fold. Firstly, we want to make what we do today as efficient as possible and make sure that we are orientated towards our customers and really understanding what they want. We supply fuel to customers and remembering that that's our purpose is super important.

The second part is how we're going to improve our service to customers. Our customers are aware of the need to consider their own sustainability – their emissions and fuel efficiency – and we want to help those customers by providing solutions. With our existing capabilities we can help them to manage their own carbon footprint, enabling them to transition at their own pace.

Our existing customer base is, typically, made up of those operating in the hard-to-electrify sectors – those with heavy trucks, ships, planes or agricultural, construction and small industrial sites using liquid fuels. They all have an increasing desire to manage their carbon footprint and emissions but can't immediately switch to electricity. I believe our role is to offer options that work today, but to also go on a journey with those customers that helps them to fully decarbonise over time. Low carbon liquids may not be the final solution for all sectors, but we believe they are a step that you can take now on the path between A and B. No one can sit and do nothing while they wait for the final answer. The transition journey can begin now.

With that strategic overview, what would you like to achieve personally in your time with Mabanaft?

We are a company with a long history and strong brand so maintaining those established values with our loyal customers now, while ensuring

we are on a path that also delivers for our customers in the future, that's the most important thing.

The other aspect is operational; I'd like to streamline our various businesses and cultures globally, to harness the power of our total organisation to deliver solutions catered to our customers' future needs.

As you look to deliver on your ambition for Mabanaft, what's the best piece of advice you have ever received?

It's basically to trust your instinct. If you're the one making the decisions, do all the analysis that will give you the best chance of a high-quality decision then trust that outcome and your instinct and go with what you believe because, often, you only get one chance.

What do you see as your focus for the next few years?

We've already done a lot of transformative work in the business. We've changed the way that we operate, we've invested in additional people bringing new capabilities, and we've refocused on certain activities. But throughout all this, we remain very focused on the end game – selling a product to a customer – and ensuring that the customer is our starting point.

We made these changes to be more efficient in the way that we serve our current and future customers and to help them transition at their own pace by providing them with more solutions. We need to remember that's why we did it.

What role can Mabanaft play in the shift to future fuels to decarbonise the transport, heat and commercial sectors?

We are experts with a long history in sourcing, handling, transporting, and selling liquid fuels to customers. It's what we've been doing for the last 75 years. These same customers are going to need liquid fuels in the future so we are working out how we can give them different options to start them on that journey.

We believe that there isn't a single answer and there are multiple solutions that we need to follow. There are solutions readily available now to immediately reduce their emissions and carbon footprint. We believe that our customers' customers will be demanding these changes in the very near future and we have solutions that will help them now. A prime example is logistics companies where we can offer low carbon solutions that don't involve buying a new truck or changing their entire supply chain. We are already engaged in supply of an expanding portfolio of biofuels, such as renewable diesel or HVO.



This year we will take our first ammonia molecules from our joint investment in Gulf Coast Ammonia LLC. It's a product we believe will become an important part of the energy mix by the end of the decade. It can be a carrier of hydrogen, enabling it to be imported where it is either not abundant or too expensive to produce, and it can also be used as a direct burn, replacement fuel – for example in the marine sector, where we see significant potential for our business.

Many customers may be on a path to hydrogen but with many years of work still needed to deliver low carbon hydrogen as a solution. The basics of any reliable fuel supply are that it's got to be affordable, and it's got to be available which is why we are, currently, focussed on viable near-term solutions and hydrogen derivatives.

With the current challenges around economic hydrogen production at scale what needs to happen to get to that point?

It's the classic chicken and egg. You need significant demand in order to justify investment in production, but these investments are heavily reliant on access to green power which will only become affordable when there is production at scale. This is why I believe regulation is needed, as well as subsidy in the short term, and companies that are willing to form partnerships to combine capabilities and share the investment risk as they establish new markets or supply chains.

Whether it is for wind, solar or other new power generation, there will be a need for new grid capacity, new machinery etc. so the investment required is enormous. Regulation, subsidies and technology will all need to be used, but the good thing is that those things are already happening even if it is a slow burn.

