

Fuel Oil News

MAY 2024



**TAKING A FLIGHT
INTO THE FUTURE**

CELEBRATING INDUSTRY WINNERS

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FEATURES

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And the award for...

My last intro ended 'See you there!', and see you there we did. Almost 1400 made the trip to Liverpool, to join those already staffing more than a hundred stands showcasing the best the industry has to offer.

As I predicted, significant meetings were had, deals done, understandings shared and essential plans made.

What I failed to predict, was how the incredible UKIFDA team would take an already successful event and make it even bigger and better. A feat they manage, unbelievably, year after year.

Amongst those of you that the Fuel Oil News team engaged with, on your stand, at our stand over a flapjack (how good were they?!), at the awards dinner or over a 'nightcap' at Motel Bar, had, without exception, found genuine value.

A carefully curated conference delivered stimulating presentations around decarbonisation challenges, politics and progress as well as thought-provoking insights into drivers affecting the energy market current and future.

And what a treat was in store for those who had the presence of mind to book early for the sold-out awards dinner. Within moments of rising to

speak, expedition leader and filmmaker Monty Halls had us all in the palm of his hand for a rapid journey through a series of memorable moments, set against a backdrop of stunning images and video footage (do ask me about the manta ray if you weren't there).

Monty wasn't the only one inspiring us that evening, either. With UKIFDA President Rory Clarke, hosting, this year's award winners were unveiled, highlighting, once again, the phenomenal talent, passion and dedication in our industry (p10 & 11).

In the words of John Lennon, one of Liverpool's most famous sons, "A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality."

For herculean efforts to deliver a vital event that brings the industry together and strengthens its efforts to secure a low carbon liquid fuel future, my virtual award for greatest industry contribution, along with my heartfelt thanks, go to Ken, Dawn and the UKIFDA team.



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Fuel Oil News

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On the cover

A striking image of Ian McDonald, Head of Fleet Technical Management at Virgin Atlantic standing in front of Flight 100. In Conversation, on pages 27 to 29, Ian takes us behind the scenes of this historic, 100% SAF-fuelled, transatlantic flight.



In this issue

Unveiled at last month's successful EXPO, the 2024 UKIFDA award winners feature on pages 10 and 11. We are In Conversation with one of our Irish distributors on pages 16 & 17 and continue our mental health series on pages 32 & 33.

Hydrogen collaboration for Uniper and Phillips 66

Uniper and Phillips 66 Limited have signed a collaboration agreement to work together on a supply of green hydrogen from the Humber H₂ub® (Green) project to Phillips 66 Limited's Humber Refinery from 2029. The hydrogen would be used to replace refinery fuel gas in industrial-scale fired heaters, as part of Phillips 66 Limited's plans to reduce the Humber Refinery's scope 1 operational emissions.

The Humber H₂ub® (Green) project development and the supply agreement with Phillips 66 Limited is subject to financial investment approval and includes several pre-conditions that would need to be met, including securing the necessary planning consents and environmental permit, agreement on terms for the hydrogen offtake and a Low Carbon Hydrogen Agreement with the UK Government.

Hydrogen ambitions

Guy Phillips, Team Lead, Business Development Hydrogen, UK for Uniper, said:

"The Humber H₂ub® (Green) project is a key part of Uniper's hydrogen ambitions in the UK and we're pleased to be collaborating on it with Phillips 66 Limited. The Humber region is recognised as the UK's most carbon intensive industrial region and hydrogen will be vital in decarbonising and securing the region's economy. The Humber H₂ub® (Green) project could make an important contribution to kick starting the hydrogen economy in the Humber region.

"Our Killingholme site is ideally placed



with excellent utilities infrastructure. It has the potential to support the UK's hydrogen and decarbonisation ambitions, creating new high-skilled employment opportunities and ensuring the site continues to make a valuable contribution to the regional economy."

Lowering emissions

Duncan Hammond, Humber's Decarbonisation Projects Manager at Phillips 66 Limited, shared: "We're excited to collaborate with Uniper on their low carbon hydrogen project. Hydrogen refuelling will be a big step in lowering the refinery's emissions as we evolve with the energy transition.

"Energy security is vital for the UK. Utilising technologies such as low carbon hydrogen produced by electrolysis and also carbon capture will enable us to continue to produce

essential products for the transport sector and supply chain, some of which are used in the production of electric vehicle batteries, wind turbine blades, pharmaceuticals and much more.

"We believe hydrogen will attract new industry, protect jobs, and develop the local economy."

Hydrogen production is a key pillar of Uniper's strategy – the company's aim is to build more than 1GW of electrolyser capacity across the business by 2030.

The Humber H₂ub® (Green) project includes plans for initial electrolytic hydrogen production capacity of up to 120 MW, with the potential for future expansion. The green hydrogen production facility would be developed as part of Uniper's wider aspirations for the Killingholme Energy Transformation Hub.



Leading the way with HVO and electric-powered vehicles

XPO Logistics has successfully deployed HVO and electric-powered vehicles within its 4PL and transport control tower operations. This is an industry first, representing a significant sustainability achievement.

HVO and electric-powered vehicle trials were initially implemented across test routes comprising nearly 3,000 miles in the UK and Ireland, with emissions reduced by over 4,000 kgCO₂e. Expanding the uptake of emission solutions in the managed transport sector aligns with XPO's broader decarbonisation strategy, which includes increasing the use of alternative fuels. At the same time, newer low and zero-emission vehicles are entering the market.

A leap forward

Paul Hayes, XPO's Director of Asset Light Solutions, said: "Sustainability is an important strategic pillar for all our customers and, together, we are exploring options to accelerate the supply chain's decarbonisation. This unique deployment and implementation of alternative fuel technologies in our 4PL operation is a leap forward for our customers on their sustainability journey."

Dan Myers, Managing Director – UK and Ireland, XPO Logistics added: "It's hugely satisfying to see the expansion of alternative fuels as we continue our journey as a leader in sustainability."

Argent Energy to end production at Scottish biodiesel plant

European biodiesel producer, Argent Energy, has entered consultation on plans to end production at its biodiesel plant in Motherwell, Scotland. Despite the excellent team and their considerable efforts, external factors affecting the UK and EU biodiesel market have driven the requirement to make a strategic change. The decision, taken only after lengthy consideration of all other options, will concentrate the business on its other, better situated locations.

Motherwell operation

Argent's Motherwell biodiesel operation is where Argent Energy's story started, back in 2005, producing 45,000 tonnes of waste-based biodiesel each year, before later expanding, in 2016. Argent's second plant in Ellesmere Port is located on the Manchester Ship Canal, and its third is strategically positioned in the Port of Amsterdam. An expansion of the Dutch facility is underway, with initial plans to triple capacity.

The consultation for employees at the Motherwell facility is expected to start as soon as possible and Argent will be working closely

with all those impacted at this difficult time. The decision to consult on closure of the plant was not easy. However, market conditions, that have put severe economic pressures on biodiesel production facilities in the UK over the past 2 years, have forced the move to ensure the continued strength and future of the business.

Chief Executive Officer, Louise Calviou said: "This has been the hardest decision for us to make, and is one we have not taken lightly. After careful consideration of market conditions and our strategic goals for global decarbonisation efforts, we believe it is a necessary step. We, and our shareholder, remain dedicated to our ambitious growth plans, and our mission to displace as much fossil fuel as possible continues."

External conditions

The main external conditions that have substantially weakened the environment for European and UK biodiesel production are:

- Unprecedented competition from imported Chinese biodiesel that benefits from state economic support and subsidies.
- Approvals by HMRC for major UK fuel



suppliers to utilise Inward Processing relief and avoid the normal 6.5% duty for imported biodiesel. This is also estimated to have led to lost Treasury revenue of around £150 million in 2023.

- The removal, after Brexit, of UK trade defence measures on renewable diesel from the USA, that competes with UK biodiesel. This has resulted in an increase of imports of subsidised US-made product of nearly half a million tonnes.
- Post Brexit, the inability for the UK to import category 1 tallow – Argent's main feedstock - from the EU – due to EU regulations.

These challenges have taken a toll on the whole sector and Argent Energy is working with the industry and UK government to solve these structural imbalances and put the sector back on an even footing, preventing further damage to the UK industry. In the meantime, support of its employees is the focus for Argent Energy.

New leadership and expansion plans for EET Retail

EET Retail, the retail division of EET Fuels, has appointed Narayan Bhatra as Chief Executive Officer. Narayan was previously Chief Retail Officer at Nayara Energy, India's second largest oil and gas company and its fastest growing private fuel station network. He has over three decades of experience in the energy sector.

EET Retail has plans to develop a significant portfolio of Essar-branded fuel retail outlets, within three years, as part of its vision to become the UK's "retailer of choice to consumers". EET Retail will have a pan-UK presence and grow its network across all regions and markets, including identifying opportunities for potential acquisitions to accelerate growth.

Long-term strategy

In the age of new mobility, EET Retail's long-term strategy includes offering a range of low-carbon, high-quality fuels including serving the needs of drivers preferring e-mobility. These fuels will be offered in an environment that includes non-fuel customer offerings.

Narayan Bhatra commented: "I'm excited



to be joining EET Retail now. It has a clear and very ambitious vision for growth, as well as the potential to create a market-leading proposition for low carbon high quality fuels, given EET Fuels' huge investment in its decarbonisation plans at Stanlow, as well as building a world-leading hydrogen production facility."

Deepak Maheshwari, CEO of EET Fuels, added: "We are embarking on this exciting journey of growth and innovation in the retail sector in the UK, and are confident in Narayan's leadership. EET Retail plans to deliver best-in-class fuel outlets, creating a network of partnerships that are focussed on Essar's customer-first belief. Narayan's appointment marks a significant milestone for EET, and we are excited about the opportunities ahead, under his leadership."

Ambitious plans

EET Fuels forms part of EET which is committed to playing a key role in the decarbonisation of the UK economy, and has ambitious plans to build an energy transition park at its site in the North West and to become the UK's first low carbon process refinery. This aligns with the UK Government's Ten Point Plan on the Green Industrial Revolution and with its British Energy Security Strategy.

Tony Fountain, Managing Director of EET, said: "EET Fuels is a key part of Essar Energy Transition and we are committed to maintaining a strong, secure manufacturing base for fuels in the North West and across the UK. Our approach provides our customers with the assurance of working with a partner that is committed to decarbonising our production processes, playing our part to ensure that the UK delivers on its climate change goals and enhancing energy security.

"I look forward to working with Narayan to share this industry-leading commitment with our retail customers."

Firefly Green Fuels – UK facility to break ground later this year

Firefly Green Fuels was founded with a desire to decarbonise aviation by transforming a wholly biogenic waste – sewage – into a truly sustainable aviation fuel (SAF). James Hygate, CEO, has announced significant progress towards commercialisation of their SAF pathway.

Firefly Green Fuels plan to open an operational demonstration facility by 2027, and a commercial scale facility by 2029. The company expects to start producing SAF commercially in the UK before 2030.

Paul Hiditch, COO, said: “Firefly has developed a process to convert processed human sewage into fuel and secured a raft of MOU agreements with key partners including Haltermann Carless, Petrofac, Chevron Lummus Global (CLG) and Anglian Water.

“Haltermann Carless, a global leader in sustainable hydrocarbon production, is the owner of a specialist refinery site in Harwich where Firefly will soon build a pilot facility, followed by a planned first-of-a-kind commercial scale plant shortly thereafter.

“The company has also announced a partnership with Chevron Lumus Global (CLG), a leading technology provider in the renewable

transportation fuels industry. CLG will provide bespoke refinery infrastructure, to optimise efficiency and flexibility while minimising emissions for Firefly’s commercial scale plant.

