

# Fuel Oil News

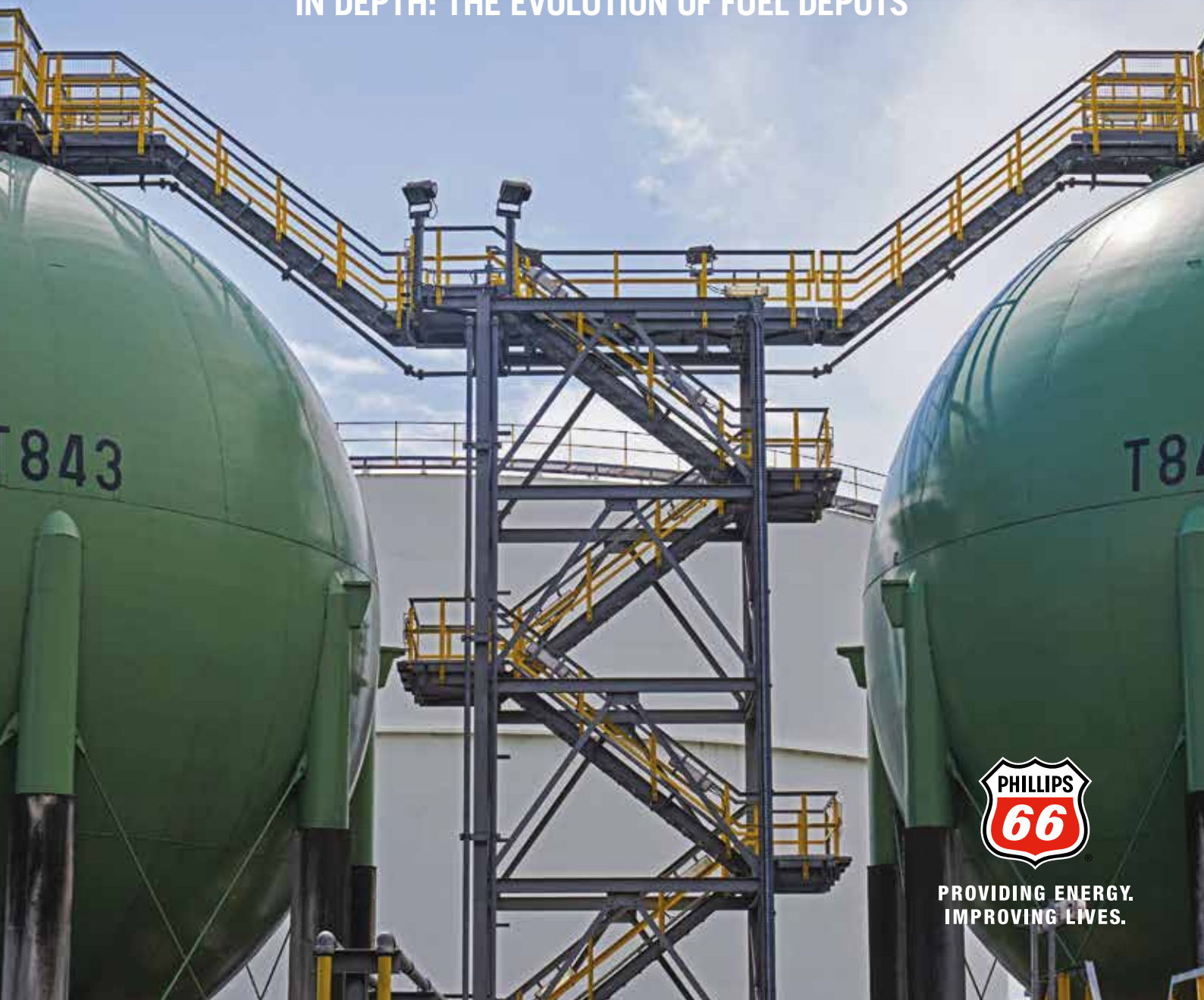
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April 2026

## YOUR GUIDE TO UKIFDA EXPO & CONFERENCE 2026

CUSTOMER CONVERSATIONS: FARMERS IN FOCUS

IN DEPTH: THE EVOLUTION OF FUEL DEPOTS



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## Actions speak louder than words

I'm not sure it has ever been more challenging to welcome you to an issue with words that truly reflect both the current industry and the wider picture – while also ensuring they will still hold true by the time this magazine lands in your hands.

Setting aside the obvious impacts of recent global events, I am acutely aware of how difficult these past weeks have been for many within our distributor community, as well as for the customers you serve. That challenge has, in some cases, been compounded by ill-considered commentary – shared without scrutiny or context.

Yet while words can do far more harm than may be assumed from the 'sticks and stones' rhyme of our childhood, they are ultimately outweighed by something far more powerful: action.

Faced with the unenviable challenge of maintaining supply in one of the most volatile markets ever experienced, the fuel distribution industry has done what it always does – got on with the job. While others debated and amplified uncertainty, distributors focused on what mattered: assessing stock, managing supply, balancing obligations, and supporting understandably concerned customers.

Absorbing volatility not of your making, you have continued – day in, day out – to keep customers supplied. In many cases, as you have shared with me, that has come at significant cost to your teams and your businesses. It is not always visible. It is not always recognised. But it matters – and it deserves to be acknowledged.

Looking ahead to the annual UKIFDA event, I was considering the themes of previous gatherings. As it is again this year, action is implicit in each. There will, of course, be plenty of words exchanged in Liverpool – of knowledge, challenge, encouragement and collaboration. But what the event truly represents and celebrates is something more enduring: the collective action of an industry committed to delivering the energy needs of today, while actively shaping what comes next.

I'll be there with the Fuel Oil News team – Claudia, Rhian, Adrian and Nick – as well as flapjack and a warm welcome. Do come and see us, and tell us how we can continue to support you, as you continue to support your customers.



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# Fuel Oil News

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

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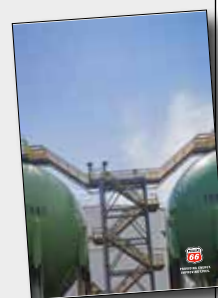
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A fan of fast cars, magic and integrity.

## On the cover

An artistic shot of the tanks holding FAME at the Phillips 66 Humber Refinery. The energy supplier is, once again, headline sponsor for the UKIFDA EXPO & Conference 2026 – a complete guide to this year's event is on pages 25 to 34.



## In this issue

Our depot deep dive brings firsthand experience of depot evolution to pages 10 & 11 and insight into what makes a good depot to pages 14 & 15. We hear from your agricultural customers on pages 17 to 19 and unpack this year's essential industry gathering on pages 25 to 34.



## Greenarc secures significant market win

**Greenarc Fuel Cards has been appointed as a partner of Shell – a notable development for the growing fuel card provider.**

New partnership appointments of this kind remain relatively rare for Shell, making the agreement a significant milestone for Greenarc as it continues to expand its offer to UK fleets.

The deal will see Greenarc combine its customer-focused fuel card platform with Shell's extensive UK forecourt network, giving customers access to a wider range of sites, fuels and services through a single card.

For fleet operators, the partnership strengthens network coverage and adds access to premium fuels, EV charging and additional on-site amenities, alongside simplified administration.

Matthew Crockett, CEO of Greenarc, said the agreement represents both recognition and opportunity for the business.

"Fantastic to be appointed a partner for Shell. We have a very proud team that are pleased to be able to work in partnership with such a prestigious brand," he commented.

"It enables customers to access premium products, clean and welcoming sites, and offerings from EV to premium fuels, all on one card – making administration and management much simpler for fleets."

He added that the partnership enhances Greenarc's ability to deliver a broader, more flexible proposition to its customers.

"At Greenarc we are not just a fuel card provider, but a company that puts the customer at the forefront of everything we do. The products from Shell only enhance what we can provide."

## WCF: Named in UK's top 100 Best Workplaces

**WCF has been named in the top 100 for large businesses in the Best Workplaces list following independent analysis of anonymous employee feedback. The achievement places the firm among the UK's leading employers of its size.**



Phil Murray, Chief Executive Officer at WCF, said the achievement was rooted in the firm's employee-owned model, which gives staff a direct stake in the business and a genuine voice in how it develops.

"This recognition matters because it comes directly from our people," he said. "It tells us that the way we listen, involve and invest in our teams is making a real difference to their working lives."

"Being part employee-owned shapes how we think and act every day. People don't just work at WCF – they help shape its future and that creates a stronger sense of pride, responsibility and shared purpose across the business."

Employees taking part in the Great Place to Work survey are asked to share their experiences of workplace culture including trust, leadership effectiveness and employee experience. The findings are evaluated to understand how consistently employees across different roles, locations and seniority levels experience the workplace.

Phil added: "When people feel informed, supported and encouraged to grow, they bring more energy and ideas into the business. That long-term engagement is what drives innovation and helps us continue to evolve across such a broad range of sectors."

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## Further expansion for WCF

**WCF has acquired County Durham-based Easy Fuels (NE) Ltd.**

Established in 2018, by Leisa and Glenn Humphries, Easy Fuels serves domestic, commercial and agricultural customers from its base near Hartlepool.

Speaking after the announcement, Phil Murray, CEO of WCF, said: "This strengthens our fuel distribution presence in the North East and supports our ambition to continue to broaden our footprint in the areas we operate."

"As an employee-owned business, it's important that the businesses we welcome into the group share our guiding principles. Easy Fuels' customer focus, entrepreneurial drive and reputation for service align closely with our own, and we're delighted to welcome Glenn, Leisa and team to the WCF family."

### Business as usual

As part of the deal, Easy Fuels will join forces with WCF Chandlers, and all Easy Fuels employees will transfer from their current base to WCF's nearby Peterlee site to work alongside the existing team. Founders Leisa and Glenn Humphries will continue in their existing roles.

Glenn said: "It was vital to us that Easy Fuels retained its identity and values as part of the



Leisa and Glenn Humphries from Easy Fuels, with Phil Murray and Paul Green from WCF

acquisition. Our staff are incredibly important to both myself and Leisa, and we remain fully committed to supporting the same dedicated team, delivering the same high standards of service to our customers."

Leisa said: "Joining WCF allows us to maintain that strong local focus while benefiting from additional operational support. This will help us invest further in our staff and support the long term growth of Easy Fuels, while staying true to the values the business has been built on from the very beginning."

Easy Fuels' customers have been assured that it will be "business as usual".

The acquisition follows WCF's recent move to merge its North West businesses under the Allan Stobart brand.

## TRA signals no countervailing for US HVO biodiesel

**The Trade Remedies Authority (TRA) indicated its recommendation following completion of its investigation into US hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) biodiesel.**

The TRA initiated investigations in March 2025, due to concerns over the impacts on UK producers of subsidised imports.

As of March 2026, the TRA proposed a final negative determination, meaning no countervailing measure will be imposed.

### Domestic production

The UK has no dedicated HVO production, but established producers of FAME-based biodiesel originally flagged concerns over the impact of subsidised US imports on uptake of domestic product.