Taking the Inflation Reduction Act in the US as an example, that's a massive government incentive to invest in the production of green hydrogen which can make the difference needed to get a business case over the line. With reliable production, someone will commit to the offtake and then you can find a customer because the price becomes reasonable – these things can then snowball.

And then other governments can replicate it?

It's interesting the way you just described that, because the idea of conforming across governments or countries is essential. You can't be in a situation where the certification, for example, for a low carbon project is X in one country but Y in another.

Typically, if you look at where the investments are today, it's where there's already an abundance of renewable energy sources, whether

wind, solar, or hydro, for example, but low demand for the energy in that country. The Middle East is a classic example, Australia another and South America too, but the issue is with transporting the excess. If you produce green ammonia in Saudi Arabia, for example, and the regulatory regime doesn't match the regulatory regime where you want to sell that product, that creates a massive problem. This is why there needs to be conforming across markets and that's why regulation is so important.

The same also applies to low carbon solutions. As I said earlier, I don't believe we can suddenly jump to green in one step so, if you take our ammonia business for example, we plan to utilise carbon capture in the production. 18 months ago, that would have seen it called blue ammonia which highlights the need for greater definition in terms of what level of carbon intensity means that an energy source can be considered low carbon.

Are these reductions achieved through offsetting or actually achieved?

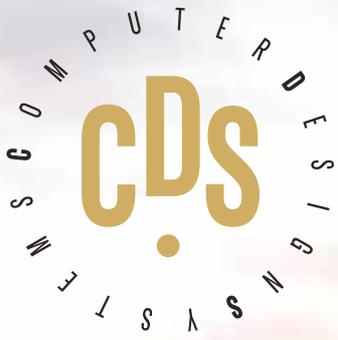
They are actually achieved and, personally, I don't believe that voluntary offsetting can be the only solution. The only long-term solution is to drive efficiency and to switch to lower carbon fuel. HVO is a great example in the UK with typical ghg emission savings in the range of up to 90% reduction compared with diesel and you can make up the balance to zero with voluntary offsets. That's a much more compelling solution than to continue utilising diesel and using offsets to get to 100%.

If you could get one message across to Mabanft customers, what would it be?

As the same reliable partner that we've always been and will continue to be, we're going to work with you in the long term to offer the range of low carbon or alternative energy solutions you need, to manage your own fuelling and sustainability journey. We are ready when you are.

We will be the same Mabanft, offering the same products, but we're also going to start helping them in a longer-term relationship to meet their own sustainability needs.

In our next issue we will hear further thoughts on the role Mabanft is playing in the energy transition from UK managing director, Jay Nair, who will also share his thoughts on sector diversity and the way the Mabanft brand resonates with the changing fuel industry.



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PORTLAND MARKET REPORT

AUGUST
IN VIEW

THE RACE FOR SUCCESSFUL PRODUCTION OF SUSTAINABLE AVIATION FUEL AT SCALE

Thousands of holidaymakers have now returned from holiday destinations around the world, making 2023 the busiest summer for air traffic since (pre-pandemic) 2019. Evidently, of all the things the general population seems willing to sacrifice on the decarbonisation journey, flying is not one of them! With this in mind, it is little wonder that, when it comes to alternative fuels, there is currently no hotter ticket than Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF). Every organisation, from the International Air Transportation Association (the body that represents major global airlines) to the European Union, has mandated the use of green aviation fuel from 2030 onwards with the intention of being carbon neutral by 2050.

This is a huge ask because, bluntly speaking, planes run best on liquified fossil fuels! Battery power for aviation? No chance! No set of batteries can lift a 747 carrying 500 passengers off the ground at 200mph and then keep it in the air for 12 hours. What about liquid hydrogen? Forget it! The density of the fuel is so great that planes would either be too heavy to take off or the fuel tanks would take up 90% of the available capacity. The challenge, then, is how to successfully and sustainably decarbonise jet fuel, so that you end up with the same fuel, but one that is not derived from crude oil. To do this, three possible routes present themselves. First up and, in fact, already over the line in small quantities, is SAF made from the Hydroprocessing of Esters and Fatty Acids (HEFA) – the same manufacturing process that is used to make green diesel (ie, Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil = HVO). The second technology available is Alcohol to Jet (ATJ), whereby alcohol emanating from (non-fossil) sources (e.g., waste corn kernels) are processed into a high octane jet fuel. The final method of making renewable jet fuel is Fischer-Tropsch technology, which synthesises waste gases (municipal and agricultural) into liquids such as methanol, before converting them into jet fuel.