“A further agreement has been reached with utility company Anglian Water to provide Firefly with the waste that will be used as feedstock for the planned pilot facility.”

A significant leap forward

James Hygate, CEO, reflected: “The signing of these agreements marks a significant leap forward in realising our ambitions to develop a sustainable SAF industry here in the UK. Opening up this new sewage pathway will bring new jobs and growth to the UK, helping secure a greener and more prosperous future.”

Paul continued: “Firefly’s leadership team have been working at pace to bring this SAF pathway online in the UK, ahead of further expansion into global markets. Independent analysis by Cranfield University has shown that Firefly’s SAF offers a highly significant 92% CO₂e saving versus fossil jet fuel.

“Recognising this huge carbon saving potential, ultra low-cost airline Wizz Air signed an offtake agreement with Firefly in 2023,



James Hygate, CEO of Firefly Green Fuels

with a value of almost \$1bn over 15 years.

“Firefly will break ground on our pilot facility in the coming months and plan to be in commercial operation by the end of the decade. It’s an exciting time for the business.”

At the forefront of reducing emissions

Yvonne Moynihan, Corporate and ESG Officer at Wizz Air, added: “Being the leading airline in Europe for environmental sustainability on a per passenger basis, we hold SAF as a core component to our sustainability strategy.

“Since 2023, Wizz Air has actively supported Firefly fuels through investment, and we are optimistic that this partnership will drive progress within the industry, bringing us closer to affordable and accessible SAF options.

“We are convinced that industry collaboration is a crucial step in addressing the climate crisis. We remain focused on reducing our carbon intensity by 25% by 2030.”

HVO partnership will reduce carbon emissions in truck racing

Silvey Fleet and BWOC have been appointed sustainability partners of the British Truck Racing Championship (BTRC) 2024.

The BTRC is one of the biggest motorsport categories in the UK, and Silvey Fleet and BWOC will be sole suppliers of the renewable diesel HVO for race events throughout the season in both the UK and France.

Fuelling a sustainable future

Improving sustainability is key to securing the future of motor racing and using new, more sustainable energy sources to fuel vehicles will play a significant role in helping organisers achieve this crucial goal.

Silvey Fleet and BWOC will be helping the BTRC significantly reduce CO₂ emissions over the course of the 2024 season through the use of HVO that can be used in place of conventional diesel without having to make any engine modifications.

Transitioning to greener alternative fuels

The road transport industry is undergoing a major shift as it transitions to new, more sustainable energy sources. Silvey Fleet and BWOC are playing their part in this evolution by offering innovative new products and services, such as HVO, EV charging and carbon offsetting, to help customers reduce CO₂ emissions.

“Partnering with the BTRC is an exciting opportunity for Silvey Fleet, allowing us to demonstrate our commitment to offering customers sustainable solutions, and play our part in shaping the energy transition,” says Miriam James, Managing Director of Silvey Fleet. “It is a prime example of how companies can collaborate and take action to decarbonise and contribute towards a more sustainable future.”

“We want to help customers decarbonise by offering innovative fuel solutions that can help reduce their CO₂ emissions,” explains Amy



Silvey Fleet and BWOC partner with British Truck Racing Championship to reduce carbon emissions in truck racing

Jones, Managing Director of BWOC. “Supplying Renewable Diesel (HVO) to the BTRC will help ensure the organisation meets its commitment to reducing carbon emissions and enhance the positive impact racing can have on the world.”

Stuart Oliver, Promoter/Director of BTRC said: “We are delighted to have Silvey Fleet and BWOC as sustainability partners for our 2024 season. The BTRC is aligned with Truck Sport UK and the British Automobile Racing Club in its commitment to reducing carbon emissions from racing events. Using Renewable Diesel (HVO) at our events will significantly reduce carbon emissions, helping us work towards achieving this goal.”

High cost and limited feedstock hinder scaling of SAF

High cost and limited feedstock are key hurdles facing the scaling of global sustainable fuel (SAF) production, according to a recent report by the Energy Industries Council (EIC) on the global production of this emerging fuel.

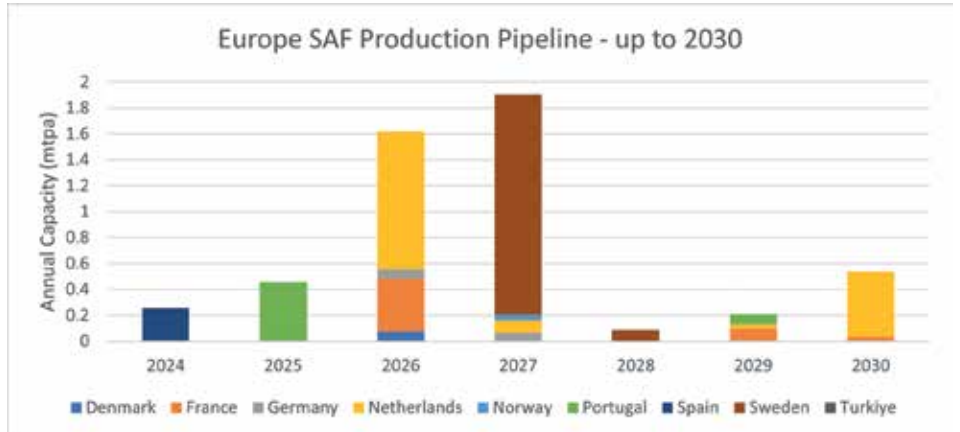
Despite SAF's potential to substantially lower CO2 emissions by up to 80% compared to conventional jet fuel, its current production represents a fraction of total aviation fuel usage, less than 1%, the report says. As the sector aims for net zero, overcoming challenges such as feedstock access, increased investment, and the need for robust government policies becomes paramount, the report finds.

SAF challenges

Addressing the complexities of scaling SAF, the report's author and EIC Analyst Nabil Ahmed says: "While SAF has numerous environmental benefits, its adoption is not without challenges. High production costs, two to four times that of traditional jet fuel, alongside the limited availability of scalable feedstocks, present significant hurdles. Yet, with strategic initiatives and enhanced governmental support, including mandates and subsidy mechanisms, we can navigate these challenges effectively. There is a need for a diversified approach to feedstock development and an increase in green hydrogen and carbon capture activities for efuels."

The global SAF market, still in its nascent stages, requires substantial development to make a meaningful impact. There are countries, however, that have set ambitious targets, including the US, UK, Canada, and Japan, with each aiming for a 10% SAF blend by 2030.

These targets point to a burgeoning trend in SAF project announcements, with



projections suggesting the potential for 50 million tonnes per annum of SAF production by 2030, contingent on the development of announced projects. Such growth presents vast opportunities for the supply chain, which highlights the importance of strategic focus on feedstock availability and research into new SAF production pathways, according to the report.

Evolution

Aviation's challenge in reducing its carbon footprint is compounded by the sector's intrinsic reliance on high-energy-density fuels. The landscape, however, is gradually changing, with 104 SAF projects earmarked for development, signalling an industry on the



brink of evolution despite scalability challenges.

"The innovative production of SAF, using resources ranging from agricultural waste to the pioneering 'efuels' generated from carbon capture and green hydrogen, is a clear indicator that the sector, with proper investment in this area, stands a clear chance to shift towards sustainability," Ahmed said.

North America leads the charge with the most SAF projects, followed by Europe and its key players: the UK, Netherlands, and Sweden. This global effort highlights a collaborative push towards sustainable aviation, necessitating a unified approach from airlines, stakeholders, and, especially, governmental bodies, to foster the sector's growth through policies and incentives.

As the industry strides towards its ambitious 2030 targets, the role of SAF becomes increasingly vital. This report underscores the imperative for concerted effort, innovation, and policy intervention to scale SAF production and adoption.

To download the report, please visit: <https://www.the-eic.com/MediaCentre/Publications/Reports>

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A new solution from D.T.S. for live, field-based data

D.T.S. has launched IMPROVE, an innovative and dynamic solution set to transform the way businesses in the UK fuel, transportation and logistics industries manage and harness their live field-based data. The new solution offers a comprehensive suite of features designed to empower businesses to make informed decisions, drive efficiency, and enhance overall performance.

Revolutionising data management

IMPROVE has been created to provide businesses with tools to leverage live field-based data in a way that is most relevant to their operations.

Key features include:

- Customisable data display: enabling pages to be designed to showcase the specific data that matters most to individual businesses.
- Administrative capabilities: admin users can create reports, while dynamic view users can access and utilise live data. In addition, a PDF export functionality facilitates seamless sharing of relevant data with wider teams.

Empowering management and enhancing performance

IMPROVE is designed to provide businesses with the means to enhance



operational performance and streamline data management processes.

Key benefits include:

- Effortless KPI generation: at the click of a button, businesses can generate key performance indicators, enabling them to make swift, data-driven decisions.
- Cost-efficiency: with a clear and transparent cost structure, IMPROVE offers businesses the opportunity to improve their data management processes without incurring excessive expenses.

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Centre Tank Services celebrates instrumental colleague

Centre Tank Services (CTS) is celebrating another big work anniversary – Gurdeep Lakhanpal has been with the business for a decade!

In that time, Gurdeep has gone from the Technical Team to Sales Manager and is now Head of the Middle East Division of CTS in Saudi Arabia.

A fulfilling journey

Asked for some of the highlights from his time with the company, Gurdeep shares: “Reflecting on the past 10 years at CTS, I realise that every day has been more than just ‘work’ or a ‘job’. It’s been a fulfilling journey fuelled by passion and dedication to what I love doing each day.”

“In March 2014, my journey at CTS began, when I joined the Technical Team, under the guidance of Technical Director Rob Terry and colleague Trevor Banks, and quickly benefitted from their 20 years’ worth of technical knowledge.

“2018 brought internal changes, presenting an opportunity for me to step into the role of Sales Manager, where I was able to nurture relationships with both customers and suppliers.

“Now, a decade later, I find myself in Saudi Arabia, embarking on a new chapter with the CTS Group’s latest venture, CTS Middle East.”

Commenting on Gurdeep’s time with the company, Matthew Terry, CTS Managing Director, said: “Gurdeep’s move to Saudi Arabia finds us not only investing in a colleague and friend who has been instrumental throughout the 10 years he has worked here, but also expanding into a growing market where we have already seen some success.”



Read all these stories and more in full at www.fueloilnews.co.uk



NWF award highlights team member for 'going the extra mile'

Bill McClelland was awarded the 'Going the Extra Mile' award for NWF for March.

Lee Martin, Regional Manager said:

"Nothing has been too much for Bill. This is a large team, with many moving parts, at the height of customer demand, to ensure we remain fanatical about service, which hasn't phased Bill at all. A true asset to us and our customers."

Bill McClelland, Assistant Depot Manager, Darch Oil said:

"The transition into this role has been a far easier process for me due to the professionalism and teamwork of colleagues within Darch Oil. The 'Going the Extra Mile' award was a reflection of the hard work of the entire depot."



Roll up Roll up – the circus is in town!

Craggs Energy, the West Yorkshire-based distributor, proudly distributes fuel to a variety of customers – including the circus when it's in town!

Craggs driver, Nathan Brown, said: "Working at Craggs Energy and driving one of the bigger trucks means I get to visit our larger commercial clients throughout Yorkshire and Lancashire but it's not every day we get to keep a circus topped up with fuel! This was an exciting delivery for me!"



Driving success for Morgan Webb

Morgan Webb, Depot Assistant for Barton Petroleum, the Northamptonshire-based fuel distributor, is proud to announce that he has recently passed his LGV test.

Morgan said: "On the 7th February 2024, I had never even sat in a lorry. Then, 44 days later, after completing all my tests, I can now drive one!"