The decision to initiate the TRA countervailing investigation followed the application from representatives of the U.K. biodiesel industry citing concerns that the market had changed since a previous

review in 2022, resulting in imported HVO competing directly with U.K.-produced biodiesel.

A parallel investigation into dumped imports of HVO from the U.S. was terminated by the TRA in November 2025, due to a lack of significant evidence of dumping.

The TRA published its interim findings in its Statement of Essential Facts in November 2025, finding that these UK producers were suffering injury due to subsidised US HVO.

### No benefit to US producers

However, after considering comments on these findings, the TRA found that the Blenders Tax Credit effectively ended before 15 October 2025, and no longer offers subsidisation to the US exporters.

Based on the evidence, the TRA has determined that it is unable to recommend a countervailing measure and intends to submit a final negative determination to the Secretary of State for Business and Trade.

## Latest Oil 4 Wales tanker to showcase innovation at UKIFDA EXPO

**A new Oil 4 Wales tanker featuring its latest OptiMate technology will be showcased by MechTronic at this year's UKIFDA Expo 2026, offering visitors a first-hand look at how delivery automation continues to evolve.**

The vehicle, on display at Stand 24, highlights the latest iteration of the OptiMate system, designed to improve delivery accuracy, reduce contamination risk and enhance operational efficiency.

Fuel Oil News reported the milestone 10th anniversary of MechTronic's OptiMate in March issue, and the Expo appearance provides an opportunity to see how the technology translates into real-world design – and how it continues to develop.

### Long-standing partnership

Oil 4 Wales was the first distributor to adopt OptiMate a decade ago, and having their vehicle on display underlines the long-standing partnership. Over that period, the system has moved from an early-stage innovation to a widely adopted sector solution.

For distributors attending the Expo, the tanker offers a practical demonstration of how integrated delivery systems can support both efficiency and driver safety – from automated manifold management to streamlined compartment operations.

Brad Wilkie, Managing Director of MechTronic, said the vehicle reflects both the longevity and continued development of the technology.

"To see the system still delivering reliability and safety a decade later is the best possible endorsement of what we do."

See our full UKIFDA Expo preview and exhibitor guide on pages 25 to 34 of this issue for more on who to visit and what to look out for.



# Why kerosene surged: Inside the heating oil price shock

**As global markets react to the Iran crisis, kerosene prices have risen far faster than crude. We examine why heating oil has become the most volatile part of the fuel market – and why distributors are facing scrutiny.**

The Iran conflict has sent shockwaves through global energy markets, pushing prices higher and disrupting supply chains.

Across the UK and Ireland, heating oil prices have surged far faster than crude – fuelling public anger, political accusations and sector scrutiny.

## A global crisis reaches rural homes

When tensions in the Middle East escalated, global oil markets reacted instantly.

Shipping through the Strait of Hormuz – a critical oil transit route – was disrupted, tanker movements slowed and traders priced in supply risks.

While crude oil dominated the headlines, the most dramatic movements were in the kerosene market.

For around 1.7 million UK households relying on heating oil, the result has been an immediate jump in energy costs.

The surge has also triggered a heated public debate. Politicians have accused suppliers of profiteering, regulators are being urged to investigate the market, and customers are frustrated.

## Why Northern Ireland is particularly exposed

The political pressure has been especially intense in Northern Ireland, where heating oil remains the dominant form of home heating.

Around two-thirds of households in Northern Ireland rely on kerosene, compared with 6% of homes across the UK overall. That dependence amplifies price volatility in the region.

As prices have surged, consumer groups and politicians in Northern Ireland have been among the most vocal in calling for investigations into the heating oil market.

However, industry representatives say scrutiny will ultimately confirm that distributors are simply reflecting wholesale costs.

Kevin McPartlan, Chief Executive of Fuels for Ireland, said the industry welcomes investigations into fuel pricing, expressing confidence that they will show the sector is not profiteering.

He pointed out that the global wholesale price of kerosene had risen significantly more than other fuels – around 74% compared with

48% for diesel and 15% for petrol – reflecting pressures specific to the kerosene market rather than abnormal margins.

He added that previous investigations into fuel pricing during the Covid period ultimately found no evidence of systematic profiteering by distributors.

## Why kerosene has surged faster than crude

One of the most common questions is why heating oil has risen so much more sharply than crude.

The answer lies in the nature of refined products.

As a kerosene product, heating oil is driven by the global aviation fuel market rather than crude benchmarks.

In a consumer advice note, UKIFDA confirmed that the wholesale price of jet fuel has more than doubled, reaching a three-and-a-half-year peak.

Europe is particularly exposed to supply disruption in this market. In 2025, at least 40% of Europe's jet fuel imports came from the Middle East via the Strait of Hormuz, which is, at time of writing, effectively closed.

Analysts warn that European refiners may struggle to fully replace these lost imports in the short term, while shipping freight rates and insurance costs are rising sharply as tankers avoid the region.

The result has been a rapid rise in wholesale kerosene prices – which feeds directly into the price distributors pay for heating oil.

What began as a crude shock has become a middle-distillate supply crisis, where kerosene sits at the most constrained part of the market.

## A market moving faster than distributors can quote

The speed and scale of wholesale price movements have created major operational challenges for distributors.

Speaking in the early days of the Iran conflict, Eugene Dalton, Chief Executive of Irish fuel distributor Corrib Oil, said the volatility had been exceptional.

"At one point benchmark wholesale market prices were more than 90% higher than they had been just four days earlier," he said.

Prices have also been moving multiple times within a single day, making it difficult to quote for deliveries several days ahead.

Eugene described how Corrib Oil received supplier price increases averaging around 57% in a single week, forcing the company

to temporarily stop taking new orders while it worked through existing commitments.

Despite the volatility, he said the company honoured prices on existing orders – even though that meant making losses on some deliveries.

As Marcus Dandy of Compass Fuels commented: "It's been a brutal couple of weeks across the supply chain.

"Many distributors had already taken customer orders before the wholesale market moved. When the price jumps overnight, we're left honouring those deliveries at the agreed price, which in many cases has meant delivering fuel at a loss.

"At the same time, lifting allocations often tighten when markets get volatile, which means distributors suddenly have to chase replacement product on the spot market at much higher prices.

"So, while it can look like everyone is simply putting prices up overnight, the reality is that distributors are caught in the middle of a fast-moving commodity market."

## Working with price volatility

Speaking with Fuel Oil News, one domestic customer described their frustration: "We are currently on our last oil reserves and have had to top up locally at the petrol station because we can't get a delivery for three weeks.

"The company we usually use say they can't give us a price until the day before it is delivered, even if we pay for it now.

"We challenged this and asked why we can't just buy the oil they have in reserve now. We think they are just profiteering."

In reality, most distributors have little or no storage with many holding no more than two days' supply. Any fuel stored is working stock that must be continually replaced at current wholesale market prices.

Distributors are effectively price takers, largely buying at daily market prices, and are now quoting much closer to delivery because volatility makes forward pricing dangerous and risks supply continuity.

With limited stock, distributors have more orders than available stock at any given time. Heating oil prices reflect the price the distributor pays on the day they collect it. Sell at yesterday's price and businesses can quickly run short of both cash and product

## Panic buying

Market psychology can also play a significant role during price spikes. Somewhat

counterintuitively, rising prices can trigger panic buying behaviour, as households and businesses rush to fill tanks before further increases.

As James Spencer of Portland Fuel noted in a recent industry podcast, any attempt to keep prices artificially low during a period of panic buying risks emptying storage quickly and leaving distributors unable to meet customer demand.

Another challenge emerging during the current price surge is the impact on credit and working capital.

Much of the downstream fuel industry operates using trade credit insurance and supplier credit limits. These limits are typically set based on the value of fuel purchases rather than physical volume.

When wholesale prices rise sharply, the same credit limit buys significantly less fuel.

If wholesale prices double, distributors may be able to purchase only half the volume of fuel within existing credit limits, potentially tightening supply further unless additional financing or revised credit terms are secured.

### Political pressure intensifies

While this may explain the surge in kerosene pricing, it does not make consumer anger unreasonable. Far from it. For households dependent on kerosene, this is an immediate cash-flow shock, not an abstract market event.

With customers having to absorb the full increase at point of order, the rapid rise in heating oil prices has also become a political flashpoint.

The Government has warned companies not to exploit the crisis, while Conservative leader Kemi Badenoch has called on the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) to investigate the heating oil market.

Ministers in Ireland have also spoken in inflammatory terms of ‘possible price gouging’ and the issue has quickly become part of the wider cost-of-living debate.

This may generate political mileage, but risks reducing a complex market issue to a question of morality with distributors unfairly in the firing line.

### Government message: appreciation and scrutiny

Alongside the political criticism, ministers have made efforts to acknowledge the essential role played by distributors.

In a joint letter to UKIFDA, Energy Secretary Ed Miliband and Energy Minister Michael Shanks thanked the sector for the work it does supplying off-grid households.

## LESSONS FROM PREVIOUS FUEL CRISES

While the current surge feels unprecedented for many customers, the downstream sector has experienced similar volatility before.

### Markets move fast

Oil markets react to geopolitical events within hours, with impacts flowing quickly into wholesale fuel prices.

### Price spikes are usually temporary – but of unpredictable duration

Shocks typically ease as supply stabilises but predicting when remains difficult.

### Product markets diverge from crude

Refined products can move far more sharply than crude during supply disruption. (see page 47)

### Demand can amplify volatility

Rising prices often trigger panic buying, increasing short-term pressure on supply.

### Working capital pressures increase

Higher prices mean more capital is needed to purchase the same volume of fuel.

### Transparency matters

Previous investigations found no systemic profiteering but highlighted the importance of clear communication.

### Supply strategies is critical

Balancing fixed and flexible purchasing can help manage risk during volatility.

However, the letter also emphasised the importance of maintaining consumer trust – a point reinforced by UKIFDA’s response which indicated support for the CMA’s approach and confirmed that “Despite the very large price swings and demand, distributors are honouring orders as quickly as they can.”

## “WHAT BEGAN AS A CRUDE SHOCK HAS BECOME A MIDDLE-DISTILLATE SUPPLY CRISIS.”

### A sector caught between geopolitics and perception

The current heating oil price spike illustrates how quickly global geopolitical events can ripple through local energy markets.

For households dependent on kerosene, the surge has been immediate and deeply worrying.

For distributors, the challenge is navigating unprecedented wholesale volatility while ensuring that fuel continues to reach customers who depend on it.

This is not simply a crude price story, but one of jet fuel markets, supply disruption and market structure, and the rapid impact of geopolitical developments on the supply chain.

The fuel distribution community is being squeezed from both sides. Customers are frightened and angry. Distributors are being asked to absorb global volatility they did not create. And politicians, sensing a live cost-of-living issue in rural communities, are turning up the heat.

The danger is that in the scramble for culprits, the industry’s actual role, and the real

mechanics of the market, get lost.

It is also important not to confuse operational triage in a broken market with excess profit. Rapid wholesale price rises can compress margins and increase working capital requirements, leaving businesses focused on managing risk rather than increasing profit.