Of the three production routes, HEFA is easily the furthest developed, and process plants are now producing over 300 million litres of SAF globally per annum. Currently, almost all of the volume produced in this way involves the co-processing of Fats, Oils and Greases (FOGs)

with crude, in oil refineries. This, however, is set to change between now and 2030, with 10 European renewable plants (including 2 in Britain) scheduled to come on-stream and produce 8 billion litres of SAF annually. On the other side of the Atlantic, ATJ has won the “sprint” to SAF production with a company called Lanzajet (backed by both Microsoft and Shell) launching its first operational plant this year in the state of Georgia. Production will be modest though (50 million litres per annum) and HEFA processing still looks like winning the US production “marathon”, with over 20 SAF plants planned in the next 10 years (combined capacity = 36 billion litres). Fischer-Tropsch, on the other hand, has yet to make much headway, largely because of higher capital costs and lower production outputs.

“THERE IS NO HOTTER TICKET THAN SAF.”

With CO2 reductions of between 50-90%, airlines are desperate to get hold of SAF and thus prove their green credentials. British Airways, KLM and United Airlines are just a few of the mainstream flag-carriers that have signed long-term SAF supply deals. This looks good on paper, but there remain a number of predictable problems within the nascent SAF industry, starting with feedstock scarcity. The HEFA process is likely to dominate global SAF production until 2030, but this most promising of technology relies on waste FOGs, which are both limited in supply and already trading in the highly competitive road transport fuels market (as a source of HVO and biodiesel). Yes, there are alternatives to FOGs (palm oils, soya etc), but these open up inevitable debates around fuel for food and deforestation. Then, there is the horrific price of SAF, with the product trading today at over \$3,000 per tonne, versus \$990 per tonne for bog-standard Jet A1 kerosene. Finally, there is

the very obvious problem of the “scalability” which will be required to meet global jet fuel consumption. To meet net zero requirements by 2050, over 500bn litres of SAF will need to be produced for the 40m commercial flights that currently take place each year. In 2022, 300m litres of SAF were produced...

Clearly then huge challenges lie ahead, and we are, once again, reminded that decarbonisation is neither simple nor quick. However, there has been a significant acceleration of activity over the last 12 months and in the States, the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) has acted as a lightning-rod through the industry. Effectively, the 20 or so planned production plants mentioned above are now in a race to get production over the line to maximise government subsidy. At the same time, there is increasing consensus (World Economic Forum, US Dept of Energy, European Union) that there will be sufficient feedstocks for the production of SAF, without requiring seismic changes to land-use nor an upending of the agricultural supply-chain. As for prices, the logic will always be that increased supply brings prices down.

That won't happen overnight, so we can't kid ourselves that the greening of aviation will be cheap or that the solutions are straight-forward. And, with fuel overheads making up more than 30% of the overall cost of running an airline, it is inconceivable that passengers will not pay more for their flights once SAF begins to take over as the fuel of choice. Then again, such is the broad global appetite for flying, Portland would bet that the airlines will have few problems selling their seats at higher prices.

For more pricing
information,
see page 34

Portland
www.stabilityfromvolatility.co.uk

Challenging gender stereotypes as an apprentice tanker driver



THE LIQUID FUEL DISTRIBUTION SECTOR IS EVOLVING ON MANY FRONTS AND GENDER DIVERSITY IS ONE OF THEM WITH SUCCESSFUL WOMEN INCREASINGLY CONTRIBUTING AT EVERY LEVEL. STILL HEAVILY MALE DOMINATED HOWEVER, WHEN IT COMES TO CERTAIN ROLES SUCH AS TANKER DRIVING, FUEL OIL NEWS CAUGHT UP WITH **LEAH SNOW**, A RELATIVE NEWCOMER TO THE INDUSTRY TO HEAR MORE ABOUT HOW SHE IS HAPPILY CHALLENGING GENDER STEREOTYPING BOTH WITHIN AND WITHOUT THE SECTOR.