"I had my medical in January and did my driving assessment on the 7th February. Then I had my lorry theory test booked in and then the nerves really started kicking in. (I had bad memories of my car theory test which I had to take nine times!)"

"But, with the help and knowledge of my Depot Manager, Charles, and the Depot Supervisor, Dale, I ended up getting 90/100 on my lorry theory test and 81/100 on the hazard perception. Then, in early March, I had my LGV Driver CPC where I scored 49/50."

"My driving lessons started on the 13th March, with just 5 days training with the big test date on the 20th March which I passed and then I completed my LGV CPC module 4 practical test scoring 100%!"

"Completing this was a massive achievement for me and I feel very proud. I just can't wait to help the depot and get in the driving seat!"

Huge congratulations to Morgan from Fuel Oil News!

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Industry award winners unveiled at hugely successful EXPO

The UKIFDA EXPO 2024 award winners and runners-up were announced at the once again sold out Awards Dinner, which was a highlight of an unparalleled industry gathering.

The annual EXPO, hosted by industry body, UKIFDA, delivered two days of excellent networking, insight and fun, with both exhibitors and attendees hailing it as ‘a success from start to finish’.

Over 1,300 delegates, from over 450 companies, attended the event, which was held over two days at the Exhibition Centre, Liverpool, and included a sell-out trade exhibition, an extremely well-attended conference with an impressive schedule of insightful content, and a packed-out awards dinner.

The dinner, sponsored by Mabanaft, was held on the evening of April 10 and began with the President’s Drinks Reception, sponsored by FoxInsights. With more applications for the awards than ever, the judges reported some tough decision-making across the six categories.

UKIFDA CEO Ken Cronin, explains: “This year’s EXPO is all about ‘Working Together in Changing Times’ and the winning individuals, depots and companies are a testament to this forward-thinking theme.

“Competition was especially stiff this year and our award winners and runners-up should be proud of their achievements. Huge congratulations to you all, we are fortunate to have you working so hard to push the industry forward – a true inspiration to everyone.

“Thanks also to all of our sponsors for their support.”

UKIFDA Driver of the Year 2024 award sponsored by OAMPS

Always leading from the front, Daniel has shown true professionalism in a particularly challenging situation. Heralded a ‘health and safety ambassador’ by his company, Daniel is this year’s driving superstar.

Winner:

Mircea-Daniel Petreus, Watson Fuels (right).

Runners-up:

James Casey, Barton Petroleum (below).

Leah Snow, NWF Fuels (below right).



UKIFDA Depot of the Year 2024 award sponsored by Pen Underwriting

Recognised for its commitment to driving the standard of distributor depot safety forward, the winner is a depot with exactly the right systems in place – it’s taken a lot of hard work, and the team at Certas Energy’s Three Cocks Depot has truly made it happen.

Winner:

Certas Energy (Three Cocks Depot)

Runners-up:

Barton Petroleum (Oakley Depot) - pictured.
Par Petroleum



UKIFDA Green Award 2024 sponsored by Oilshield

This award celebrates working towards a decarbonised future for the liquid fuel distribution sector. Judges were particularly impressed by the company’s HVO journey, exemplifying how a commitment to environmental responsibility can drive innovation for lasting impact.

Winner:

Certa [Ireland]

Shortlisted finalist: **Eliminox**



UKIFDA Innovation Award 2024 sponsored by Fuel Oil News

Nominated multiple times for its next generation of advanced smart tank telemetry, the team's commitment to working alongside the liquid fuel distribution industry is clearly apparent!

Winner: **Magnus Monitors**

Shortlisted finalists:

Fuel Additive Science Technologies

MechTronic



UKIFDA Customer Service Award sponsored by Worldpay

Described as an exemplary team member and the 'King' of everything customer service, Dan's can-do attitude and extensive industry experience, coupled with his willingness to embrace new customer-focused projects are highly valuable.

What a great role model for NWF Fuels and the industry as a whole.

Winner:

Dan Busby (NWF Fuels)

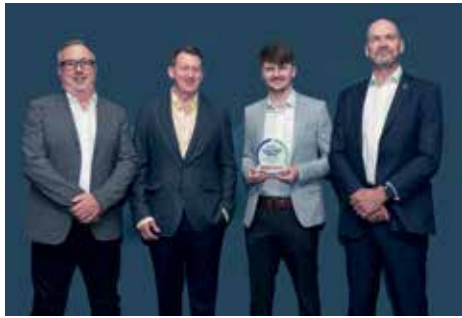


UKIFDA Young Person of the Year 2024 Award sponsored by Just Tankers

Harry is hardworking, enthusiastic and always willing to go above and beyond, from taking personal ownership of operational challenges to maintaining an outstanding level of service to NWF Fuels' customers, every day – congratulations Harry!

Winner:

Harry Boxall (NWF Fuels)



Runners-up:

Jack Popplewell (Dice Fuels)

Jaime Pulling (WCF Chandlers) - pictured



Congratulations to all the winners and runners-up. We look forward to speaking with you in future issues of Fuel Oil News.

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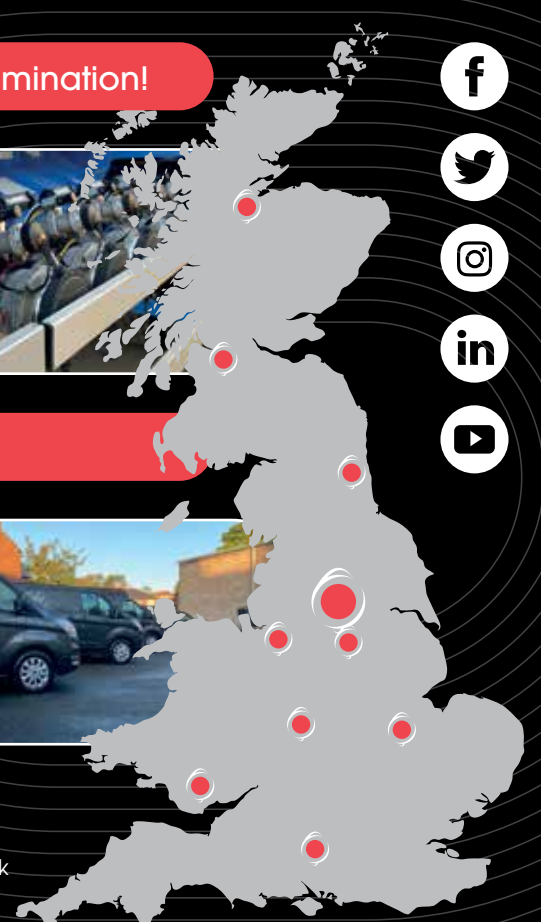
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Mabanaft welcomes Caroline Watkins as Managing Director, UK branch



Mabanaft's operating business in the UK has appointed a new managing director and head of UK, Caroline Watkins.

Headquartered in Hamburg, Germany, the Mabanaft group is a leading independent and integrated energy company, providing its customers with innovative energy solutions for their transportation, heating, industrial and agricultural needs.

Caroline joins the team as an accomplished, senior oil industry leader. With her extensive experience of over three decades in the oil and shipping markets, she brings valuable expertise and a fresh dynamic to the team.

Prior to joining Mabanaft, Caroline was the Director of International Crude Trading for Suncor, where she worked for 12 years, leading their Supply and Trading business in the UK and working closely with teams in North America and elsewhere. Before that, she gained a wealth of experience during her time at Chevron and Shell, undertaking various roles before settling into Crude Oil Trading.

As Managing Director of the UK branch, Caroline will collaborate globally with colleagues, suppliers, and customers. In her new role, Caroline will play an important role in Mabanaft's sustainable and renewable energy initiatives in the UK, helping to steer Mabanaft and its UK branch towards a greener and more sustainable future.

Caroline comments:

'I am delighted to join the Mabanaft UK team. After many years operating upstream of the refinery gate, I am excited to join the downstream community. I am eager to meet our customers and seek ways to collaborate with our industry partners and suppliers. I hope to propel Mabanaft UK towards meeting our sustainability objectives and championing renewables as the future of energy, aiming for a greener future here in the UK.'

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James Hunt has been appointed CEO at **New Era** saying: "I am pleased to announce that, after 26 years of dedicated service at New Era, I am honoured to be appointed CEO."

"It is a privilege to lead this fantastic company as we continue our journey to be the UK's leading sustainable fuel distributor."



Ged Kennedy has taken a new position as UK & Ireland Sales Director for HVO experts **Tria Energy**.



Ross Ballantyne started a new role as Business Development Manager at **Certas Energy**.

EET Retail, the retail division of EET Fuels, has appointed **Narayan Bhatra** as Chief Executive Officer. Narayan was previously Chief Retail Officer at Nayara

Energy, India's second largest oil and gas company and that country's fastest growing private fuel station network. He has over three decades of experience in the energy sector including management roles with Essar and Reliance Industries across India and Africa (more on page 5).

Richard Ellis has started a new position as Transport & Operations Manager at **WCF Chandlers**.

The Tank Storage Association (TSA) has appointed **Nunzia Florio** as Communications Director.

Nunzia brings to the role a wealth of experience in communications, media and external affairs and has led the association's communications functions since 2019 as Communications Specialist.

Peter Davidson, Executive Director of the Tank Storage Association, said: "Nunzia's expertise will be invaluable in supporting us to further develop our communications vision for the future, deliver the exciting new initiatives we are setting out for the months and years ahead, continue to build on our relationship with influential external stakeholders, and champion the value and benefits of a thriving, resilient bulk storage and energy infrastructure sector in the UK."

Nunzia commented: "I am delighted to join the TSA in this capacity and privileged to have the opportunity to champion our sector and the key contribution it makes to complex supply chains, growth, mobility and resilience. I look forward to continuing to work closely with our members to share our industry's ambitions for the future."

After over five years at the helm of **Argent Energy**, Erik Rietkerk has handed over the controls to Louise Calviu who will move from her current role as COO to assume the role of Chief Executive Officer.



Kamal Hamdan has joined the **Alpeco** team as Technical Sales Manager to assist

customers with the board range of Alpeco products and solutions.

Simon Turner joined **Greenarc** as Tank Services Manager

Otodata has announced the appointment of **Jeremy Eaton** as Chief Executive Officer. Jeremy will work closely with Andre Boulay, President, and the team, to lead Otodata into its next chapter of growth.

"We are delighted to welcome Jeremy as our new Chief Executive Officer," commented Andre Boulay. "He is a dynamic, values-driven business leader who brings with him decades of strategic and operational expertise building and leading IoT businesses."

"His experience from Honeywell and McKinsey will greatly expand the depth of Otodata's senior leadership team as we set the strategic vision for Otodata going forward."

"I am thrilled and honoured to have been appointed Otodata's CEO," Jeremy Eaton shared. "It is a business with an amazing team and track record, is a clear leader in remote tank monitoring, and continually innovates to create value for its customers."

"I look forward to working with Andre and the entire Otodata team moving forward."



IMI has appointed technical hydrogen expert **Dr Cornelia Neumann** as its new Sales and Business Development Manager. She will be responsible for growing the company's portfolio of hydrogen customers across Germany, in key sectors such as transport, power and industry.

Dr Neumann joins IMI to support its ongoing energy transition to cleaner and more sustainable energy sources. Her appointment follows the company's expansion into the green hydrogen market with development of the IMI VIVO PEM electrolyser.