Reflecting on customer abuse directed at her sales team, Leanne Hardy of Par Petroleum added: “Unfortunately, that’s just one of several abusive comments they’ve had to endure.

“Our staff are working incredibly hard in an exceptionally challenging market. Oil prices may be high, but kindness costs nothing. Behind every call is real person doing their job.”

Describing it as “a horrible time in the industry for distributors and customers”, Joe Clarkson-Hall of Hall Bros added: “It’s a shame when people don’t realise all the effort you put into trying to do right by them.”

As scrutiny intensifies, ensuring that the public debate reflects how the heating oil markets actually work may prove as important as managing the volatility itself.

### Closing

If anything, the current crisis illustrates how exposed the heating oil market remains to global geopolitical shocks – and how quickly those shocks impact both rural households and distributors.

After an initial surge in demand – with the industry estimated to have handled around four times the usual order volume in one weekend – demand is beginning to normalise, though the market remains far from stable.

The challenge now is to protect customers, preserve supply and keep the debate anchored in how heating oil pricing really works.

## THE LATEST UPDATES FROM OUR DISTRIBUTOR COMMUNITY

### Allan Stobart: Delivering excellent customer service

Allan Stobart Lubricants and Fuels, the Carlisle-based distributor of fuel and lubricants, has been recognised for its outstanding customer service with the Feefo Platinum Trusted Service Award 2026.

The prestigious award is presented to businesses that consistently achieve exceptional customer feedback, reflecting a sustained commitment to service excellence.

#### Consistency and integrity

Beth Hindmarsh, Sales Office Manager, explained more about the achievement:

“Delivering excellent customer service is at the heart of everything we do here at Allan Stobart Fuels.

“The Platinum Trusted Service Award is awarded only to companies that have achieved the gold standard for three or more consecutive years.

“Maintaining our high service rating consistently over the past few years demonstrates that our customers truly value the consistency and integrity we bring to every interaction. We are incredibly proud of our team for setting such a high benchmark for excellence.”

*Congratulations to the team at Allan Stobart.*



### Craggs Energy: Proudly supporting local hospice

Craggs Energy, the West Yorkshire-based distributor, is proud to be supporting a local hospice.

Julie Stephens, Regional Director, explained more: “We are supporting a local charity – Overgate Hospice. The hospice provides incredible care and support to people in our community and their families.”

The hospice is currently embarking on a journey to transform end-of-life care in Calderdale. They have started a ‘Big Build’ project to create a state-of-the-art hospice facility, ensuring that every patient receives compassionate care in an environment designed for comfort, dignity, and peace.

Julie continued: “We have prepared a beautiful hamper filled with delicious treats and goodies. We are selling raffle tickets to win the hamper and every ticket sold will help raise vital funds for their amazing work. Let’s come together and make a difference.”

*If you have any plans to support or sponsor local charities this summer then please let us know – claudia@andpublishing.co.uk*





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# Depot evolution in practice: WCF's CEO Phil Murray on scale, structure and local leadership



FOLLOWING LAST ISSUE'S COVERAGE OF DEPOT CONSOLIDATION AND THE EVOLVING DEPOT MANAGER ROLE, MARGARET MAJOR, MANAGING EDITOR FOR FUEL OIL NEWS SPOKE FURTHER WITH WCF CEO **PHIL MURRAY** TO EXPLORE HOW THESE CHANGES ARE PLAYING OUT IN PRACTICE.

HIS PERSPECTIVE REINFORCES A KEY THEME EMERGING ACROSS THE SECTOR: WHILE STRUCTURE, SYSTEMS AND GOVERNANCE ARE EVOLVING RAPIDLY, LOCAL DEPOT LEADERSHIP REMAINS CENTRAL – BUT INCREASINGLY REDEFINED.

THIS FOLLOWS WCF'S RECENT ALIGNMENT OF ITS NORTH WEST OPERATIONS UNDER THE ALLAN STOBART BRAND.

## Phil begins with his thoughts on the future of the regional fuel depot model.

Over the past decade, fuel distribution has become materially more complex.

Margins are tighter. Compliance obligations are greater. Fleet and environmental standards continue to rise. At the same time, customers expect the same reliability and local responsiveness that has always defined our sector.

Against that backdrop, the regional depot model is not disappearing, but it is evolving.

**As highlighted in last issue's analysis of consolidation and depot leadership, this evolution is not simply structural – it is operational, cultural and strategic and, as WCF's experience shows, it is already happening in practice.**

Historically, independence alone was enough. A well-run depot with strong local relationships could thrive on service and reputation. That remains true.

What has changed is the infrastructure required behind the scenes.

Compliance reporting, procurement discipline, digital fleet management and energy transition readiness now require scale and coordination.

The question facing many of us is not whether local depots matter, they absolutely do. The question is how they are operated and supported.

In our case, bringing together WCF Fuels North West and Allan Stobart Lubricants & Fuels was not about removing local identity. Depot teams, drivers and customer relationships remain critically important. However, what we have simplified is the structure around them, aligning procurement,

compliance oversight and leadership accountability at a regional level.

The strategy is relatively simple. Protect local service by strengthening the platform behind it.

**The WCF approach directly reflects a wider shift already visible across the sector – where decision-making increasingly sits within systems and central frameworks, while accountability remains locally visible.**

“PROTECT LOCAL SERVICE BY STRENGTHENING THE PLATFORM BEHIND IT.”

## Operational reality: continuity at the front line, change behind the scenes

As regulatory demands increase and the UK's energy mix evolves, sustainable margin becomes essential. Not for short-term return, but for reinvestment in fleet renewal, digital optimisation, renewable liquid fuels capability and depot infrastructure. Without that reinvestment capacity, the regional model risks becoming fragile.

There is also a cultural dimension. In employee-owned businesses such as ours, decisions are taken through the lens of long-term stewardship. When handled thoughtfully, consolidation can protect employment, strengthen operational clarity and secure the future of regional operations.

The drivers, operational managers and the customer service teams remain central.

What evolves is the governance and infrastructure that sustain them.

The future of regional fuel distribution will belong to businesses that can combine scale discipline with local trust, and balance operational efficiency with long-term investment.

## Evolving to deliver operational resilience

At WCF, the core driver behind consolidation has been long-term stewardship.

WCF has operated for over 110 years, and our responsibility, particularly as an employee-owned business, is to leave the business stronger for the next generation.

Bringing WCF Fuels North West together with Allan Stobart was about simplifying our structure to ensure we have the resilience to continue serving our communities reliably in a changing market.

The decision was primarily operational.

However, the brand alignment reflects the need for greater consistency. Allan Stobart has deep roots in the region, and aligning under one name creates clarity while retaining the same drivers, depots and customer relationships.

In practical terms, resilience and operational sustainability mean:

- Clearer regional leadership accountability
- Consistent compliance oversight
- Stronger procurement leverage
- Better coordination of fleet and depot infrastructure
- Reduced duplication behind the scenes

## Redefining the depot manager role

**One of the clearest themes emerging from both sector analysis and WCF's experience is the evolution – rather than erosion – of**

### depot-level leadership.

Operational managers remain central to our model.

They continue to lead their teams, serve local customers and operate with clear accountability at site level. What has changed is that we have simplified the reporting structure above them to ensure consistency and support across our region.

Local leadership remains critical.

If anything, the depot manager role has been strengthened.

By streamlining systems and compliance oversight at regional level, our managers can focus more on customer service, people leadership and community relationships.

The role is evolving, making greater use of technology to manage processes but will always remain, first and foremost, people-focused.

**This reinforces a central conclusion from last issue's Delivering Insight feature: the real shift is not about removing depot managers but redistributing authority.**

### Centralisation vs. local delivery

Some support functions have been aligned regionally, particularly around procurement, marketing and compliance to ensure consistency and visibility across our fuel distribution businesses.

Modern fleet tracking, order management and compliance systems allow us to maintain high service standards while operating at greater scale.

Unified platforms improve accuracy, compliance and planning, but more importantly, they sit behind the service rather than in front of it.

Operational delivery remains local.

Digital infrastructure enables stability but doesn't replace the vital importance of building and maintaining strong relationships.

In fuel distribution, service is built on trusted relationships with our valued customers – and protecting that continuity has been central throughout the consolidation process.

We understand that regional businesses carry pride, customer loyalty and brand identity.

Our approach is not to remove any of that, but to provide a stronger platform behind it. Heritage and scale are not opposites; they can coexist when handled carefully.

**Systems may support decision-making, but they do not replace judgement – particularly where service reliability and trust are critical.**



WCF is bringing together WCF Fuels North West and Allan Stobart Lubricants & Fuels, under the Allan Stobart brand (AI generated image)

### Cost reduction or long-term sustainability?

As an employee-owned business, transparency is central to how we operate.

We consulted openly, communicated early and made it clear that the changes were about long-term stability and enabling future opportunities rather than short-term cost reduction.

Consolidation improves structural efficiency by reducing duplication and strengthening procurement discipline.

## “THE SECTOR IS MATURING RATHER THAN LOSING AUTONOMY.”

However, our focus is not simply cost per litre, it is delivering a reliable service with sustainable returns, ensuring our customers receive the fuel they need, when they need it.

Consolidation strengthens our ability to invest in:

- Fleet modernisation
- Depot infrastructure
- Compliance systems
- Tank telemetry and digital capability
- Renewable liquid fuel readiness
- Digital assets to support both customer service and marketing activities

Sustainable margin allows reinvestment and reinvestment sustains service quality.

**For some distributors, the challenge will be striking the right balance between efficiency and local autonomy.**

### The bigger picture

The sector continues to evolve at a greater pace each year, so it is highly likely we will see more consolidation in our sector.

Regulatory demands, supply chain constraints, capital requirements and energy transition pressures mean scale and structure are increasingly important.

However, careful consolidation should be given to the impact on customers serviced in the areas affected.

Independent depots can continue to thrive, particularly where relationships and service are strong.

What is changing is the complexity of the operating environment. That requires either strong local differentiation or supportive infrastructure behind the scenes.

Depot-level authority is not disappearing – it is evolving.

Operational delivery remains local. Governance, compliance and strategic procurement are becoming more structured and automated.