While most put serious consideration into their career path, it was Leah's spontaneity that led to her joining the team at Evesons Fuels, part of the NWF Fuels family, in the autumn of last year. Holidays are often a time for self-reflection and, while away with friends, Leah decided to begin a new career that has brought as many challenges as it has rewards.

An appealing challenge

Seeing a chance to begin a career with Evesons, a distributor that delivers to Warwickshire, Worcestershire, the West Midlands, Hampshire and West Sussex, Leah wasn't deterred by the thought of being a tanker driver. If anything, challenging gender stereotypes and paving the way for female colleagues was part of the appeal. With a job in security that could already be considered 'unconventional', and a natural talent for driving, operating a truck full of fuel seemed like a no-brainer.

After successfully passing the interview stages, Leah started her driving apprenticeship by shadowing the Evesons' drivers to learn the

ropes or, in this case, hoses. Fortunately, Evesons' driver Daisy (Dave Vaisey) is a former driving instructor and has acquired the unique ability to teach skills that are almost impossible to articulate once they become part of your subconscious and muscle memory. Daisy soon became Leah's go-to driver.

There is, however, a lot more to delivering fuel than simply driving. Leah had to master routing, degassing tanks, safety protocols, and the best order in which to fill and deliver fuel from the tanker's six compartments to keep the truck well balanced – with a capacity of around 15 tons of fuel around the back it's wise to keep a sensible centre of gravity...

As well as the practical experience gained at Evesons, the apprenticeship taught Leah the knowledge required to pass theory tests specific to tanker driving. The course was so thorough and holistic that it even included lessons on the best diets for drivers to help maintain their concentration.

Taking the lead

The next big step to becoming a fully-fledged tanker driver was to pass the Urban Driver Level 2 test which would allow Leah to progress from shadowing from the passenger side to taking the driver's seat. Despite having considerably less driving time than her male counterparts from depots across the country, some of whom were taking the test for the second or third time, Leah was the only driver in her cohort to pass the test on the first attempt.

Leah is now on the roads, driving with the assistance of seasoned Evesons' drivers, and beginning to take on solo deliveries. Never having been one to sit behind a desk or stay in one place too long, Leah has very definitely caught the 'fuel bug' and loves getting about, seeing the quaint villages and interesting houses around the Downs, and enjoying stopping for lunch with a view of the seaside around Southampton.

With her own insight into the benefits of defying the status quo, Leah offers her advice for those wanting to progress in unconventional careers: "Whether it's tanker driving, security or anything else you want to do, don't be put off thinking it's only men who can do it, or it's only for one type of person. It's common to worry about following the norm and to believe that women can't compete with men in certain roles.

"I'm only small, probably 5' 4", and carrying a 100ft hose full of fuel around gardens, driveways and other obstacles is physically demanding. The Evesons' drivers I've been out with will usually manage to drag the hose to the customer's tank in one pull, whereas I often have to have a couple of attempts. But that's okay, don't feel bad about it, just do what you're capable of and you'll find, 9 times out of 10, that's enough."

While the liquid fuels industry may still be considered, by some, to be archaic in some areas, those within the industry like Leah, supported by diverse employers like NWF Fuels, are helping to fuel change and drive progression.

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The background of the entire advertisement is a clear, vibrant blue sky. In the lower right corner, a large, detailed dandelion seed head is shown in full bloom, with its green stem and base visible. Numerous dandelion seeds, each with its characteristic white, feathery pappus, are scattered across the sky, appearing to be blown by a breeze. The seeds are in various stages of flight, some closer to the main seed head and others further away, creating a sense of movement and expansion.

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A case study: the benefits of tank telemetry implementation

AN INTERVIEW WITH ALAN KEYES, GLEN FUELS

Background

Glen Fuels is currently run by my brother Kevin and me. It was set up in 1986 by our parents, Kevin Snr. and Miriam. Dad was a sales manager at that time in Irish Shell. An opening appeared in the Wicklow and North Wexford areas to become an Irish Shell distributor, so they went for it.

Initially, we started with 1 truck in each of the Kilmacanogue and Gorey depots. Both trucks were, conservatively, 15 years old; Ireland was in the middle of yet another awful depression; interest rates were in the mid-teens; all in all, a perfect time to start a new business! Looking back, they were very tough years, hats off to Mum and Dad for keeping it going, but keep it going they did.