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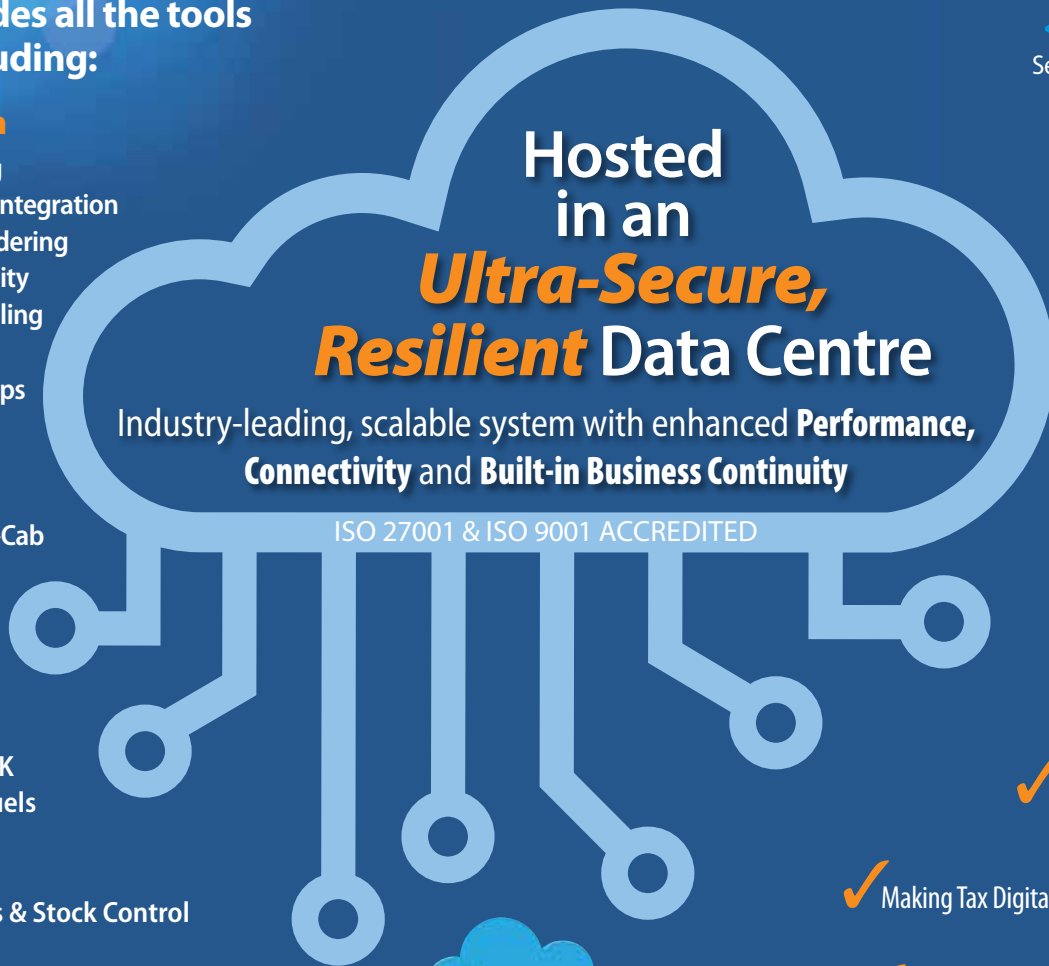
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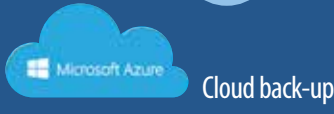
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A DAY IN THE LIFE...

Rena Tegala

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 **RENA TEGALA**, NATIONAL ACCOUNT MANAGER AT MABANAFT, TO DISCOVER HOW RENA SPENDS A TYPICAL DAY.



MY ALARM GOES OFF AT...

6am (5:30 if I am in the office)

THE FIRST THING I DO IS...

COFFEE! Then I check my phone to make sure there are no family dramas (in that order!)

I PREPARE FOR THE DAY AHEAD BY...

drinking my coffee!

I CAN'T LEAVE THE HOUSE WITHOUT...

...coffee and shower, in that order!

MY TYPICAL DAY –

A trip to the gym kicks off my morning routine around 6:30am, where



I do a 45-minute workout and another half-hour in the spa. A quick shower, hop back into the car, and I'm home by 8am, ready to dive into a new day!

First stop – my diary. Checking the commodities market is the key to my day, and if it's down, it's happy days for me! Quick catchups with Clare, Harry, and the sales and marketing team follow, where we share a few laughs and insights about the exciting day ahead.

Logging into Mabalive, our online portal, is the real game-changer. This platform is where the magic happens – customers check orders, make sales, and manage invoices in real-time. A quick reach out to customers who might need a helping hand, and we're set to for the day!

THE WORST PART OF MY JOB...

is when we have a market that is constantly not in our favour and supply disruptions!

THE BEST PART OF MY JOB...

Well, it's when the office is buzzing with excitement and sales are rolling in! It's the best motivator, and I thrive when this is the case! I might sound like an anorak, (as they say), but I really enjoy speaking with customers and colleagues alike.

And let's talk about the office – my happy place! Not only does it break up the week, but interacting with colleagues adds that extra dash of fun. Apparently, it's very quiet when I'm not around; I guess my charm and enthusiasm are truly missed!

I RELAX AFTER WORK BY...

making a nice meal for the family and catching up with the kids to find out how their day has been.

My younger one is a football fanatic and I think his commentary skills would give Lineker a run for his money. I wish he was that enthusiastic with his homework!

MY FAVOURITE MEAL IS...

I like all meals, you don't get my figure just by having one favourite meal!

ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE IS...

Chocolate bars... obviously!

THE LAST THING I DO EACH DAY IS...

My kids give me a massive hug and tuck me in. Having 15- and 17-year-olds, the tables have turned! They put the lights out and bid me goodnight.

I'M NORMALLY IN BED BY...

Lights out by 10:30pm latest! Family members would spill the beans and say 9-9:30pm! Having said that, family and friends know not to call me after 8:30pm!



Ferguson Fuels: family-run, with customers at its heart

FERGUSON FUELS HAS OPERATED AS A FAMILY-RUN FUEL BUSINESS IN NORTHERN IRELAND FOR OVER 50 YEARS. CLAUDIA WEEKS, COMMUNITY CONTENT LEAD FOR FUEL OIL NEWS SPOKE WITH **CLARK HAMILTON**, YARD MANAGER AND FAMILY MEMBER, TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS DEDICATED DISTRIBUTOR AND HOW THE BUSINESS HAS CHANGED SINCE IT WAS FOUNDED.

“Based on the Derry/Donegal border in Northern Ireland, Ferguson Fuels has been operating since 1968, providing fuel to the North-West area of Northern Ireland and beyond,” Clark begins.

“My Grandfather, Patrick (Patsy) Ferguson started the business, originally supplying coal to homes within the local Derry City area. A few years later artics were added to the fleet to undertake fridge work within the UK and Europe as well as covering general haulage of fertiliser, bulk coal, and pallet loads.

“This initial expansion continued, and grew rapidly, as the business added fuel oil distribution to its services in 1989.”

Energy diversification

In a clear indication that energy transition is nothing new, Clark explains how Ferguson Fuels adapted to a diminishing demand for coal: “A steadily reducing demand for coal was met by an increase in the need for oil from our customers to fuel their home heating,” he shares.

Initially supplying the North West, the demand for heating oil grew rapidly, and coverage was soon extended, with Co. Donegal and Inishowen added in 2000. Despite the rapid growth in fuel distribution, the company continued to provide its original services.

“We continued to provide general haulage services to companies throughout Northern Ireland for many years, before focusing solely on fuel haulage in 2000. Our iconic blue and yellow lorries are easily recognisable as they travel the roads, supplying our own depots, as well as the companies we provide fuel haulage for.”

In the family

As for Clark’s own journey: “I have been working with the business officially since 1998, however, as a young child, I spent many afternoons after school helping in the yard.

“All of my childhood memories involve the business in some way. My typical working day involves a wide variety of work – I am hands on delivering oil to customer homes and our

own depots as well as dealing with all the other elements involved in running a family business.”

A reflection of the importance of relationships in the close-knit communities served by Ferguson Fuels, the customers appreciate the dedication of this family-run company: “We have built up a loyal customer base with generations of the same families using us for their fuel needs,” Clark explains – this long-standing relationship clearly very important to him.

“Our reputation has always been high, and this has stood us in good stead throughout the years and continues to do so. Business is still growing within the Co. Donegal area, and we appreciate each, and every, order our customers place with us.”

Award success

With a need to reach new customers in hard to access locations, Ferguson Fuels took delivery of a new DAF mini tanker in 2023, and Clark shared the delight of the team in seeing their





prized fleet addition featured as a runner up in this year's Fuel Oil News Tanker of the Year awards.

"We are proud to have been awarded Runner Up in the Tanker of the Year 2023 awards. We are delighted with this, our newest truck in the fleet, from Morrow Tankers, Lisburn. Since the truck has gone to work it has fulfilled all the reasons that we purchased it for – easily navigating narrow roads with great manoeuvrability – and its new Tex metering system from Alpeco makes it very easy to set up the delivery."

In fact, Ferguson Fuels has been so happy with their award-winning tanker that they have recently placed another order with Morrow Tankers. "This time it's for an 18-tonne tanker," Clark shares, before adding: "We look forward to welcoming it later this year and entering it into the Tanker of the Year 2024 Awards!"

This is not the first time the arrival of a new truck has had a significant impact on the company as Clark explains: "The arrival of our Mercedes Benz tractor unit V8 1850 LS in 1992 – the first 500 horsepower Mercedes truck in the UK – is one of my favourite memories of our family business. I was only 10 years old at the time and I remember the excitement among the drivers for it coming into the fleet."

What of Ferguson's future?

It seems it is not just award success that the business is hoping for in the future. "Ferguson Fuels is now a third-generation family business," Clark explains, "with the fourth generation already showing an interest by helping on Saturdays and in the school holidays."

"There are, currently, six family members involved in the day-to-day running of the business. Three of these are office based and three are in the driving seat."

"We employ twelve staff, several of whom have over 30 years of dedicated service with us. From this strong base, we hope to further develop the business going forward and to

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continue to supply our loyal customer base with their fuel needs."

Fuel needs that continue to evolve, as Clark acknowledges: "The biggest change to our business has been the introduction of mains gas piped throughout Northern Ireland. We rely now, more than ever, on loyalty from our customers in the rural areas of the North West and Co. Donegal who continue to rely on us to meet their home heating needs."

Challenges

This change in domestic energy is not the only challenge being addressed by Ferguson Fuels.

"Fuel poverty has been the biggest challenge for our consumers in many years," stresses Clark. "We find our customers are placing orders for smaller volumes of fuel on a more frequent basis. The cost-of-living crisis continues to affect many homes."

It is an issue that troubles Clark, especially with the close relationship Ferguson Fuels has with its customers, but it also highlights what he values most about working in fuel distribution: "The most rewarding element of the job for me is building a connection with our customers who



trust us as their first choice to supply their fuel."

Keeping the customer at the heart clearly matters to Clark and the team, and has been entrenched in the business from the start. "My Grandfather Patsy said to me to always treat a customer how I would like to be treated myself. That has stuck with me throughout my interactions with every customer and is the best bit of advice I have ever been given."

Looking forward

As Clark looks to the future, these strong foundations feature prominently in his vision for the company as it continues to move forward.

"We wish to keep building upon the business my grandfather started over 50 years ago by continuing to provide a high quality, friendly and reliable fuel delivery service."

"I would like the fourth generation to continue on with the family business, and I hope that my own two sons will carry on my grandfather's legacy."

Fuel Oil News hopes to be seeing the business through their eyes in future years.