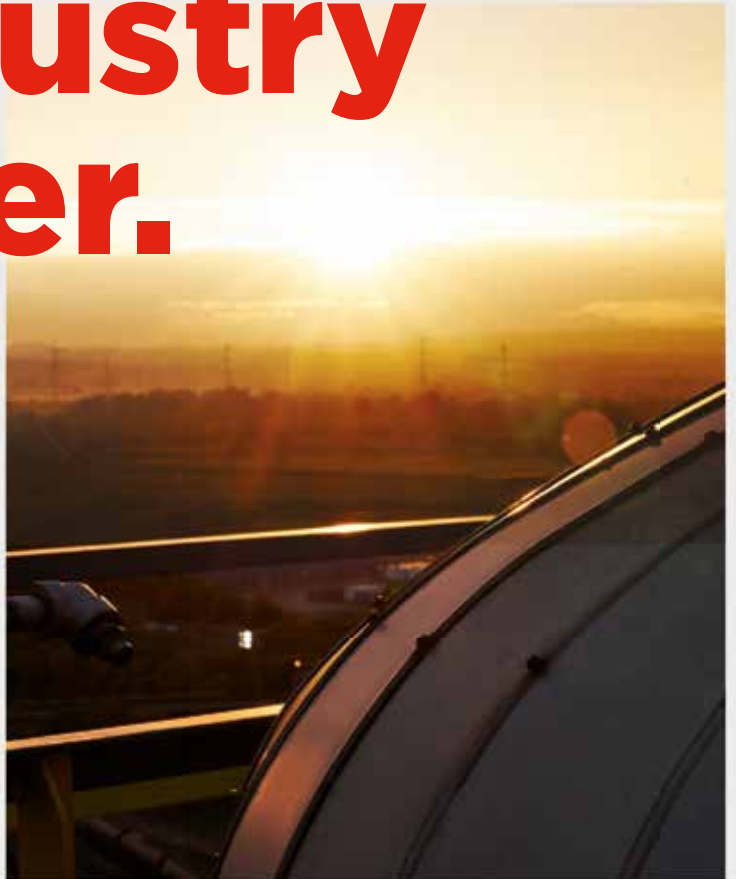
This reflects a sector that is maturing rather than losing autonomy.

## What this means for SME distributors

- Consolidation doesn't remove depot leadership – it reframes it
- Systems centralise control – but not accountability
- Local knowledge remains a competitive advantage
- The risk is not change – but unmanaged role drift

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# Government announces £50m heating oil support package

As global tensions drive sharp increases in off-grid energy costs (see analysis on pages 6&7), the UK Government has responded with a £50m support package for households using heating oil.

But while the move has been welcomed as recognition of the pressures facing rural households, questions remain over the level of the relief – and how quickly it can be delivered.

## Limited support

The funding – around £53m in total – will be distributed across the UK, with £27m allocated to England, £17m to Northern Ireland, £4.6m to Scotland and £3.8m to Wales.

However, the scale of the latest intervention is notably lower than previous support.

If spread across all oil-heated households, the package would equate to roughly £30 per home – a fraction of the £200 Alternative Fuel Payment introduced during the energy crisis following Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

The comparison has already prompted questions over whether the latest support will provide meaningful financial relief given the speed and scale of recent price increases.

## Questions over delivery

The Government has indicated that local authorities in England will distribute the funding, likely through existing hardship or welfare schemes.

In Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, the funding will be passed to devolved administrations, which will determine how support is delivered.

However, key details remain unclear, including:

- which households will qualify
- whether payments will be automatic
- how support will be targeted

This lack of clarity raises the risk that funding could be spread too widely, limiting its impact on those most exposed to rising heating costs.

## Northern Ireland reaction: “falls far short”

The response has been particularly critical in Northern Ireland, where heating oil remains the dominant form of home heating.

Finance Minister John O'Dowd described the £17.2m allocation as “disappointing and [falling] far short of what is needed”, warning that households would be “genuinely shocked and disappointed at how limited that support is.”

First Minister Michelle O'Neill was more direct, calling the package a “slap in the face”

that “doesn't scratch the surface” of the region's needs.

## Charities warn of continued pressure

Charities representing vulnerable households have welcomed the announcement but warned that further support may be required.

Joanna Elson, Chief Executive of Independent Age, said older households on low incomes remain particularly exposed to heating oil price volatility.

“With the price of oil rising sharply in recent weeks, predicting costs has become a budgeting challenge for older people on low incomes who have very little flexibility,” she said.

“While the Government's announcement is good news, the scale of need is significant. We urge ministers to keep the situation under review and be prepared to step in with greater support if needed.”

“THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERVENTION IS LIKELY TO DEPEND LESS ON THE HEADLINE FUNDING AND MORE ON HOW WELL IT IS TARGETED.”

## Industry engagement

Fuel distributors say the recent spike in heating oil prices has created significant operational and customer communication challenges, with volatility making it difficult to provide forward price certainty.

Responding to the Government's announcement, industry body UKIFDA confirmed it had engaged with government as soon as market conditions deteriorated.

The association said it contacted the Energy Minister's office in early March to highlight the impact of rising prices on customers, distribution businesses and employees.

## A different market to gas and electricity

The association also emphasised the structure of the heating oil market, which differs significantly from mains energy supply.

“The fuel distribution industry is made up of a large number of companies, many of them small, family-run businesses,” UKIFDA said. “This structure creates strong, healthy competition and, in normal times, helps keep prices lower.”

Unlike gas and electricity, with heating

oil typically purchased at prevailing market prices, and most distributors holding minimal storage, prices can move quickly in response to wholesale market conditions – both up and down. This significantly limits the ability of distributors to smooth price volatility.

In effect, distributors are price takers in a market driven by global supply dynamics.

## Demand pressures

The current price spike has come at a time of year when demand would normally begin to ease. Instead, rising prices have triggered a surge in orders, as households seek to secure supply before further increases.

## Targeting support effectively

The latest package represents government acknowledgement that households relying on heating oil remain particularly exposed to sudden energy market shocks.

However, the effectiveness of the intervention is likely to depend less on the headline funding and more on how well it is targeted.

If support reaches the most vulnerable households quickly, it may provide some short-term relief. If not, there is a risk the funding is diluted before it has meaningful impact.

With global markets continuing to respond to geopolitical developments, the question may not simply be whether support is offered – but whether it can be delivered quickly and effectively enough to those who need it most.

## An industry ready to support

UKIFDA said the industry stands ready to support communication efforts to customers, as it did during previous periods of market disruption “so that as many of them as possible can benefit.”

Welcoming “any financial assistance that can be offered to customers”, the association confirmed it would work with government to ensure households understand what support is available and how to access it.

## A developing response

The funding is an important recognition of the pressures facing off-grid households.

But with prices still volatile and many details yet to be confirmed, it is unlikely to be the final word on support.

As the situation develops, the focus will shift from headline funding to delivery – and whether the response matches the scale and urgency of the challenge facing heating oil users.

# What makes a good depot? Insights from UKIFDA's Jon Cox

CONTINUING OUR FOCUS ON THE EVOLVING ROLE OF THE FUEL DEPOT, FUEL OIL NEWS SPOKE WITH **JON COX**, TECHNICAL MANAGER AT UKIFDA, WHO CARRIES OUT DEPOT INSPECTIONS ACROSS THE UK.

FROM WHAT HE SEES ON THE GROUND, A CLEAR PICTURE EMERGES: THE FUNDAMENTALS OF A WELL-RUN DEPOT HAVEN'T CHANGED – BUT EXPECTATIONS, STANDARDS AND SYSTEMS HAVE MOVED ON SIGNIFICANTLY.



## Setting the scene: The role of the depot

For me, the depot is the operational core of any distribution business. Where it's located, how it's laid out and how it's maintained all influence how well a business delivers, how quickly it responds to customers and how it copes under pressure.

A depot reflects a business's standards and priorities – people form an opinion the moment they walk through the gate.

Across the sites I visit, the depot really is the heartbeat. For many companies the depot is also where teams come together in the main office – drivers, engineers, sales teams, and managers – making it the natural place where information flows.

Externally, a well-run depot shows professionalism and control, which builds confidence among customers, regulators and suppliers.

## What makes a good depot – and a poor one

The first signs of a well-run depot are usually simple: clear PPE signage, tidy walkways, organised storage and defined traffic routes. When the basics are taken care of, it usually means the wider operation is in good shape.

Excellence shows in the small details – clean bunds, even surfaces, minimal staining, spill kits ready to go and a general sense of pride. That tells me the team is proactive.

On the other hand, missing signage, incomplete paperwork, the absence of an H&S or Environmental Policy or inconsistent PPE use are all signs that something needs attention. Penalties from the HSE or EA don't necessarily indicate business failure – they're often a sign that more support or focus is needed.

Strong leadership is always a factor. When senior managers are visible and engaged, standards naturally improve, and when teams feel empowered, those standards are maintained day in, day out.

## Common issues uncovered

Across the industry, the same issues tend to recur: outdated risk assessments, incomplete documentation and safety equipment overdue for review. These things usually arise because teams are busy, not because they don't care.

Most gaps stem from a mix of technical, procedural and behavioural factors. Common areas include document reviews, driver and staff training documentation and loading, delivery handling and working-at-height procedures – often because once something is written down, it isn't revisited.

There are some high-impact, quick wins – I recommend refreshing signage, setting regular document review dates, making sure ownership is clear, having senior managers sign key paperwork and maintain a simple up-to-date training matrix. These steps make compliance stronger and regulatory visits much smoother.

## The depot through time: How things have changed

Safety standards have advanced significantly. Top-loading gantries are now rare, PPE use is much better managed and record-keeping is part of everyday work. Driver training has improved too, helped by clearer regulations and digital and online tools and training.

Environmental protection has also stepped up. Bottom loading has reduced working at height risks and modern systems help spot or contain spills early. Better bunding, drainage and maintenance all play a part.

Depots aren't necessarily more complex – they're just set up differently. Satellite sites managed centrally are more common, allowing wider coverage without full teams on every site. The core skills are still there, passed down and strengthened by new technology. A mindset of continuous improvement now underpins many operations.

## What makes a good depot? A quick checklist

### First impressions

- Clear PPE signage on entry
- Defined traffic routes and walkways
- Clean, organised yard

### Operational standards

- Clean bunds and well-maintained surfaces
- Spill kits accessible and ready
- Minimal staining and strong housekeeping

### Compliance basics

- Up-to-date risk assessments and documentation
- Clear H&S and Environmental policies
- Training records maintained and regularly reviewed

### Warning signs

- Missing signage or inconsistent PPE use
- Incomplete or outdated paperwork
- Poor site organisation

### Quick wins

- Set regular document review dates
- Assign clear ownership for compliance
- Maintain a simple, up-to-date training matrix

### Technology

- Tank telemetry and monitoring systems
- Integrated fleet and order systems
- Digital compliance and recordkeeping

### Leadership and culture

- Visible, engaged leadership
- Staff confident to challenge unsafe behaviour
- Strong, consistent safety culture

### Final thought

**When you walk your depot tomorrow, ask yourself... will everyone go home safely?**

## Automation and digital systems

Remote tank-level monitoring has been a big step forward. The ability to see levels from anywhere, combined with loss-level alarms for leaks or theft, adds real safety and operational value.

In-cab technology has also come a long way. When it links properly with order systems and metering, it gives real-time information that improves accuracy and reduces the risk of cross-contamination. Cameras and vehicle tracking help with safety and with resolving any queries.

Technology should support good processes and training, not replace them. For smaller distributors, digital systems don't have to mean a big investment. A good starting point is to look at the manual tasks that take time and see where technology could help.

## Depot of the year: What excellence really looks like

The depots that stand out are those that keep improving. They act on previous reports, are open about what needs fixing and don't shy away from difficult questions.