The years went by, myself and Kevin joined up in the early 90s, the business model changed, we started making a few bob, upgraded the fleet, volumes increased steadily and further changes then came when Topaz bought out Irish Shell's interests. That change enabled us to expand our network and grow the business.

A lot of this growth came from adapting new ideas – we were the first Irish distributor to put a mini tanker on the road. Everybody thought that we were nuts, yet mostly everybody in the business has one now.

We have 5 depots now in the South East of Ireland and are still keen to tack a couple more on, so watch this space!

How did the relationship with Magnus Monitors come about?

Shankar walked into my office in October 2016 with a mortar shaped device. It was his version 1 of what we now know as the Magnus Monitor. We discussed its capabilities but mainly its potential. We had been looking for a cost-effective, reliable and accurate telemetry option for many years to no avail and now we had a chance to help with the development of such a product.

We agreed on a reasonably sized trial of 100 units scattered across Wicklow and Wexford and took it from there.

What were the business challenges or opportunities you wanted to address?

Like all oil distributors, despite the many marketing campaigns, radio ads, text message campaigns and personal calls, we still had a

large number of run-outs across our customer base. As Murphy's Law states, these run-outs happen in the busiest of times and we have to get to them that day. The routing sheets then become meaningless and everybody's job instantly becomes more difficult with stressful juggling of all the demands along the supply chain.

If we could reduce the number of run-outs, we knew it would be a massive help to our delivery efficiencies but also improve customer satisfaction and loyalty.

What made Magnus Monitors stand out as a suitable supplier?

The Magnus Monitor that is now on the market is truly unique. It's reliable, is very robust and, like the old Ronseal ad – it does what it says on the tin!

As mentioned above, we had looked at many proposed solutions over the years. We stocked and marketed a couple of different product lines but stopped doing so as, in short, they just didn't give us, or our customers, what we, or they, were looking for.

We liked what we saw with Eirscope and where they saw the product going. The fact that they actively looked for our input was huge. They listened to the issues from the oil distributors' point of view rather than the other way around. That sealed it for us.

Tell us about the benefits.

Magnus Monitors are radar-based so all it takes is a simple sealant to install it on tanks. We don't compromise the customers' tanks by



drilling holes. This allowed our staff to install 1000s of monitors with very little training and time.

We have now a large number of units out in our customer base across 6 counties and can now plan our routes well in advance. Our staff have totally embraced it because it helps all of us on a daily basis and customers are more aware of their usage thanks to the Magnus app.

In short, any customer who has a Magnus, doesn't run out of oil, ever.

Our delivery routes have become far more efficient and we are better prepared for the spikes in orders that have become more common over the past few years. We can order our own stocks well in advance as we can see what is needed over the coming period.

It's a win-win.

How did the implementation go?

There were a lot of learnings with Magnus Radar Monitor (Version 1). The main one being the critical customers who absolutely have to have their tanks monitored all appear to live in areas that have poor telecommunication coverage. This is where it was great to be part of the development. At the time, we were working off the Sigfox platform which worked

nearly everywhere, but we needed those extra few percentages of cover.

The latest Magnus Radar Monitor version now provides this as it offers 5, if not 6, telecommunication options. The unit itself now selects which option works the best in a particular area and this has made the implementation pretty much seamless.

It works for residential tanks, as well as large commercial tanks with heavy throughput, including our depot tanks.

What about post-implementation?"

It's gone very well. We are now working on integrating it more into our own software systems. Any of our customers who has one loves it, as well as the peace of mind it gives them.

Is there any advice you would share with other distributors considering going along the same route?

We were one of the first suppliers in Ireland so, as an early adaptor, we got to hear and experience everything from the customer's perspective.

It's not for the entire customer base – yet. I can see that changing over time. The roll-out



takes a while but is well worth it, so stick with it.

Just imagine a life without multiple customer run-outs on a daily basis and how much easier it would be to run the business without those run-outs – that's what the Magnus will help you achieve.

How would you summarise?

The Monitor is easy to install and easy to use and the information provided is detailed without being over complicated for our staff to follow.