The after after party

THE AFTER AFTER PARTY WAS HOSTED BY FUEL OIL NEWS AND PORTLAND AT MOTEL BAR, LIVERPOOL DURING THIS YEAR'S UKIFDA EXPO. WE HOPE YOU ENJOY THESE MEMORIES OF A FANTASTIC NIGHT DURING A FANTASTIC INDUSTRY GATHERING. LOOK OUT FOR MORE MEMORIES OF THE EVENING IN OUR NEXT ISSUE AND LET US KNOW IF YOU'D LIKE A COPY OF YOUR PHOTO: MARGARET@FUELOILNEWS.CO.UK THANKS FOR MAKING IT THE MEMORABLE EVENT IT WAS. IT WAS SO GOOD TO SEE EVERYBODY, WHETHER ON THE FLOOR OF THE EXPO, IN THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS, AT THE AWARDS DINNER OR AT MOTEL FOR A 'NIGHTCAP'...



The team from FAST



Pat Murnane Tria Energy with Peter Morgan Eleven Recruitment



Carlos Rojas EET with Margaret Major Fuel Oil News



James Spencer, Portland with David Mould, Estuary Oils



Fuel Oil News with the Handsfree team



Lucy Robinson and Geoff Henderson, Phillips 66



Paul Derham from FAST working the door!



Dr Steve Wilkinson, Avioxx with Joby Clarke, Cobo



The FON support team! (l-r) Theo Smith, Myfanwy Fleming-Jones and Callum Long



Nick Smith Fuel Oil News with Alex Wolfe

Northern Ireland: progress update

On Wednesday 6th March, OFTEC's Ireland Manager, David Blevings, gave evidence to the Northern Ireland Affairs Select Committee as part of their inquiry into the barriers to the deployment of renewable energy in Northern Ireland.

Reminding them that there is no one solution to decarbonising heating in NI, David proposed that a technology neutral approach should be adopted and that the deployment of sustainable biofuels would help with additional electricity generation and grid reinforcement – solutions that other panelists said could take 'decades' to deliver.

The committee was interested in supply and availability of HVO, with David sharing analysis commissioned by OFTEC and UKIFDA that demonstrates its strength as a solution for the 526,000 homes which rely on oil heating in Northern Ireland, as well as the 1.7 million in the UK more widely.

Push the button

David urged the committee to press government to implement the RLHFO

consultation as soon as possible, highlighting that, if implemented, the RLHFO would reduce the cost of HVO to consumers at no cost to the Government. This mechanism is well understood by industry, and the supporting legislation is already written. All that is left is for the Government to push the button on the consultation and get the process moving.

As set out in Section 159 of the Energy Act 2023, the Government must undertake a consultation on implementing a Renewable Liquid Heating Fuel Obligation (RLHFO). An identical obligation has been successfully used to incentivise renewable liquid fuels in transport since 2008, and RLFs supplied under the RTFO currently contribute a third of the savings required for the UK's transport carbon budget.

In addition to the RLHFO, the Treasury must also review and rectify an anomaly in the tax treatment of renewable liquid heating fuels, which are currently, unfairly, subject to a levy in the Hydrocarbon Oil Duties Act (HODA) 1979 at c.10p per litre. Fossil fuels, such as kerosene, receive no fuel duty. Again, for the same fuels when used in transport, there is no tax



discrepancy and the two are treated the same, incentivising the use of greener fuels.

OFTEC & UKIFDA have submitted written evidence to the committee and are following up with the Chair of the committee with further information in support of David's testimony. The committee will end the inquiry with a written report, which will include recommendations for the Government.



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TRANSITION TALK

“The bulk storage and energy infrastructure sector will continue to be pivotal in mitigating risks by providing resilient infrastructure and supply chains and by holding sufficient stocks of critical products.”

PETER DAVIDSON

Peter Davidson is the Chief Executive Officer of the Tank Storage Association, representing the interests of over 70 companies operating 309 terminals in the UK or providing equipment and services to the sector. Here, Peter highlights the central role terminals play in the supply security and resilience of products critical to our daily lives, and shines a light on the proactive steps the sector is taking to open up new possibilities on the journey towards carbon neutrality.

The bulk storage and energy infrastructure sector plays a vital role in providing services that are critical to UK, European and global consumers. The sector supports an essential interface between sea, road, rail and pipeline logistics for a diverse range of products that are essential to our daily lives, including transport and heating fuels, chemicals, animal feed and foodstuffs. Terminals also provide greater resilience within the supply chain by ensuring flexibility to meet demand, particularly in periods where domestic supplies of stored products cannot be guaranteed. Around twenty-two of the terminals operated by Tank Storage Association (TSA) members in the UK are designated by the Government as Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) due to their importance in providing energy to industrial, transport and defence markets. Storage capacity also includes strategic reserves held for emergencies and supply disruptions.

Most recently, the ‘energy trilemma’ of security, affordability and sustainability has come into sharper focus owing to shifts

across energy markets – driven largely as a consequence of Russia’s war in Ukraine – and in the wider geopolitical landscape. These shifts have also resulted in greater volatility and fragmentation and in some nations taking steps aimed at minimising dependencies on ‘non-aligned blocs’. And it is against this backdrop that the TSA, as part of its active membership of the Federation of European Tank Storage Associations (FETSA), commissioned a series of studies analysing the role of European tank storage in the global energy system.

An evolving role

As part of this series of studies, The Hague Centre for Strategic Studies (HCSS) has examined changing geopolitical landscapes and the evolving role of terminals. In this study, titled “*European tank storage and changing geopolitical landscapes*”, the HCSS delves deeper into the impact of the war in Ukraine on European energy security and decarbonisation, with a specific focus on the bulk storage and energy infrastructure sector.

The report highlights the fact that, while international trade remains essential for the supply security of a range of strategic industrial and energy products, it is taking place under increasingly challenging conditions. And growing global strategic competition, accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine in early 2022, has been reflected in a wider move toward protectionism and increased state support for strategic sectors. Indeed, the report notes that China, the US, Japan and the EU have all

introduced plans to increase self-sufficiency, for example, in digital technologies, such as chips and artificial intelligence, energy – critical minerals and green tech – as well as space and defence. Most recently, the US Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) 2022, signed into law on 16 August 2022, commits, among other measures, \$370 billion to improve energy security and promote innovative technologies through a mix of tax incentives, loan guarantees and grants, while in the EU the Critical Raw Materials Act (CRMA) and Net Zero Industry Act (NZIA), widely seen as a response to IRA 2022, are aimed at accelerating the move toward a competitive green economy.

There are other examples too. Japan’s Green Transformation Promotion Act, known as ‘GX’, aims to mobilise over 150 trillion yen (well over \$1 trillion) through cooperation between the public and private sectors over the next 10 years to ensure a stable supply of energy, strengthen industrial competitiveness and promote decarbonisation efforts. Australia has also established the A\$15 billion National Reconstruction Fund to support supply chains and bolster the development of strategically important industries.

New strategy for critical imports and supply

In the UK, the government has recently published its first critical imports and supply chain strategy, which aims to build resilient supply chains and safeguard critical imports. This strategy notes that dynamic changes within the global context, the intensification of systematic competition and signs of fragmentation of the global economic and



trade order, climate change and the Covid-19 pandemic among others, have highlighted vulnerabilities of the UK's essential supply chains. It therefore focuses on the reliable access to the critical imports and goods needed now and in the future. The strategy defines critical imports as 'those goods imported into the UK which are critical to the UK security and prosperity', further noting that '[t]his primarily refers to goods which are essential for the operation of the UK's designated Critical National Infrastructure (CNI) sectors and / or to the success of the government's five growth sectors'.

CNI currently encompasses the chemicals, civil nuclear, communications, defence, emergency services, energy, finance, food, government, health, space, transport and water sectors. A new Critical Imports Council is expected to be set up shortly to bring together businesses in critical and growth sectors and government to identify risks to critical imports and develop an action plan. In addition to the Critical Imports Council, new structures within government are expected to be set up to manage and assess delivery of the strategy and a progress update, setting out the steps that have been taken to manage the delivery of the strategy and plans for further work, will be published in due course.

The Energy Act 2023, meanwhile, described by the government as the "largest piece of energy legislation in a generation", aims to deliver "a cleaner, more affordable and more secure energy system that is fit for the future." It covers a wide range of areas from oil and gas to nuclear, as well as nuclear fusion,

hydrogen, carbon capture and storage and renewable energy. In particular, Part 12 of the Act, which came into force in January 2024 and is aimed at addressing matters around energy security of supply, gives the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero new key powers, including powers to impose obligations on companies to take such actions as thought necessary to ensure the resilience of supply and continuity of certain core fuels. It also creates a duty on core fuel sector participants to report a notifiable incident, such as an incident which affects their relevant activities or assets in such a way as to create a significant risk of or cause, disruption to or failure of the continuity of core fuel supply.

The Act further sets out the thresholds specifying whom the statutory duty to report an incident applies to. The thresholds specify that the measure applies to operators or facility owners with an annual capacity over 500,000 tonnes.

In addition, Part 4 of the Act covers new technology. For example, the Act notes that the Secretary of State must carry out a public consultation, hosted by the Department for Transport, on the options for designing and implementing a Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) revenue certainty scheme in order to secure consistent fuel supply. This mechanism is set to be introduced by the end of 2026 and will run in parallel with a mandate requiring 10% of fuel supply to be SAF by 2030 rising to 75% in 2050.

The Act further states that a report to Parliament on the progress made towards the development of a sustainable aviation

fuel revenue certainty scheme will have to be laid within 18 months from 26 October 2023. Also, Part 2 of the Act covers carbon dioxide capture, storage etc. and hydrogen production, transport and storage.

What is abundantly clear is the pivotal role of resilient infrastructure and supply chains to not only mitigate price shocks and supply shortages but also, as we look ahead, to secure supplies of future energy carriers, particularly at a time of longer and more volatile supply chains that may be impacted, for example, by geopolitical developments, weather events or logistics bottlenecks. The need for sufficient available storage capacity and strategic stocks across a range of current and future energy carriers and industrial inputs is also clear.

A pivotal sector

The bulk storage and energy infrastructure sector will continue to be pivotal in mitigating risks by providing resilient infrastructure and supply chains and by holding sufficient stocks of critical products. On the journey towards carbon neutrality, tank storage infrastructure will go through significant changes and will require significant investment and planning to ensure the import, production, storage and transport of new energy carriers.

Looking ahead, energy carriers used across sectors and industries will vary and more types of fuels and carriers will likely need to be stored in strategic reserves. Adaptations as regards infrastructure for new fuels and energy carriers, and the transportation of these, will also have to form part of considerations.

The complex journey ahead will therefore undoubtedly require a framework that engenders investor confidence and partnership with the bulk storage and energy infrastructure sector to help reach the solutions that will mitigate risks amidst geopolitical shifts, but also deliver on future opportunities.

The Tank Storage Association continues to highlight the central role terminals play in the supply security and resilience of the products that are critical to our daily lives. And it will continue to work with the government and key stakeholders to help to deliver on the opportunities and innovative solutions that will support the achievement of the UK's climate neutrality targets, shining a light on the proactive steps the sector is taking to open up new possibilities.

In Conversation with United Fuels

UNITED FUELS IS A FUEL DISTRIBUTION BUSINESS BASED IN SKIPTON, NORTH YORKSHIRE. THE BUSINESS WAS ESTABLISHED IN 2018 AND IS PROUD TO BE AN INDEPENDENT FUEL DISTRIBUTOR.

CLAUDIA WEEKS, COMMUNITY CONTENT LEAD FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, SPOKE WITH JAMES FERGUSON, MANAGING DIRECTOR AT UNITED FUELS.

A day never to be forgotten

The United Fuels team are delighted to be celebrating five successful years since launching, and James reminisced about the very first day in business: “We started with a 4-wheeler, a driver (my brother-in-law), myself, and another office member (my nephew) and a whole lot of enthusiasm!