They understand the legislation and apply it consistently. Leadership teams are aligned and genuinely invested in the depot's success, and that attitude spreads through the workforce.

Often, the biggest improvements come from small changes. My top tips are tidier layouts, updated paperwork, clearer signage and better-organised processes. It doesn't always require major investment.

## Looking ahead: Futureproofing the depot

Depots will remain central to distribution, but their role will continue to evolve along with the energy landscape. They will become more connected, more data-driven and more integrated with wider systems.

Regulatory, environmental and operational pressures will continue to increase, so being proactive is essential. A future-ready depot has strong fundamentals, sensible investment and technology that genuinely supports day-to-day work. Staff feel confident, systems are resilient and decisions are informed by good data.

If I had to give one piece of advice right now, it would be to prioritise security

– physical, operational and digital. Cyber attacks are rising across all industries and strengthening digital infrastructure now protects everything else. Combined with steady investment in core infrastructure, it builds long-term resilience.

## And finally

When you walk your depot tomorrow, ask yourself: Will everyone on site go home safely? If the answer isn't an immediate yes, focus on the obvious fixes.

Give staff the confidence to speak up! That's one of the most important things. A strong safety culture is one in which a driver can remind the MD to put on hi-vis without hesitation. Leadership sets the tone, and what people see from the top is what they follow.

When teams feel empowered to take ownership, those standards are reinforced every day.

**As the sector evolves, the fundamentals highlighted here remain constant – reinforcing that while systems and structures may change, the foundations of a well-run depot do not.**

# Automation

Multi-compartment/line change deliveries maximising driver productivity

Complete protection against contamination

# Safety

Full delivery setup and flow rate controlled remotely at the delivery point

Smart, low pressure pump relief valve prevents costly spills



# Efficiency

Smart driver interface with simple, intuitive controls

Unrivalled, quiet flow rates and compartment changes

# Reliability

Accuracy and reliability minimising downtime

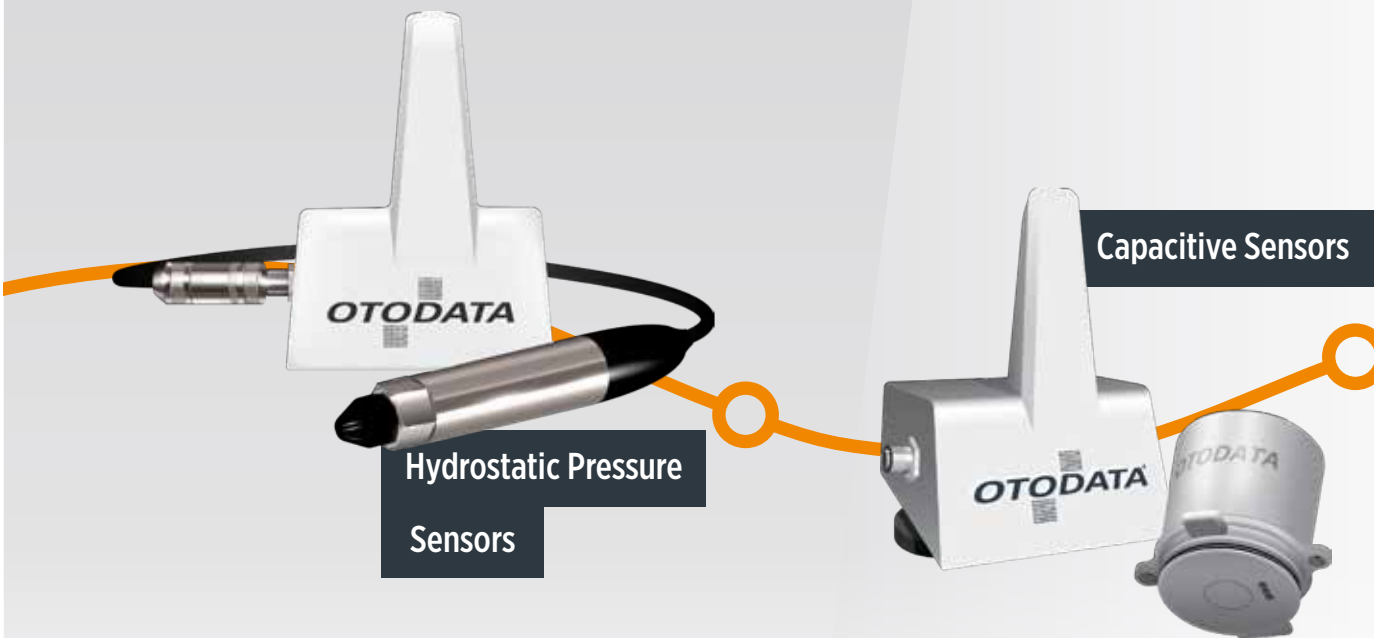
Online customer portal with delivery data, vehicle history, and service information



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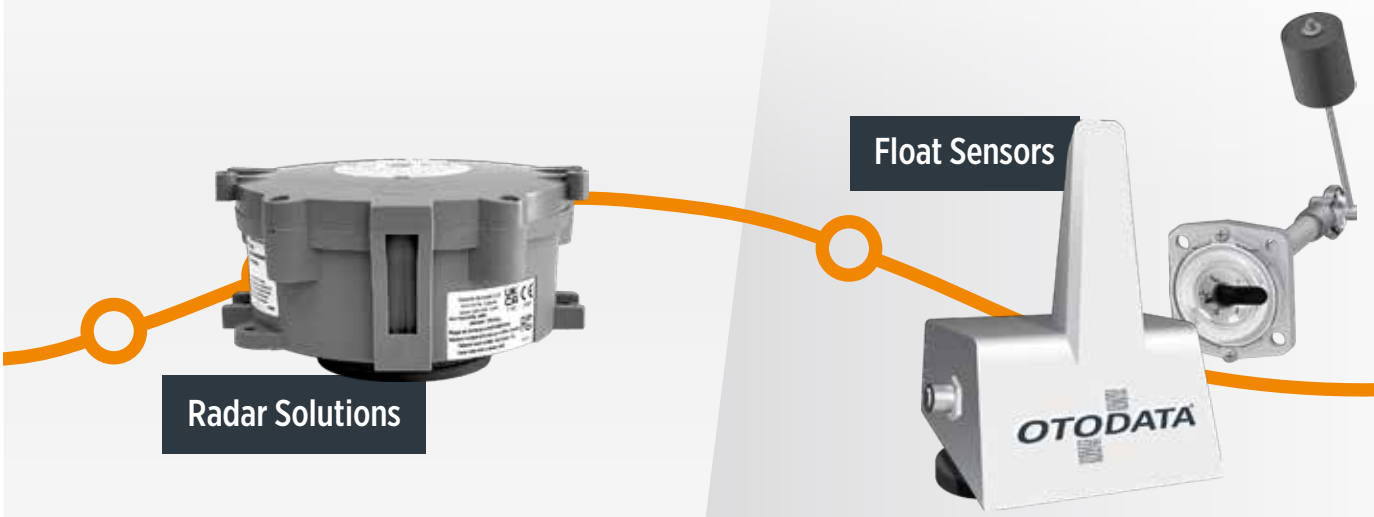
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# The downstream customer – agriculture



David Platt



Olly Harrison

THERE WOULD BE NO DOWNSTREAM FUEL INDUSTRY WITHOUT THE CUSTOMER – AND IN THE UK AGRICULTURAL SECTOR, THAT CUSTOMER IS THE BACKBONE OF FOOD PRODUCTION. FROM ARABLE ENTERPRISES AND LIVESTOCK FARMS TO CONTRACTORS OPERATING HEAVY MACHINERY ACROSS RURAL BRITAIN, RELIABLE FUEL SUPPLY IS FUNDAMENTAL TO DAILY OPERATIONS.

IN THE THIRD IN OUR SERIES OF CUSTOMER CONVERSATIONS, CLAUDIA WEEKS, COMMUNITY CONTENT LEAD FOR FUEL OIL NEWS, SPOKE WITH COMMERCIAL AGRICULTURAL FUEL USERS FROM ACROSS THE UK TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THEY REALLY THINK OF THEIR FUEL SUPPLIERS, WHAT WORKS WELL, WHAT IMPROVEMENTS ARE NEEDED, AND HOW THEY VIEW THE INDUSTRY'S ROLE IN SUPPORTING FARMING THROUGH THE TRANSITION TO A GREENER FUTURE.

## The customers

- **David and Charlotte Platt – run a long-established family farm in Cheshire. Their 300-acre operation spans several parcels and combines traditional farming with diversified rural enterprises.**
- **Olly Harrison – runs a cereal farm, based near Liverpool in Merseyside, farming around 1500 acres of arable crops and combinable crops.**

Claudia asked David and Olly to describe their farming operations, and to explain what role liquid fuels play in keeping the business running day to day as well as how important energy reliability is to them.

David responded: “We’re a family-run agricultural business based in Cheshire, with over 100 years of farming heritage in the local area.

“The farm has evolved over time from a traditional livestock and arable operation into a more diversified rural enterprise. Alongside core agricultural activities such as grassland management, arable production, and livestock, we also operate associated land-based businesses including leisure accommodation and wellness facilities that sit within the farm environment.”

## Energy reliability is critical

David continued: “In total, we manage over 300 acres across multiple parcels, with a central yard that houses machinery, storage, and operational infrastructure.

“Energy reliability is critical. Farming is time-sensitive, whether that’s harvesting windows,

livestock care, or land management and downtime simply isn’t an option.

“Liquid fuels remain the backbone of our operation because they’re dependable, energy-dense, and compatible with the machinery we rely on. Tractors, telehandlers, generators, and heating systems all depend on fuel being available when needed.”

“Energy reliability is vital,” agreed Olly. “Every wheeled vehicle is running on liquid fuel, so it is incredibly important that they are all kept topped up.”

## Choosing a supplier

We were keen to establish what the main factors are for those in the agricultural sector when choosing a fuel supplier. (Cost, customer service, environmental factors, size of company, location, etc.)

“The level and efficiency of service and the quality of fuel and price,” replied Olly. “It is important that the range of products fits with the machinery that I use and are compatible. When ordering fuel for the business I like to talk to somebody, so I like the fact that I can pick up the phone to my local representative and get that personal interaction.

“Also, having the right fuel and lubrications for servicing and maintenance of the vehicles is important.

“Being able to order both things from Certas with one order has worked out to be very efficient for me and is an important factor when choosing a supplier for my business.”

David had similar views: “Reliability and service come first. Cost obviously matters, but consistency of delivery, communication, and

trust in the supplier are more important long term.

“When you’re running a farm, you need confidence that fuel will arrive when promised, particularly during peak seasonal demand.

“Ordering fuel is generally straightforward, but like many commodities it can be frustrating when prices move quickly. Having a supplier that communicates clearly about timing and pricing helps reduce uncertainty.”

## Volatility and long-term planning

We asked both David and Olly how fuel price volatility and long-term energy planning impact business confidence and investment decisions?