It was great to work with the Magnus Team. They are very open, supportive and quick to respond to our feedback.

Most importantly, we can now say to our customers: "You will never run out of oil again."



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Definitions matter: when is pollution not pollution?



IN AN INDUSTRY IN WHICH DEALING WITH POTENTIAL CONTAMINANTS IS A DAY-TO-DAY ACTIVITY, IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT THOSE INVOLVED ARE COVERED FOR THE POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES OF ANY UNPLANNED HAPPENING. POLLUTION IS EXTREMELY TIGHTLY DEFINED, FROM AN INSURANCE PERSPECTIVE, MEANING THAT MANY BUSINESSES MAY BELIEVE THEY ARE ADEQUATELY COVERED FOR ANY POLLUTION EVENT WHEN THE REALITY MAY BE QUITE DIFFERENT.

IN THIS ISSUE WE HEAR FROM **KARL JONES** OF DOWNSTREAM FUEL INDUSTRY INSURANCE SPECIALIST OAMPS, WHO CONSIDERS THE IMPORTANCE OF DEFINITIONS AND HOW TO ENSURE YOUR POLICY MEETS YOUR NEEDS.

Pollution is always pollution, isn't it?

From an insurance perspective, the definition of 'pollution' might not match your expectations of the word. So, when you're thinking about risks and insurance, it's important to know that your policy is probably...

- very unlikely to have cover for any liabilities resulting from gradual or historic pollution.
- very unlikely to have cover for environmental damage liability (biodiversity/natural resources restoration).
- giving limited cover for statutory pollution liabilities.
- very unlikely to have cover for the cost of remediating your own site, only that of a third party.
- providing cover that is limited to damage to third party property or injury. And only if it's as a result of a sudden, accidental and unforeseeable event that occurred at a defined time and place.

And even if the pollution happens at a defined time and place, if you've not adequately maintained the equipment – whether it's the tank, pipework, interceptors, bunds etc. – then it could hardly be considered unforeseeable, could it?

Someone has to be responsible for pollution clean up

The Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) established the operation of the 'polluter pays' principle in the UK.

The EPA states that the responsibility for cleaning up contaminated land falls in the first instance to the person who knowingly caused, or allowed, polluting substances onto or under the land.

Unfortunately, it is not always clear when the pollution occurred or,



Leaking Pipe, 10 drips a minute = 600l in 6 months!!

another complication is where there may be numerous parties who all could bear responsibility. Even if the responsible party can be identified, it could be impossible to trace them, or they may not exist anymore.

So, if no such party can be found, the responsibility for the clean-up passes onto the current owner or occupier of the land. Regardless of whether they caused, or were even aware, of the pollution.

Even a tenant with a lease term over 21 years can be deemed to be the owner of a contaminated site if their landlord becomes insolvent. The tenant could be liable for any costs associated with cleaning up the contamination by virtue of a covenant in the lease to comply with all statutory requirements that arise during the term of the lease.

Knowing and permitting pollution that you didn't cause

Classification as a "knowing permitter" – the party that assumes legal liability even though they or their organisation didn't cause the pollution – requires knowledge of the contamination, the power and opportunity to do something about it and the failure to act.

This means that it is possible for a buyer of a contaminated site to be deemed a 'knowing permitter' of contamination if it undertakes environmental investigations on the site that reveal a significant possibility of harm or water pollution and fails to take preventative action.

In the event that contamination is discovered during the buyer's due diligence process, they should ensure that arrangements are made with the seller to apportion, or deal with, any future clean-up costs and that their liability is limited as far as possible.

And it's not just the environmental issues they need to consider; organisations could suffer irreparable damage to their reputation through adverse publicity too.

So, back to insurance, is it any help?

Businesses often believe that any pollution liabilities arising from their operations would be fully covered under their standard insurance policies.

But, following the enactment of EPA, the Association of British Insurers (ABI) put a standard exclusion in place for pollution liabilities in public liability policies.

This restricts cover to identifiable 'sudden, accidental and unforeseeable' pollution incidents or specified perils.

Many insurers have added additional specific exclusions for pre-existing contamination and operational pollution cover.