“I will never forget the first day that we opened for business. We all sat watching the phone at 8am and waited for it to ring. We had done some hefty leaflet dropping announcing our opening and so it was a great delight (and relief!) that, at 8.07am on our first day, we received our first order!

“Since then, we have grown to six tankers, a handful of office staff and still have the same enthusiasm we had when we started.”

The impact of Covid

The coronavirus pandemic hugely impacted all businesses, but it was especially challenging for

businesses in their infancy, as James explained: “Just as we thought things were starting to go well, Covid 19 arrived!

“Businesses were shut overnight, which massively affected our commercial growth plans. It was an incredibly challenging time for us all.

“It felt like the biggest milestone for us, as a business, when it was over and, thankfully, the customers we had started to engage with didn’t forget us! Since then, we have seen a steady increase in volumes year on year.”

The team is United

Claudia asked James to tell us more about the team at United Fuels: “Back in 2018, we started with three staff and one truck. We now have ten members of staff and six trucks!

“From day one we had a real ‘one family ethos’ mentality and this still maintains today. Our staff are the backbone of the company, and we all work extremely well together.



“However, I am very much an ideas man. I’m very happy, but rarely satisfied! When I come into the office and say “I have a new idea!”, I can see eyes rolling and giggles as to what it might be this week.

“I do encourage my team to challenge my ideas and to share their ideas collaboratively which always makes for an interesting debate in the office! I’m lucky to be surrounded by such a fantastic team.”

Customers get a personalised service

James explained more about the location of the business: “Skipton is local to where I live, and it is the gateway to the Yorkshire Dales, so it was an obvious choice of location to launch the business.

“I love dealing with customers on a personal level and I want to maintain that discipline. We don’t want to be an over commercialised company and I think the vast majority of customers see the value in dealing with a smaller player in the industry. As a smaller business, customers know that they are getting that personalised service. On occasion, it is the MD himself delivering the fuel!

“Customers choose us as their supplier because of the team we have at United Fuels. Our people make the difference. From our drivers to the office staff, we get to know our customers and enjoy building those relationships with them.

“We feel that we are part of the





community and we have enjoyed going to many weddings, christenings, and, sadly, even funerals, of our customers. Our customers matter hugely to us.”

The most memorable day

Fuel Oil News asked James to share his most memorable day at work: “I have to say that there have been plenty of memorable days although one day does stand out.

“I received a phone call about 4.30pm to say that an elderly couple, one of which was on end-of-life care, had been let down by their supplier and had no heating for the night.

“It was October 2022, and the temperature was below zero. After hearing their plight, I jumped in a truck immediately and drove two hours to get to them. When I arrived, I didn’t realise just how poorly one of the individuals was and he was being kept warm by blankets. I delivered the oil (at cost) and they wrote a letter to me a few days later telling me how they couldn’t thank me enough. It was incredibly touching and meant a lot to help out.”

The industry

“I must say that the most enjoyable part of

operating in fuel distribution is that no two days are ever the same. The challenges are daily, which certainly keeps me busy, and it means that every day is interesting.”

When asked about his proudest accomplishment in the business, James replied: “It has to be creating job opportunities and seeing my team grow with the business.”

And, when asked the best piece of advice he has been given in this industry, James laughed and said: “Ears! Mouth! – It’s best to use them in that order!”

The future for United Fuels

“We are excited for the future of United Fuels. We know that we are in an ever-changing industry so will have to adjust plans accordingly as time goes by, but our plan will always be to grow organically and keep our company ethos. We will never compromise our service to customers and never choose growth over that.

“Now we need to celebrate our 5th anniversary in business, and we have plans for a big staff curry night!”

Enjoy your celebrations United Fuels. We look forward to catching up with James and the team again soon.



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The Liverpool Lambanana

I HOPE THE TITLE OF THIS 'KEN'S CORNER' GRABS YOUR ATTENTION AND, LIKE ME, YOU HAD, OR HAVE, NO IDEA WHAT A LAMBANANA IS.

Developed for the 1998 Art Transpennine exhibition, the sculpture, first created by a Japanese artist, reflects Liverpool's history, as lambs and bananas were, historically, common cargoes in the city's docks. The artist aimed to present a sense of humour alongside the serious contemporary issue of genetic engineering.

He had previously visited the city and been inspired by the Queensway Tunnel's ventilation shaft, particularly the symbolism of how a vital piece of 1930s engineering had been incorporated into a broader 'sculpture' or, in this case, an aesthetically attractive building.

For me, the Lambanana, and what it symbolises, speaks very truly of what we are trying to do in our industry, and it reflects the theme of our recent EXPO of *working together in changing times well*. This does not mean we have to change everything, but it does reflect the need to take what we have and improve it for the future.

We have received an overwhelming amount of positive feedback about the EXPO – a testament to its success. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the nearly 1,400 people who attended the event, the exhibitors and all the sponsors. It is clear that, as an industry, we are a force to be reckoned with when we act together.

Inspiring

One of the most inspiring comments I received was from someone outside of our industry, who commended the diverse nature and youth of the delegates. This is a vision that UKIFDA has been championing – we strive to encourage young people, whether it is through employing students from Liverpool University to help with the EXPO registration, or Manchester students playing so superbly at the President's reception, or recognising the achievements of the industry's young people with a dedicated UKIFDA award. It is heartening to see that our efforts are making

a difference, and that past recipients of the award were present at the event.

By the end of the week, the UKIFDA team didn't feel very young! I want to thank them once again for their dedication. Working 18-hour days under constant pressure to bring together such an event is as close to a miracle as we are going to get with just five people.

We may not get everything right, but I want to express my sincere gratitude to all those within the industry who took the time to say, 'thank you', whether it was in person or privately through email. Also, to those who have provided useful thoughts and suggestions as to how to make the event even better, your input is invaluable to us, and we truly appreciate it.

Like the Lambanana, I hope that UKIFDA, and the recent EXPO, can act as a symbol of combining the best bits of the past with the future.

I wonder what Leeds next year will bring – I look forward to meeting you all again then.



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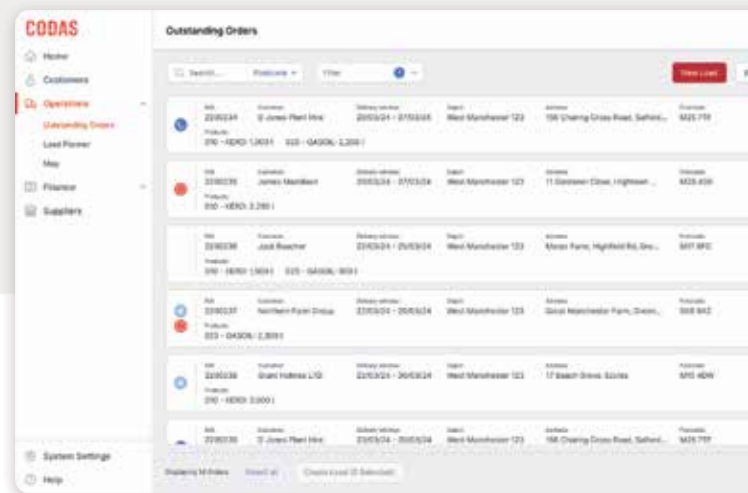
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Virgin Atlantic Flight100: a flying start for future fuels

VIRGIN ATLANTIC, THE BRITISH AIRLINE, IS PROUD TO BE TAKING STEPS TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR AVIATION.

ON 28TH NOVEMBER 2023, FLIGHT100 TOOK TO THE SKIES. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME 100% SAF HAS BEEN USED TO FUEL BOTH ENGINES OF A COMMERCIAL AIRLINE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC AS FLIGHT100 MADE ITS JOURNEY FROM LONDON HEATHROW TO NEW YORK JFK. THE PURPOSE OF THE FLIGHT WAS TO DEMONSTRATE THE POTENTIAL OF SAF AS A 100% DROP-IN REPLACEMENT FOR FOSSIL FUELS, TO PROVIDE IMPORTANT RESEARCH ON THE END-TO-END CARBON LIFE CYCLE OF SAF, AND TO ACT AS A CALL FOR THE SUPPORT OF GREATER PRODUCTION AND USE OF SAF AT SCALE.

CLAUDIA WEEKS, COMMUNITY CONTENT LEAD FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, SPOKE WITH IAN MCDONALD, HEAD OF FLEET TECHNICAL MANAGEMENT AT VIRGIN ATLANTIC, ABOUT FLIGHT100 AND THE FUTURE FOR SUSTAINABLE AVIATION.



What is your role at Virgin Atlantic and what is a typical day like for you?

I am the Head of Fleet Technical for Virgin, I am fortunate to lead a team of 50 fantastic engineers that manage the safety and reliability of our fleet. My team and I collaborate closely with the key suppliers like Boeing, Airbus and Rolls-Royce, making sure that our fleet have all the latest parts and modifications required.

My team is quite small, but the remit is broad. We cover everything from propulsion to avionic systems and have a reliability team that looks for ways in which we can continually improve fleet reliability. Getting customers away on time is what matters and, the higher the reliability, the more we can make sure everyone is off on time!

Day to day, we have lots of operational calls, which happen first thing in the morning, to see how the fleet was over night – it's a global, 24/7 operation. I also have meetings throughout the day – these might be with staff committees, or meetings with my managers about their teams – it's a good mix of working operationally and with people.

Congratulations on Flight100 – the first 100% SAF flight by a commercial airline across the Atlantic! What has the response been like to the flight?

We entered a competition with the Department for Transport (DfT) to complete a 100% SAF flight across the Atlantic, and we were delighted to win.

Our objective was simple when we entered the competition; we wanted to raise the profile of SAF and to prove that it was technically possible to run a flight powered by 100% SAF.

We saw an incredible response in the press both in the UK and globally. There was a helicopter chartered by Sky to follow the take-off of Flight100, and to see us live on Sky News while we were on the plane was fantastic. The flight was also covered hugely in the news in the USA.

Sir Richard Branson was on board, as well as Mark Harper, the Government Transport Secretary and senior representatives from the consortium that really demonstrated the industry coming together in support of the flight. To have such high-profile individuals

conducting interviews on board really helped further the conversation around SAF and the future of aviation.

Please tell us about the day of the flight.

It was an honour to be a passenger on the first 100% SAF flight.

We operated the flight under a permit to fly which was through the Civil Aviation Authority as the fuel isn't yet an approved drop-in fuel (although it is in the process of being approved).

Under a permit flight, you are not permitted to have any revenue customers on board, as we weren't operating under our own certificate, but we felt it was important for us to have observers of the first 100% SAF flight. It would be counter-intuitive to have no one on board to witness the success of SAF; we wanted people to communicate the success of the project.

We had around 100 people on board for the flight. On the day, there was such a buzz and atmosphere as we had spent 12 months preparing for the flight, testing, validating and even running a dress rehearsal flight! We were very calm and confident – by that point, it was a celebration.

We had three pilots on board; Captain John Walker had been selected from the beginning as he has always been passionate about sustainability and championing the viability of SAF.

We had a mix of government officials, press and some of the technical collaborators on board. It was a wonderful chance to meet some of the collaborators in person. We had done a lot of the work remotely and so it was great to finally talk in person and on such a momentous occasion.

Everyone was free to mingle on board (when it was safe to do so!) and interviews and conversations were conducted around the airplane. The flight went incredibly quickly.

Holly Branson was also on board supporting our PR and Communications team. She was a roving reporter and conducted lots of interviews and promoted the flight online.

Richard Branson was speaking as we landed, and there was a huge round of applause as you would expect!

Flight100 was made possible through collaboration between a Virgin Atlantic-led consortium, including Boeing, Rolls-Royce, Imperial College London, University of Sheffield, ICF and Rocky



Mountain Institute, in partnership with the Department for Transport. Will you continue to work with these partners to focus on future sustainable flights?