Olly replied: “We have been through some incredibly wild rides in the last few years in fuel price rises and drops. It is the new normal to learn to manage that. Bigger storage tanks help take out the peaks and troughs in the market.”

“Volatility definitely affects confidence,” reflected David. “Energy is a major input cost, and unpredictability makes it harder to forecast margins or justify capital investment. It reinforces the importance of efficiency and exploring ways to diversify energy sources where viable.”

## Business challenges

When asked about the biggest challenges facing their businesses, the responses were immediate and telling.

Olly didn’t hesitate: “Two things that are out of our control – politics and weather!”

David pointed to a broader range of pressures: “Cost inflation across inputs, planning

and regulatory complexity, labour availability and market uncertainty are probably the biggest challenges.

“Like many farms, we’re balancing traditional agricultural economics with diversification opportunities.”

## Sustainability must align with economic sustainability

Claudia asked whether they were experiencing pressure from customers, processors, retailers, or supply chains to reduce carbon emissions, and was that influencing decision-making on their farms?

“We are experiencing pressure from all of the above,” replied Olly. “We are trialling HVO fuel from Certas in some of the vehicles because of this.

“I can only see the pressure increasing, and it is something that we must be aware of. An example of pressure from processors is that we are now receiving premiums for some of our wheat if we can produce it with a lower carbon footprint.”

David added: “Yes, there’s increasing expectation from supply chains and society more broadly. It’s influencing decisions, but the reality is that viable solutions need to be commercially practical. Sustainability must align with economic sustainability.”

“We’ve taken steps to reduce the carbon footprint of our fuel and energy use. We’ve focused on efficiency first, modern machinery, improved logistics, and reducing unnecessary fuel use.

“We’ve also looking to invest in renewable electricity generation where feasible, such as solar installations across the agricultural buildings that have been converted into commercial lettings.”

## Alternative fuels

We asked David and Olly whether they had explored alternatives such as HVO or other biofuels, and what factors determined their viability – from cost and availability to infrastructure requirements and equipment compatibility.

Olly explained: “We have explored HVO. All we needed was an additional tank and confirmation from the manufacturers on compatibility. The cost difference is negligible relative to our output, so it doesn’t really influence my operational decisions.

David also sees potential, but with caveats: “We’ve looked at HVO and it’s promising from a technical perspective because it can often be used as a drop-in fuel. The main barriers now are cost and availability at scale. For many



farms, the price premium remains the limiting factor.”

## How realistic is electrification?

We asked David and Olly how viable they believe electrification is for agricultural machinery in the short to medium term and whether there are specific activities where low carbon fuels or electric power simply aren’t practical.

David sees significant limitations for now. “In the short term, electrification is limited. Smaller equipment may transition sooner, but heavy agricultural machinery requires high energy density and long operating hours that batteries currently struggle to provide economically.”

He added that certain tasks present challenges: “Heavy fieldwork, harvesting and other high-load operations require sustained power output over long periods, often in remote locations. Those are the main examples where electrification or some low carbon alternatives are not yet practical.

“Solar would be a practical option for us due to its lower complexity and planning risk. Larger projects like anaerobic digestion require significant capital and feedstock certainty, which doesn’t suit every farm model.”

Olly was more direct in his assessment. “Pie in the sky,” he said. “The energy needed to power tractors would be too high for batteries to be viable, making it near impossible at the moment.”

However, while sceptical about electrification, he noted progress elsewhere. “Electrification doesn’t seem practical, but the HVO I’ve received seems to be working for running the tractors on the farm. Also, we do use solar

to power the grain cooling fans, and we use biomass to power the heat sources in our grain driers.”

## Financing the transition and the role of suppliers

We also asked David and Olly about the financial realities of decarbonisation, the role fuel suppliers can play in supporting sustainability goals, and whether agriculture is being given realistic pathways to net zero.

For David, the primary concern is the economics. “The main pressure is capital cost versus uncertain return,” he explained. “Transitioning equipment or infrastructure is expensive, and support mechanisms don’t always bridge the gap sufficiently to justify investment.”

He believes fuel suppliers have an important part to play in easing that journey. “Suppliers can play a key role through education, offering lower-carbon fuel options, transparent information and flexible delivery. Trusted relationships matter here.”

When it comes to the wider policy landscape, David is cautious. “Not always,” he said, when asked whether agriculture is being given realistic decarbonisation pathways. “Targets sometimes move faster than technology or economics allow. Farming operates on tight margins, so transitions need to be practical and phased.”

Olly’s perspective is slightly different. While he acknowledges that some renewable energy solutions such as wind and solar can be costly, he feels the pressure is less acute when it comes to fuel choice. “HVO is only a small margin more than regular fuels, so I don’t feel too much pressure.”

He also highlighted the growing support from suppliers. “They’ve become increasingly helpful and tend to offer useful advice regularly. The telemetry systems provided by Certas also mean there’s an extra safeguard in place to stop us running out.”

On the pace of change, Olly feels attitudes have shifted. “Two years ago, I would have said expectations were moving faster than practical solutions. However, things have become a bit more realistic recently, and the push towards net zero feels more measured.”

## Efficiency is the common ground

Claudia asked how they balance environmental responsibility with productivity and food security?

Olly responded: “Easily, by looking into available technology and new systems.

“Reducing carbon through renewable fuels

means that we can keep our production levels high through use of man-made fertilisers which often do have a higher carbon footprint.

“If we reduced our use of fertilisers then our output of food would be down, so reducing the carbon on the fuel instead is much more productive for the farm.”

David added: “Efficiency is the common ground. Producing more with fewer inputs benefits both the environment and business viability. Stewardship and productivity shouldn’t be seen as opposing forces.”

### A natural evolution

We asked David and Olly to look to the future, in 5-10 years, how did they expect their farm’s energy mix to change?

David gave a detailed and thoughtful response: “Looking ahead, I think farms have the potential to play a much bigger role in local energy systems. We’re located within a village setting, which creates an interesting opportunity – farms like ours could effectively become small local energy producers, supplying nearby homes and businesses alongside our own operations.

“Agriculture already has many of the ingredients needed for decentralised energy generation: land for solar or wind, buildings suitable for rooftop installations, organic material that could support bioenergy, and an existing need for power on site.

“With the right infrastructure and policy support, farms could act as local energy hubs, improving resilience and reducing transmission losses compared to large, centralised generation.

“For us, the most realistic pathway in the near term is likely a combination of on-site renewable electricity generation, energy storage, and continued use of liquid fuels for heavy machinery. Over time, there may also be opportunities to supply surplus power locally if



grid connections and regulations allow.

“Farms have always been producers, historically food, now potentially energy as well and that transition feels like a natural evolution rather than a radical change.

“I would like policymakers and industry to understand that farmers operate in the real world of margins, weather, and biology. Transitions need to be economically realistic, technologically proven, and supported by stable policy frameworks.”

Olly added: “In the future, I can see us continuing to use HVO for the whole fleet. It’s a fantastic alternative. I would like policy makers and the industry to be more realistic about the profitability of the agricultural sector.

“If there is a drive to use technology and to use less carbon, it is more expensive for the consumer. There needs to be incentives for that – otherwise it is simply unaffordable for us all.”

### Thank you to the industry

In discussions with David and Olly, it was clear that they value the support and professionalism of those in the industry, and that positive supplier relationships make a tangible difference on the ground.

• **David:** “Reliable delivery drivers and customer service teams are often unsung, but are essential to keeping farms running, particularly during busy periods. Good relationships with suppliers make a genuine difference so thank you.”

• **Olly:** “I’ve had lots of positive experiences with the industry. Even this week, I ran out of fuel unexpectedly on one of the farms. I called my Certas representative at 4.40pm, who picked up the phone, spoke to the transport team, sorted out the routing and arranged for a driver to deliver it to me on Saturday morning (the next day). That is exceptional customer service!”

Understanding the unique demands and requirements of the UK agricultural sector, will be core to the downstream industry as it moves forward through the energy transition.

*Fuel Oil News will continue to engage with industry customers. If you have a customer that you would like us to speak with so they can share their thoughts and ideas on the industry, please do let us know: [claudia@andpublishing.co.uk](mailto:claudia@andpublishing.co.uk)*

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# Magnus HAWKi takes top honours at Irish innovation awards

Magnus Monitors' HAWKi smart tank monitor has been recognised at the Hardware Association of Ireland Innovation Awards 2026, winning both Hardware/DIY Product of the Year and the overall Product of the Year title.



Selected from a competitive field, the awards highlight products demonstrating innovation, user benefit and commercial relevance. Judges noted that HAWKi addresses a longstanding challenge in domestic heating oil monitoring with a solution that is both practical and accessible.

The product has been developed to simplify tank level monitoring for end users, combining a smartphone-first interface with clear level visibility and alert notifications. A straightforward onboarding process and minimal setup requirements are designed to reduce barriers to adoption, particularly in the domestic market.

One of the standout features is its installation model. Using a peel-and-stick format with a high-strength adhesive pad, the device can be fitted

quickly without specialist tools. Combined with replaceable off-the-shelf batteries, this supports ease of maintenance over the longer term.

Connectivity – often a limiting factor for telemetry in rural and off-grid locations – is addressed through the use of long-range Bluetooth rather than reliance on a cellular signal at the tank. This approach is intended to improve reliability in areas where network coverage can be inconsistent, while also simplifying deployment.

## Practical and scalable

For distributors, the emphasis on simplicity has potential operational benefits. A device that can be easily shipped, self-installed and used without complex setup may offer a more scalable route to wider adoption of tank monitoring, particularly among customers who have traditionally been harder to reach with telemetry solutions.

The recognition comes amid growing interest in technologies that improve visibility of customer tank levels and support more efficient delivery planning. Solutions that balance usability with practical deployment are likely to play an increasing role as distributors look to enhance service and optimise logistics.

Magnus Monitors will be exhibiting at the UKIFDA Expo 2026 (Stand 57), where the team will be showcasing their award-winning product alongside further developments in tank monitoring technology.

## OptiMate - Saves you time, money and prevents contamination!

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-  Prevention of fuel contamination



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EXPO & CONFERENCE 2026  
15 & 16 APRIL | EXHIBITION CENTRE | LIVERPOOL

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# Improving safety and reliability in tanker loading

AS FUEL DISTRIBUTION OPERATIONS CONTINUE TO EVOLVE, THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFE, COMPLIANT AND EFFICIENT TANKER LOADING HAS NEVER BEEN GREATER. FROM REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS TO OPERATIONAL RELIABILITY, MODERN LOADING SYSTEMS MUST DELIVER CONSISTENT PERFORMANCE IN DEMANDING ENVIRONMENTS.

At this year's UKIFDA Expo & Conference in Liverpool, IFC Inflow will showcase its approach to engineered tanker loading systems and the principles behind safe, reliable fuel handling.

Visitors to Stand 59 will be able to see an example of IFC Inflow's tanker loading skid systems, designed to support controlled and efficient loading while prioritising safety and regulatory compliance. Developed for demanding fuel handling environments, these systems help operators maintain dependable performance while supporting safe day-to-day operations.