In essence, if the pollution cannot be attributed to an identifiable event at an identifiable place and time, then it's unlikely the costs associated with the pollution will be insured.



Even if the event complies with the insurer's definition of 'pollution', many policies will not include cover for own site clean-up costs or loss mitigating costs, so you could still be out of pocket.

This could apply to a spill following a fuel theft, for example – the thieves rarely hang around to ensure there's no leak from the storage system they've just broken into. And, in our experience, the clean-up costs are often significant.

Directors and senior employees of limited companies are not immune from prosecution following a pollution event either. Most Directors' & Officers' liability policies now exclude claims relating to pollution. However, some policies will include indemnity for defence costs relating to legal action arising from pollution, such as the Pen Underwriting policy OAMPS Hazardous Industries can provide.

What can you do?

Aside from the obvious sound operational risk management (including suitable protections and regular maintenance of storage systems, bunding and interceptors), monitoring storage volumes closely can help identify any lack of system integrity that might lead to an uninsured claim.

There are insurance policies available that include own site clean-up costs and mitigation costs, such as the Petrochemical policy available through Pen Underwriting. This policy includes access to a 24/7 spill response helpline and crisis management experts to help manage any adverse publicity and demonstrate you've done all you can.

Specific Environmental Impairment Liability insurance can cover gradually occurring pollution, or liabilities arising from historic activities on sites you own or occupy.

Unfortunately, pollution incidents can, and do, happen on even the most well-managed sites and it is often not until such an incident occurs that businesses come to realise that many of the ensuing costs and losses they incur are not insured.

Understand your environmental risks

Speak with your insurance broker to discuss the solutions that would best suit the risks your business is facing.

With the potential cost of inadequate cover, it is vital that you understand your site's pollution risks, and what you can to mitigate, and insure against, pollution liabilities.

Disclaimer

The sole purpose of this article is to provide guidance on the issues covered. This article is not intended to give legal advice, and, accordingly, it should not be relied upon. It should not be regarded as a comprehensive statement of the law and/or market practice in this area. We make no claims as to the completeness or accuracy of the information contained herein or in the links which were live at the date of publication. You should not act upon (or should refrain from acting upon) information in this publication without first seeking specific legal and/or specialist advice. OAMPS Hazardous Industries accepts no liability for any inaccuracy, omission or mistake in this publication, nor will we be responsible for any loss which may be suffered as a result of any person relying on the information contained herein.

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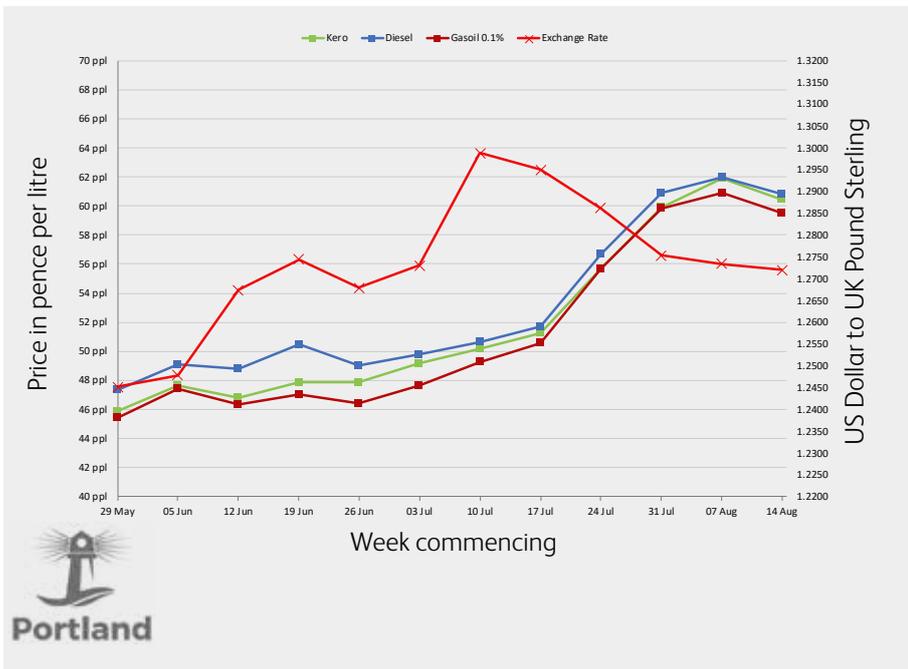
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Wholesale Price Movements: 19th July 2023 – 18th August 2023