We are doing an industry 'Share Out' with our collaborators which involves us pulling together lots of reports from different institutes and our own technical team about the complete carbon footprint for the flight.

We want to demonstrate, and prove, the 70% reduction in emissions. We are hoping to share this information and make it public by May.

We are also working with our key partners – Air France and KLM. We want to share our knowledge, learning and expertise with other airlines that are interested.

We know that, technically, it is possible to fly using SAF and, if the industry can produce enough, then we will fly with it! We want to fly 100% as soon as we can but it all hinges on production.

Mark Harper was clear that the Government are looking to invest in production and want to deliver six UK-based SAF plants. SAF needs to be a homegrown product since importing SAF won't make it a sustainable option. It is a hard challenge, but we are happy to share our learning and want to see progress across the industry.

Flight100 was supported by the UK Government. Is Virgin Atlantic involved with influencing legislative changes or lobbying government regarding future laws and requirements for aviation fuel?

Working in collaboration with the Government on this project means that we have worked closely with them throughout. The DfT has

been with us all the way – from winning the competition, through funding the process and offering advice and support. Mark Harper was integral to promoting the flight and championing the use of SAF within the industry.

We work with the ASTM through our suppliers who review all the fuel standards. They have given guidance around appropriate fuel usage and specification. Rolls Royce and Boeing have played a huge part in all of this.

What are your thoughts on feedstocks for SAF/biofuel? How can businesses ensure that the provenance is truthful and not creating other environmental issues such as deforestation, use of food crops, changing land use, etc.?

Sustainable Aviation issued a report in 2023, demonstrating that there is sufficient feedstock to produce enough SAF for the Government target of 10% in 2030 as well as the expected UK aviation demand for SAF in line with a net zero 2050 trajectory, without competing with crop production or impacting the natural environment.

Biofuels are the primary opportunity in the short term and, in the longer term, will represent over 30% SAF volume.

The primary feedstocks for UK SAF projects are municipal waste and waste biomass, which use no farmland.

Is SAF the future for aviation? Are there any viable alternatives?

SAF alone will not decarbonise aviation, but as zero emissions electric and hydrogen aircraft technologies are decades away for long-haul aviation, SAF is an immediate mid-term solution.

What is your opinion on ‘greenwashing’? (Environmental campaigners have accused airlines of greenwashing and dispute the benefits of SAF and say that only a reduction in the number of flights will significantly reduce the harm caused by aviation.)

Greenwashing can be an issue with businesses. The focus on sustainability is huge and businesses are under enormous pressure to prove their green credentials.

I don't believe the solution to making aviation green is to ban flying. The social and economic impact of Covid was devastating and demonstrated that people need to fly. People rely on us to be connected, whether that's with family or in business so we need to make flying as sustainable as possible.

Not flying is not an option.

At Virgin Atlantic we are proud of the steps we are taking towards sustainability. We are agile as an airline due to the size of our business. The average age of our fleet is around six years old which is important as the newer aircraft are much more fuel efficient.

We are very proud as an airline to have new aircraft, to have supported Flight100 and be working towards 2050 and our commitment to milestones along the way.

What will make the difference to mass adoption of biofuels?

Currently, the cost of SAF is significant and that is a barrier to mass adoption for air travel. If we can increase production, then the cost will reduce – it's a simple issue of supply and demand. Virgin has always said that, if you can produce it, then we will fly it!

There are enough companies, especially in aviation, that want to spend time, focus and money on SAF. The appetite is there. We need the availability and I do believe this will change over the next few years. It will be interesting to track the plans for the six new SAF facilities – they should be of the scale required so we need to see how long it will take for them to start producing in high volumes.

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

We know that the aviation sector is one of the hardest to abate when it comes to sustainability and the emissions reduction required. As we have spoken about, it is our



challenge as an industry to keep the world connected but finding the most sustainable ways to do it.

In terms of positives, we have proven with Flight 100 that there is a sustainable solution in the use of SAF that doesn't require any modifications to existing Engine and Airframe technologies.

As an industry the challenge now is to build on the collaborations that have already started and focus on the right level of investment to achieve the production of SAF on the required scale and at pace.

Virgin Atlantic prides itself on pioneering sustainable solutions and is committed to net zero by 2050. Apart from SAF, what else is Virgin Atlantic investing in to reduce carbon emissions?

There are two levers for in-sector carbon reductions in the short to medium term: fleet we operate and fuel we burn.

We already operate one of the youngest and most efficient fleets across the Atlantic and, in the last decade, we have reduced our absolute carbon emissions by 35% – driven by our fleet transformation.

SAF is the most readily available decarbonisation lever to aviation today and represents real emissions reductions of the life cycle of fuels compared to fossil jet fuel. While Flight100 focussed on SAF, we also trialled efficiency measures to reduce emissions, investing in UK biochar removals to address residual emissions and collating data on the impact SAF can have on contrail formation.

Other technologies such as zero emissions

electric and hydrogen aircraft are not feasible technologies for long-haul aviation in the time frame to 2050. We are, rightly, focused on the levers we have to reduce in-sector emissions – the fleet we fly and the fuel we burn.

What are the future ambitions for Virgin Atlantic?

We know that we aren't the biggest airline, but we pride ourselves on being one of the best at customer service. We offer a premium, leisure-based, customer offering. People will fly Virgin because they love the customer experience – it's not just flying from A-B, we want to offer an experience in travel.

Other airlines are struggling to offer the same levels of customer service, so we want to continue building our customer service reputation. We are on a journey to be the most-loved travel company.

We now want to link sustainability with that customer travel experience. People have high expectations from businesses, they want to know that they are investing in sustainable practises and that they care about the future of the planet. Our customers know that we care.

What do you enjoy most about operating in aviation?

I have to say the variety in aviation – no two days are ever the same. As we are a relatively small and agile airline it means that every day is busy and varied. It's exciting!

On a personal level, I've always been passionate about aviation. Planes and travel have always fascinated me and it's a pleasure working for Virgin Atlantic.



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PORTLAND MARKET REPORT

APRIL
IN VIEW

DISRUPTING THE SECTOR: THE NEW NIGERIAN SUPER-REFINERY

Mention Nigeria to most casual observers and they will probably mention the oil industry at some point. This is understandable, on the basis that Nigeria is not only the largest oil producer in Africa (15th in the world), but it also has the 10th largest oil reserves on the planet. At the same time however, those same casual observers would be surprised – if not staggered – to know that, until the Spring of 2024, this African mega-economy of 230m people had no properly functioning facilities to convert their oil to usable products. In short, until this year, Nigeria did not have one single fully operating oil refinery!

“IMPORTING 100% OF THE COUNTRY’S REFINED FUEL DEMAND HAS BECOME A RUINOUSLY EXPENSIVE EXERCISE.”

Having no refining capacity puts a country at a significant economic disadvantage. Being able to produce crude oil is meaningless to a consumer, if that crude oil cannot be converted to something useful locally (i.e., petrol, diesel, lubricants, plastics). It also presents an interesting paradox for a country that it has to export its entire crude production (2m barrels per day) only to then receive a quarter of that back (500,000 bpd) as refined products that have been produced elsewhere in the world. Over the last 20 years, this particular paradox has become increasingly problematic, as Nigerian oil production has fallen by 50% since 2005, reducing \$ receipts and eating big holes in the country’s \$ reserves. Furthermore, whilst crude oil revenues have largely gone to exploration companies and Nigeria’s obscene army of corrupt middlemen and hangers-on, the state owned Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation has been wholly responsible for importing refined products at a cost of \$2.4bn per month. Add into the mix endless government subsidies

for transport fuels (in 2023, the average price of petrol in Nigeria was 18ppl) and it is little wonder that importing 100% of the country’s refined fuel demand has become a ruinously expensive exercise.

Not surprising then that the oil world, and a fixated Nigerian public, are watching the opening of the new Dangote Refinery with enormous interest. This facility has been some time in the making, with plans going back to 2013 for a state-of-the-art refinery to be built on marshland 30km east of Lagos. Construction began in 2017 but by the time Covid hit, the project was mired in construction disputes, logistical hurdles and financing delays. Nonetheless, 10 years after plans were first put down, Dangote refinery was inaugurated in May 2023 with trial batches of crude going through the different processing units. Diesel and jet fuel production was first off the blocks, in January 2024, and gasoline supply is confidently predicted to begin in May of this year.

It is a source of significant local pride that the owner of the refinery is not the government, nor an international oil company, but a local, Nigerian conglomerate – the eponymous Dangote Group, which is headed up by Africa’s richest man (and avid Arsenal fan) Aliko Dangote. He has given his name to an impressive piece of kit, with production scheduled to come in at 650,000 barrels per day, making it the 7th largest refinery in the world. It will be bigger than any unit in Europe and approximately 3 times the size of the UK’s largest refinery (Exxon Fawley). Equally important is Dangote’s technical sophistication, with a Nelson (Refinery) complexity classification of 10.5 (out of 14). This puts it above most US and European refineries (US average = 9.5 / EU average = 6.5) and means that process configurations can easily be switched to meet ongoing developments in local (Nigerian) demand. Finally, because the refinery’s production levels will meet 100% of local demand (with a 150,000 bpd surplus to trade on overseas markets), Nigeria can now look to rebuild its \$ reserves, whilst simultaneously reducing foreign exchange costs. The Central Bank of

Nigeria estimates foreign exchange savings of between \$25bn - \$30bn annually, as a result of producing and selling refined products in Nigerian Naira.

“IT WILL BE BIGGER THAN ANY UNIT IN EUROPE.”

All of this should make happy reading for Nigerian consumers of fuel, but it does present a slightly less positive outlook for the European refining industry. Our refineries are basically old-school gasoline machines that reflect the demand economics of the 1960s and 70s, which is when they were built, and when gasoline was the main grade of fuel. The turn of this century saw the displacement of petrol by diesel in the automotive sector and this meant that European refineries were producing way more petrol than they could feasibly sell into domestic markets. As a result, they became heavily reliant on Nigeria’s 35m litre per day petrol demand, which acted as a “sink” for European exports. The loss of this sales channel will undoubtedly hit a number of European refineries hard and worse still, with expected gasoline production approximately twice that of daily Nigerian demand, Dangote looks likely to be able to export its products to the rest of the African continent and beyond.

Basically, not only will Nigeria not need European gasoline, the new Nigerian super-refinery may soon be stealing market share within Europe itself.

For more pricing information, see page 34

Mental health initiatives: a Mabanraft priority

MABANAFT PLACES GREAT IMPORTANCE ON PRIORITISING THE MENTAL HEALTH OF EMPLOYEES, BELIEVING THAT TAKING CARE OF ITS PEOPLE IS CRUCIAL TO THEIR OVERALL WELL-BEING AND JOB SATISFACTION. IN RECENT TIMES, THERE HAS BEEN A GROWING EMPHASIS ON MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS, AND MABANAFT HAS WHOLEHEARTEDLY EMBRACED THIS MOVEMENT. A COMPANY THAT RECOGNISES THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PROMOTING MENTAL WELL-BEING, MABANAFT HAS TAKEN SIGNIFICANT STEPS TO IMPROVE ITS MENTAL HEALTH FACILITIES AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS.

In this continuation of our series on the topic of mental well-being, Joanne Swift, who leads the mental health team at Mabanraft UK, shares more about the steps that have been taken.

“Our aim was to create a positive and fulfilling work environment where our employees feel appreciated and content, and to achieve this aim, in 2020, we formed a Global Mental Health and Wellbeing Team. All of our practitioners completed their Mental Health First Aid training through the accredited Mental Health First Aid England training board, and we now have an established and robust mental health initiative

across the entire Mabanraft group, with several dedicated practitioners globally ensuring the well-being of our teams”.