	Kerosene	Diesel	Gasoil 0.1%
Average price	58.38	58.98	57.88
Average daily change	1.19	1.25	1.26
Current duty	0.00	52.95	10.18
Total	58.38	111.93	68.06

All prices in pence per litre

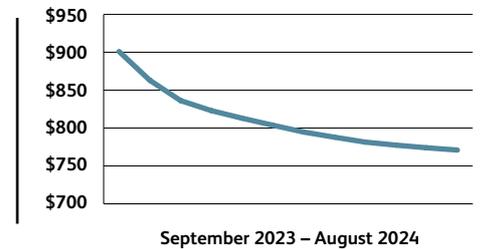


Highest price 63.31 Wed 09 Aug 23	Biggest up day +3.05 Tue 01 Aug 23
Kerosene	
Lowest price 51.60 Thu 20 Jul 23	Biggest down day -2.16 Tue 15 Aug 23

Highest price 63.80 Wed 09 Aug 23	Biggest up day +3.36 Wed 09 Aug 23
Diesel	
Lowest price 51.98 Thu 20 Jul 23	Biggest down day -1.81 Wed 02 Aug 23

Highest price 62.94 Wed 09 Aug 23	Biggest up day +3.40 Wed 09 Aug 23
Gasoil 0.1%	
Lowest price 50.88 Thu 20 Jul 23	Biggest down day -1.54 Wed 02 Aug 23

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	63.00	73.04	117.16	71.82	78.04	121.75
North East	61.95	71.67	116.24	74.27	76.35	119.61
North West	63.52	74.27	118.63	71.98	78.61	121.64
Midlands	62.02	72.20	116.70	70.34	76.80	120.36
South East	62.12	72.16	116.68	79.28	80.18	119.86
South West	62.47	72.00	116.52	73.53	76.59	119.42
Northern Ireland	62.58	73.37	n/a	70.74	78.99	n/a
Republic of Ireland	76.34	78.80	118.10	83.45	83.46	121.84
Portland	60.33	69.72	113.39			

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 SEPTEMBER'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 **JOHN WEEDON**, DIRECTOR AT MITCHELL & WEBBER.

"LOOK AFTER YOUR STAFF AND CUSTOMERS."

JOHN WEEDON



Please give your career history in 25 words or fewer

Previously a commercial bank manager for 15 years with Lloyds and, in 2002, joined my family firm which was created by our grandfather and great grandfather in the late 1800s.

Describe yourself in 3 words

Forward thinking. Positive. Fair-minded.

What were your childhood / early ambitions?

To work in finance or banking.

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

Travel photojournalist.

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

People buy from people.

Share your top tips for business success.

Look after your staff and customers.

What's your most recent business achievement of note?

Supporting UKIFDA and OFTEC by helping to create Europe's first HVO village.

Tell us your greatest fear

That civil servants won't listen to consumers or industry.

Which is most important – ambition or talent?

Ambition, to give you the drive to achieve.

What's the best thing about your job?

Dealing with customers.

Which is the quality that you most admire?

Doing what you say you will do!

What are you most likely to say?

Anybody got some chocolate?

What are you least likely to say?

No thank you, I don't want any chocolate!

Describe your perfect day

On a day off, a swim, walk and a roast lunch at a local Cornish pub.

Do you have a favourite sports team?

No, but I like most sports.

What's the biggest challenge of our time?

Wars and climate change.

Cheese or chocolate?

Chocolate!

Share your greatest personal achievement

Recently, it would be supporting the drive to renewable fuels.

What's your pet hate or biggest irritant?

People not listening.

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

D-Day.

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

Still got it!!!!

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

Removal of fuel duty on HVO for any purpose.

What is number 1 on your bucket list?

Rocky Mountains / British Columbia

What 3 things would you take to a desert island?

My wife, a lifetime supply of wine and a BBQ.

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

I'm not so keen on dark chocolate.

Who would you most like to ask these questions of?

Winston Churchill.



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