Jo is joined by several dedicated practitioners comprised of volunteers from both the UK and Hamburg offices. They diligently support their colleagues and are all committed to creating a happy and motivated team.

Jo continues: “At Mabanraft UK, we focus on the mental well-being of our staff by offering a range of comprehensive support systems. Our initiatives go beyond just acknowledging the importance of mental health - we actively work to support and empower our team members in their journey towards well-being. Whether it’s a listening ear or a helping hand, our team is always available to provide support and encouragement. One of the ways we achieve this is through regular stress-relief days and events designed to promote enjoyment and happiness at work. Whether it’s celebrating National Fun Day or organising other fun activities, we aim to create a positive and uplifting atmosphere for our employees.”

In addition to these events, Mabanraft conducts online and in-person workshops focused on mental health awareness and well-being. These workshops provide employees with valuable tools, resources, and coping strategies to manage stress and improve their mental health. These online resources are invaluable as they ensure that employees can access support within and outside the workplace. Their significance has become even more pronounced since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, as they played a crucial role in assisting individuals during challenging times.



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Meet our mental health practitioners



JOANNE SWIFT IS EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE HEAD OF THE UK AND OFFICE MANAGEMENT TEAM AND LEADS THE MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONERS IN THE UK.

Why did you become a mental health first aider?

"I was so excited to join the team at Mabanaft as a first-aid practitioner as it's something I've always been passionate about! I'm a very outgoing and friendly person who has always loved connecting with others and helping them out, whether they're friends or colleagues. That's why I jumped at the chance to get trained in mental health support – understand that everyone can use a helping hand at times, and I knew that participating in this would give me the chance to help support people. It's a role that really resonates with me, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to make a difference in other people's lives."

What is your top tip for good mental health?

"Prioritise self-care! This involves setting boundaries, practising mindfulness, and engaging in activities that genuinely bring you joy. Taking the time to focus on your individual well-being can make a world of difference in how you feel. I also think it's important to remind people that they're not alone and that there is always support available to them, just having someone to talk to can really help someone's wellbeing. If I feel a colleague is struggling, I will take the time to have a coffee and wait for them to share if they need to; taking the time for a ten-minute chat can make all the difference to someone's struggle!

"Don't hesitate to seek help when you need it, whether it's from family, friends, or professionals."



MATTHEW ZAHRA, WHO WORKS IN PRODUCT CONTROL AND BUSINESS PLANNING, IS ANOTHER ESSENTIAL MEMBER OF THE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM AT MABANAFT. ALONGSIDE JO, HE PLAYS A CRUCIAL ROLE IN PROVIDING COLLEAGUES WITH THE SUPPORT THEY NEED.

Why did you become a mental health first aider?

"I wanted to improve my understanding of mental health to support myself and those around me better. This included learning about different mental illnesses, recognising warning signs, and gaining insight into effective ways to communicate and offer support.

"It was important for me to become involved as many men suffer in silence, and it is not always easy for them to talk about their struggles."

What is your top tip for good mental health?

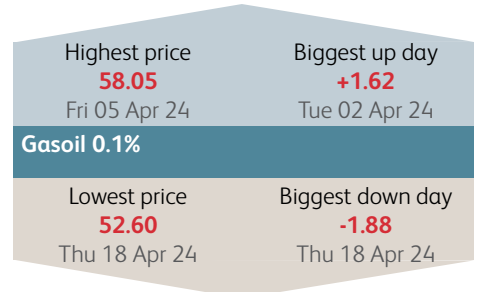
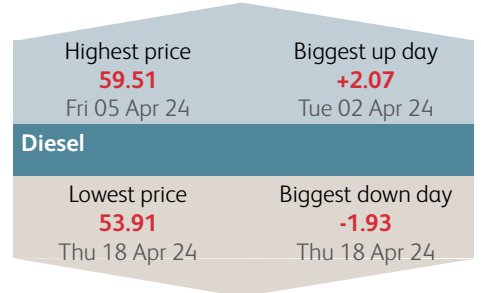
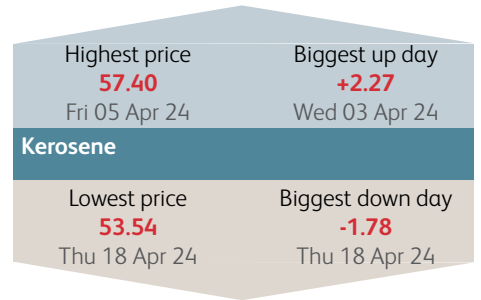
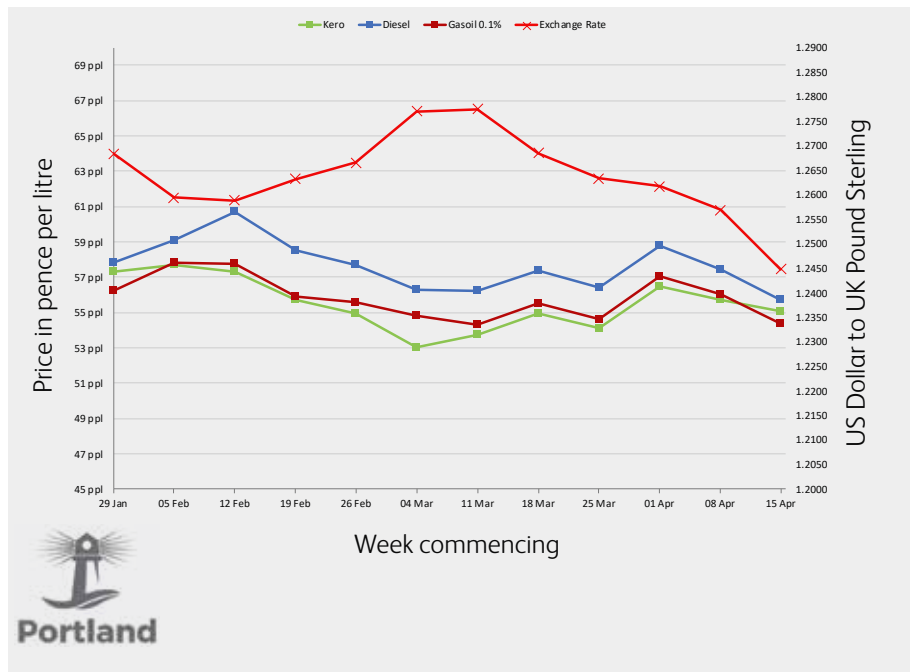
"Mental health is something everyone has, and we will all experience poor mental health at some point in our lives, some more than others. Recognising poor mental health and the factors causing it are the first key steps to improving mental health.

"Finding support through friends, family or professionals is also very important. Good mental health takes work, and you are not alone in the struggle. Talking with a trusted person about your state of mind can help you move from poor health to good health."

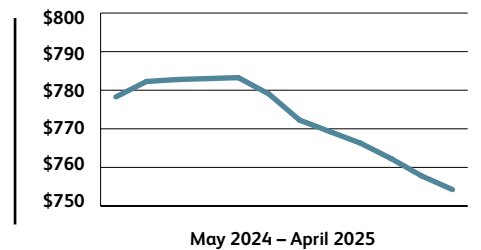
Wholesale Price Movements: 19th March 2024 – 18th April 2025

	Kerosene	Diesel	Gasoil 0.1%
Average price	55.24	57.11	55.48
Average daily change	0.84	0.89	0.86
Current duty	0.00	52.95	10.18
Total	55.24	110.06	65.66

All prices in pence per litre



Gasoil forward price
in US\$ per tonne



The Fuel Oil News Price Totem

	Trade average buying prices			Average selling prices		
	Kerosene	Gasoil	ULSD	Kerosene	Gasoil	ULSD
Scotland	60.07	71.55	116.23	68.48	76.45	120.78
North East	59.02	70.18	115.31	70.76	74.76	118.66
North West	60.59	72.78	117.70	68.66	77.03	120.69
Midlands	59.09	70.71	115.77	67.02	75.21	119.40
South East	59.19	70.67	115.75	75.54	78.52	118.90
South West	59.54	70.51	115.59	70.08	75.01	118.47
Northern Ireland	59.65	71.88	n/a	67.43	77.38	n/a
Republic of Ireland	73.41	77.31	117.17	80.24	81.88	120.88
Portland	57.40	68.23	112.46			

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 €.

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WELCOME TO MAY'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 **PAT MURNANE**, GROUP OPERATIONS MANAGER AT TRIA ENERGY.

"WHEN YOU HAVE BAD NEWS TO DELIVER, DON'T TAKE THE STAIRS, TAKE THE ELEVATOR"

PAT MURNANE

Give your career history in 25 words or fewer.

I worked in construction and hospitality for years, and then sales brought me to energy, with Electric Ireland, and subsequently, to the renewable oil industry.

Describe yourself in 3 words.

Driven. Fair. Progressive.

What were your childhood / early ambitions?

My dad was a truck driver when I was young, and I always loved machinery/driving!

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

A postman, driving around the hills and valleys of West Cork!

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

When you're going through hell, keep going! And when you have bad news to deliver to superiors, don't take the stairs, take the elevator. The faster you get to the source of the problem, the faster you can fix it!

Share your top tips for business success.

Do not give up. Ever. Just keep pushing forward, admit when you are wrong, and find solutions.

What's your most recent business achievement of note?

Our upcoming expansion of Tria Energy into the UK is a testament to how our HVO journey in Ireland has gone over the last 3 years. We have pioneered an alternative, and made

ourselves a part of our customers' operation by doing more than just "selling a litre of fuel".

Tell us your greatest fear.

Fear itself.

Which is most important – ambition or talent?

Ambition. Give me someone who is eager and committed and I will do everything in my power to help them achieve their goals. I've seen loads of people run out of talent, but someone with ambition will always drive on!

What's the best thing about your job?

Delivering a service; I spent a long time in hospitality and it's great to still get that buzz of delivering for the customer. And the team! We have some fantastic minds in our company at all levels.

Which is the quality that you most admire?

Honesty. No matter how bad a situation may be, the easiest way out is to tell the truth.

What are you most likely to say?

"I'll do that". I'm a serial offender when it comes to taking too much on.

What are you least likely to say?

"I told you so". It achieves absolutely nothing. At that point, a problem has occurred and what's important is finding a solution.

Describe your perfect day.

A specific group of people (they know who they are!), in the corner of The Blue Loo (Glengarriff, West Cork) drinking Guinness until the kegs go dry!

Do you have a favourite sports team?

Munster Rugby, and Cork GAA

What's the biggest challenge of our time?

Offering a viable alternative to fossils. Business must go on!

Cheese or chocolate?

Cheese. I'm from West Cork, the home of Irish Farmhouse Cheese and live next door to the wonderful Manning's Emporium!!

Share your greatest personal achievement.

Going back to UCC in 2021 and getting a degree in management

What's your pet hate or biggest irritant?

Poor timekeeping, and bad grammar!

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

Father Ted Trivia. That would be an ecumenical matter.

If you were elected to

government what would be the first law you'd press for?

No tax on renewable fuels. It's time to back viable alternatives!

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

That I've achieved an awful lot. I'm married, bought a house in our home area and no signs of stopping yet!

What is number 1 on your bucket list?

At the moment, it's Nashville in the USA. Spent a week in phoenix last year around the time of the Superbowl with ten great friends and saw what the real red-blooded Americans get up to! Rodeos and country music are now a part of my life!

What 3 things would you take to a desert island?

A knife, cable ties and duct tape. Not much you can't do with those 3!

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

I trained in college as a primary school teacher.

Who would you most like to ask these questions of?

Roy Keane. I'm biased as a Cork man, but I love to hear him talk!



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