With nearly four decades of experience in fuel handling infrastructure, IFC Inflow designs and delivers tanker loading solutions tailored

to the needs of modern fuel distribution operations. The company's engineering-led approach focuses on helping operators achieve consistent performance while meeting industry standards and operational requirements.

### Exclusive offer

Those interested in learning more ahead of the exhibition can visit [www.ifcinflow.com](http://www.ifcinflow.com) or contact the IFC Inflow team to discuss tanker loading systems and operational requirements. The team will also be available at the exhibition on 15-16 April at Stand 59, where visitors can learn more about IFC Inflow's solutions and take advantage of a UKIFDA-exclusive offer available during the event.



IFC Inflow engineered tanker loading skid system. Visit Stand 59 at the UKIFDA Expo to learn more.

## SAFETY BY DESIGN

We design and deliver safe, reliable and compliant tanker loading operations across the fuel distribution sector. Our engineering-led approach helps depots operate with confidence in demanding environments.

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A blue and white Flexigrid fuel tanker truck is driving on a multi-lane highway. The truck has 'Flexigrid' written on its tank and 'FG129' on the back. The highway is curving to the right, and there are other vehicles in the distance. The background shows green trees and a clear sky.

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Visit us at  
**UKIFDA Expo & Conference**  
15-16 April, Liverpool  
Stand no. 14



# All for one and one for all

## Iran conflict

At the time of writing, we are approaching the end of the second week of the Iran conflict. The unprecedented demand and sudden price increases understandably caused concern among customers.

That's why, as an industry, we moved quickly by engaging the Energy Minister Michael Shanks, issuing consumer advice notes, briefing MPs and working with the media to reach as wide an audience as possible.

Our industry has been under a level of scrutiny we have never experienced before. I want to thank everyone who has worked tirelessly to fulfil and honour customer orders at pace and under pressure.

I also want to thank all distributors that have strongly supported UKIFDA and the business principles we share as an industry, recognising in particular that we are here ultimately to serve the customer.

Over these past weeks, we have truly lived up to the motto: **all for one and one for all**.

## UKIFDA Awards

Amid all this, I spent time judging the UKIFDA Awards. What struck me first was how many of our wider industry family have military backgrounds. Your service to both country and sector is greatly appreciated. I was also reminded of the vital deliveries we make to defence-related sites every day.

Reading the submissions was a genuine ray of sunshine in a difficult period. The pride in people, in customer service, and in going the extra mile shone through every page. The shortlists are full of remarkable individuals and companies, and I look forward to celebrating their stories in Liverpool.

## EXPO – Shaping The Future of Liquid Fuels

The theme of this year's EXPO is the future of fuels, and the events of recent weeks have put that conversation into sharp perspective.

Jet kerosene prices doubled because the market feared Europe, which relies on the Middle East for 40% of its jet fuel, lacked the refinery capacity to fill the gap, and that remaining supplies could be diverted to Asia. The closure of two UK refineries in recent years has clearly not helped the situation.

Unsurprisingly, this has reignited a fierce debate between two opposing camps: those who believe we must accelerate the shift to renewable energy and move beyond oil and gas as quickly as possible and those who argue for scrapping net zero legislation and returning to oil and gas.

It frustrates me that so much energy is spent arguing over either/ or scenarios when the truth is simple: **we need both**.

Our sector is a critical part of the UK's energy resilience and national security, and a major contributor to both national and local economies. We supply the fuels that heat homes, build homes, cook food, save lives, manufacture everyday products, construct wind farms and solar parks, and power ships, cars and planes. The list goes on.

Liquid fossil fuels will not be replaced totally by renewable energy, certainly not any time soon. That must be acknowledged before any

debate begins. But it must also be recognised that renewable energy needs to accelerate.

This is why UKIFDA strongly advocates for lower carbon liquid fuels. They reduce the impact of what we supply without detracting from greener electricity, district heating or heat pumps. They complement them.

If the conflict has shown us anything, it is that we must accelerate renewable energy, increase refining capacity, diversify our fuels and strengthen our strategic storage.

## My team

As we head to Liverpool for what I know will be an excellent two days, I only wish there were an award for "Best Team in the World" because, bias or not, I would give it to the UKIFDA team.

The workload, the personal sacrifice, the long hours, and the abuse everyone has endured over the past few months, and still being ready to open the show on time, is something I can barely fathom.

A true example of **all for one and one for all**.

Let's make this the best and most productive EXPO we've ever had.

Visit us at the **UKIFDA SHOW Stand 83**

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For decades, **CODAS** has been the trusted backbone of operations for fuel distribution businesses. Built on reliability and real world performance, it has earned its reputation as a well established, industry leading product that organisations continue to depend on every day.

Today, **CODAS 7** moves that foundation forward with purpose.

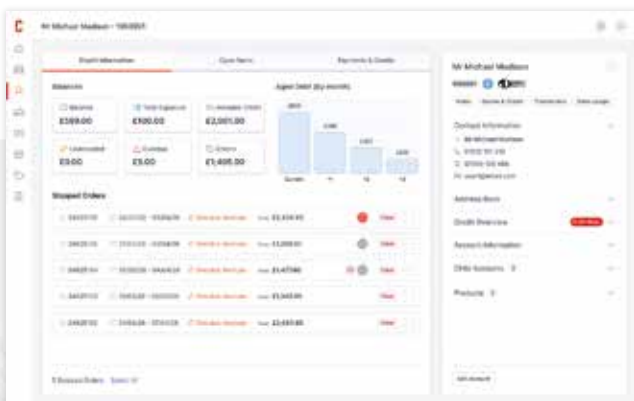
# The Web Enabled Evolution of **CODAS**

**CODAS 7** is our actively developed web-based evolution of the **CODAS** platform — bringing modern accessibility, flexibility, and seamless interoperability to every customer. Designed for today's connected world, **CODAS 7** preserves the strength of **CODAS 6** while delivering the power of a fully web enabled system that works wherever you do.

# Seamless Interoperation

**CODAS 6** and **CODAS 7** are engineered to work together through a smooth, integrated transition path. Customers can benefit from new web-based capabilities **without disruption**, ensuring continuity for teams and workflows.

Our users can adopt **CODAS 7** module by module; the experience is effortless by design.



# Modular. Scalable. Built for Everyone.

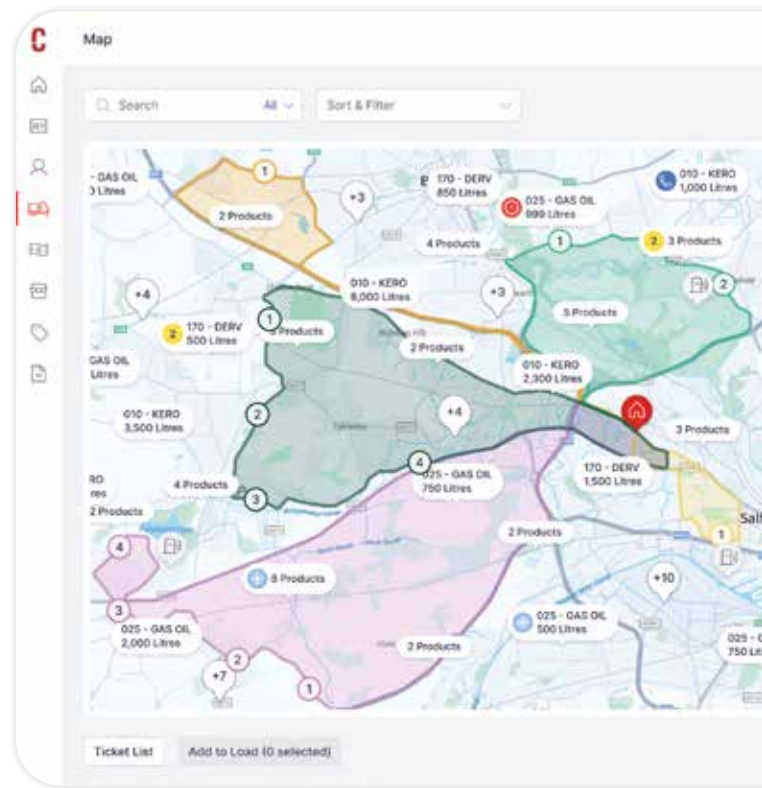
CODAS 7 reflects a modern architecture that puts our customers first:



**Modular Design** - Select only the modules you need and expand as your business grows.



**Scalable Performance** - Perfect for **top20 enterprises, single user operations**, and everything in between.



# CODAS 7: The Future of Operational Excellence

The next generation of **CODAS** is designed to keep your business ahead — combining the trusted reliability of **CODAS 6** with the agility and innovation of a modern web platform.

**Your operations. Your scale. Your future — powered by CODAS.**



# CONFERENCE AGENDA

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15, 2026

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 9:30 AM-5:00 PM   | <b>Exhibition Opens</b>  |
| 11:00 AM-3:00 PM  | <b>Welcome to Day 1 of the Conference. Location: Seminar area</b>  |
| 11:15 AM-11:30 AM | <b>Introduction and Keynote Speech</b><br>From the event's headline sponsor, P66. <b>Speaker: Geoff Henderson P66</b>  |
| 11:30 AM-12:00 PM | <b>What To Expect During A Roadside Inspection</b><br><b>Speaker: Jason Dearsley</b> Essex Police  |
| 12:00 PM-12:30 PM | <b>The Importance of Driver Training</b><br><b>Speaker: Jenny Clucas</b> Downstream Fuel Distribution Forum (DFDF)   |
| 12:30 PM-1:00 PM  | <b>Transport Q &amp; A</b><br><b>Speakers: Jenny Clucas</b> Downstream Fuel Distribution Forum (DFDF), <b>Jason Dearsley</b> Essex Police, <b>Jon Cox</b> Technical Manager I UKIFDA |
| 1:00 PM-1:10 PM   | <b>Customer Service Award sponsored by Worldpay</b>  |
| 1:10 PM-1:20 PM   | <b>Green Award sponsored by Oilshield</b>  |
| 1:20 PM-1:30 PM   | <b>Innovation Award sponsored by Fuel Oil News</b>   |
| 1:30 PM-2:15 PM   | <b>What To Do During A Cyber Attack</b><br><b>Speakers: Mike Smith</b> Delivery Technology Solutions (D.T.S.), <b>Kirk Tunstall</b> Winson Petroleum                                 |
| 2:15 PM-3:00 PM   | <b>Market Update</b><br><b>Speaker: James Spencer</b> Managing Director I Portland Analytics   |
| 6:00 PM-7:00 PM   | <b>President's Drinks Reception</b>  |
| 7:00 PM-10:00 PM  | <b>UKIFDA Dinner and Awards</b>  |
| 7:00 PM-10:00 PM  | <b>Dinner Guest Speaker</b><br><b>Speaker: John Parrott MBE</b> Snooker World Champion   |
| 7:15 PM-7:30 PM   | <b>Depot Of The Year Award sponsored by Pen Underwriting</b>   |
| 8:15 PM-8:30 PM   | <b>Driver Of The Year Award sponsored by Oamps</b>   |
| 9:00 PM-9:15 PM   | <b>Young Person Of The Year Award sponsored by Just Tankers</b>  |

## THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 2026

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| 9:30 AM-4:00 PM   | <b>Exhibition Opens</b>   |
| 11:00 AM-3:00 PM  | <b>Welcome to Day 2 of the Conference</b>   |
| 11:00 AM-11:30 AM | <b>UK Political Update – After The Consultations</b><br>Summary of the major consultations in the UK, Scotland and Northern Ireland regarding the future of heating.<br><b>Speaker: Ken Cronin</b> Chief Executive Officer I UKIFDA – The Fuel Distribution Association       |
| 11:30 AM-12:00 PM | <b>Future of Fuel – The Government's New Approach</b><br>Keynote speech from DESNZ's new Future of Fuel team.<br><b>Speaker: Future of Fuel DESNZ</b> Head I Department Of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)   |
| 12:00 PM-1:00 PM  | <b>Wolfe Power Live Podcast</b><br>With local elections following, Alex Wolfe and guests will explore how energy policy impacts voting.<br><b>Speaker: Guests To Be Confirmed</b>   |
| 1:00 PM-2:00 PM   | <b>UK Liquid Fuel Supply – What Next?</b><br>The UK has seen major change in the fuel supply chain in the last 18 months this roundtable will discuss what needs to happen next.<br><b>Speakers: Senior Representatives from Greenergy, EET Fuels, Petroineos and P66</b>     |
| 2:00 PM-3:00 PM   | <b>Ireland – Are we there yet ?</b><br>In the last year, the Irish Government has announced legislation regarding liquid renewable fuels—what progress has been made?<br><b>Speaker: Philip Hannon</b> Chief Executive Officer I The Alliance for Zero Carbon Heating (TAZCH) |
| 4:00 PM-5:00 PM   | <b>Exhibition Closes</b>  |

Please note: Timings and speakers may be subject to change



## UKIFDA AWARDS

### THE SHORTLIST IS ANNOUNCED FOR THIS YEAR'S PRESTIGIOUS INDUSTRY AWARDS

The UKIFDA Awards are highly regarded in the fuel distribution industry.

Celebrating industry excellence, the awards form a central part of the two-day event, shining a spotlight on the people and businesses who go above and beyond to support customers, champion best practices, embrace new technologies and lead the industry forward. The shortlisted finalists for this year's annual industry awards have now been revealed by event organiser UKIFDA.

The winners will be announced and presented during the two-day UKIFDA EXPO & Conference, taking place at the Exhibition Centre Liverpool on 15 and 16 April.

The Depot of the Year, Driver of the Year and Young Person of the Year awards will be announced and presented during the UKIFDA Dinner on 15 April.

#### Recognising excellence across the industry

The 2026 awards span six categories, each celebrating a different area of achievement. With strong entries received from across the UK and Ireland, this year's shortlist reflects the outstanding commitment, professionalism and forward-thinking approach of the individuals and companies shaping the industry's future.



#### Professionalism and leadership

In recognition of exceptional professionalism, safety, customer service, supporting colleagues, and demonstrating leadership on the road., Three outstanding individuals have been shortlisted for the **UKIFDA Driver of the Year 2026 award**, sponsored by OAMPS.

- Richard Ingram – Craggs Energy
- Malcolm Kington – Certas Energy
- Ian Walters – Rix Petroleum.



#### Outstanding

The shortlist for the **UKIFDA Depot of the Year 2026 award**, sponsored by Pen Underwriting, is always eagerly anticipated. The shortlisted depots that demonstrate outstanding operational performance, safety, teamwork and customer service are:

- Allan Stobart Fuels – Raughton Head Depot
- Barton Petroleum – Wellingborough Depot
- Certas Energy – Drem Depot

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## Sustainability leadership

The shortlist for the **UKIFDA Green Award 2026**, sponsored by *Oilshield*, highlights three industry organisations who are leading the way in sustainability, environmental responsibility and low-carbon progress.

- **Certa Ireland**
- **Certas Energy**
- **James D Bilsland Ltd**



## Shaping the future

Celebrating emerging industry talent, the shortlist for the **Young Person of the Year 2026 Award**, sponsored by *Just Tankers*, reveals the three young people who are in the final running for this important accolade.

Those making a significant contribution, demonstrating an innovative approach, and helping to shape the future of fuel distribution are:

- **Alannah Carton – Certa Ireland**
- **Charlotte Lewis – WP Group**
- **Cerys Rushall – New Era Energy**



## Sector solutions

The **UKIFDA Innovation Award 2026**, sponsored by *Fuel Oil News*, recognises forward-thinking solutions, new technology and smarter approaches that strengthen the sector.

This year's shortlist includes four industry trailblazers

- **BoilerJuice**
- **FoxInsights**
- **Watson Fuels**
- **Cobo Tankers**



## Customers at the heart

With customers at the heart of the industry, the shortlist for the **Customer Service Award 2026**, sponsored by *Worldpay* (now Global Payments), highlights individuals who go above and beyond to deliver outstanding service, demonstrating professionalism and care that strengthens customer confidence.

Those in the running are:

- **Patrick McCabe – Certa Ireland**
- **Natasha Tidswell – RSM Group**
- **Andrea Williams – Moorland Fuels**

**Congratulations and good luck to all those named!**  
**We look forward to sharing the details of the winners in our May issue.**



# Energy is changing.

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From conventional fuel oils to emerging energy carriers, the energy landscape is evolving—and the logistics behind it must keep pace. Schenk Tanktransport specialises in the safe, reliable movement of complex bulk liquids, supporting customers from refinery feedstocks to future fuels. When precision and safety matter, the industry depends on specialist bulk transport.

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Want to know more? [schenk-tanktransport.com](https://www.schenk-tanktransport.com)

# Refining relationships through resilience for over 100 years



Stanlow is a key contributor to the UK's energy security. Under Essar Energy Transition Fuels, it's building on that heritage with a clear plan to develop the country's leading low carbon energy hub.

From its base in the North West, Stanlow has supported communities, industry, and transport partners, and is a key part of the UK's energy landscape.

The company's resilience comes from listening to customer feedback and continuous reinvestment. Over the last year, it has delivered one of its most significant site improvement programmes to date. As part of a major turnaround, the refinery increased its production capacity by 8%. This is a direct boost to national fuel security and a major signal of confidence in Stanlow's long-term future.

*Essar Energy Transition Fuels' refinery  
Stanlow, North West England*



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[www.eetfuels.com](http://www.eetfuels.com)

Meet the team at stands **3-4**



Essar Energy Transition recently installed the UK's first hydrogen-ready furnace at Stanlow - an important step towards creating the world's leading low carbon process refinery.



Essar Energy Transition Fuels' integrated network provides customers with reliable access to required products, delivered on schedule and on competitive terms. This is supported by a long-standing, relationship-driven, commercial model that offers flexibility, dedicated account management, and a customer-centric service tailored to meet the needs of businesses and resellers nationwide.

Building on its best year of domestic sales, it is strengthening its capabilities to ensure it can continue to support the evolving needs of its customers. Its resilience and partnerships remain at the heart of this investment, future-proofing services for both new and existing customers.

Come and speak to the team on stands 3-4 to discuss your needs for today and hear about the future plans for Stanlow at the UKIFDA Expo & Conference in Liverpool, on Wednesday 15 and Thursday 16 April 2026.



*Stanlow has served the UK for more than a century. We've made significant strides in strengthening our resilience, and we're committed to supporting customers through the UK's evolving energy landscape.*

*I'd be delighted for you to stop by our stand, meet the team, and explore how we can work together.*

Carlos Rojas  
Chief Marketing Officer at Essar Energy Transition Fuels



## 2026 EVENT SPONSORS

UKIFDA APPRECIATES THE SUPPORT OF ALL THE SPONSORS OF THIS YEAR'S ESSENTIAL INDUSTRY EVENT.

Ken Cronin, UKIFDA CEO said: "UKIFDA extends sincere thanks to all partners for their continued support and commitment to the industry's shared progress.

"With strong sponsorship backing and an exciting awards programme ahead, UKIFDA EXPO & Conference 2026 promises to be an unmissable highlight in the industry calendar, bringing together expertise, innovation and collaboration as we 'Shape the Future of Liquid Fuels', together."



### Headline sponsor

Phillips 66 returns as the event's main sponsor, ensuring a high calibre gathering of industry professionals.



### Dinner

This highly-regarded industry event is sponsored by leading renewable fuel supplier Prema Energy – a company proudly supporting the industry's transition to low-carbon liquid energy solutions.



### Café Area

A specialist provider to the industry, AIM Recruit brings its vibrant energy to the Café Area.



### President's Drinks Reception

Tank monitoring technology specialist Otodata is sponsoring the Drinks Reception, the lively precursor to the ever-popular dinner.



### Outside space

Taking pride of place outside the centre will be fuel tanker dealer Just Tankers, sponsor of the Outside Space.



### Coffee Bike

Road tanker manufacturer Lakeland Tankers is sponsoring the much-appreciated Coffee Bike.

### Awards sponsors



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# EXHIBITOR PROFILES

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**AJAK Energy 39**

Wherever you are, we've got you covered

**Ajax Solutions 1 & 2**

Advanced tank level monitoring and telemetry systems designed for the fuel distribution, industrial, and energy sectors.

**Alfons Haar 71**

The one stop shop for tanker operators in the UK.

Celebrating its 75th Anniversary, Alfons Haar continues to go from strength to strength. With complete in-house design and manufacturing of all of our equipment, direct sales in the UK and a service department providing repair and maintenance across the UK and Ireland.

**Alpeco 84**

Global liquid handling and flow control equipment supplier for over 40 years. An extensive range of road tanker products, alongside fuel handling, depot and industrial processing equipment.

**BoilerJuice 94**

Online heating oil marketplace and independent platform of choice for heating oil suppliers.

**CDS 78**

Market leading innovator CDS has been developing software for the downstream liquid fuel industries for over 50 years.

**Celestia TST 76**

An end-to-end IoT provider bringing Nive!Watcher to UKIFDA 2026 – an advanced remote tank monitoring and order automation solution built to help diesel distributors win more repeat business through a proactive, data-driven customer service.

**Cobo 83b, 91, 98 / 99**

<http://cisternascobo.com>

**Collins Youldon 35**

Collins Youldon is a leading manufacturer of electric and hydraulic rewind catherine reels and horizontally mounted hoses in mild steel, 304 and 316 stainless steel for a wide variety of applications.

**Concrete Canvas 61**

Created specifically for erosion control and containment applications, Concrete Canvas (CC) is a flexible, concrete filled geosynthetic which provides a thin and durable concrete layer when hydrated.

**Delivery Technology Solutions Ltd 83**

With over 5,000 vehicles across local, national, and international fuel logistics businesses live on the platform, D.T.S. is a leading supplier of In Cab Computer Solutions for fuel logistics.

**Designed for Safety 65**

We design, manufacture and supply road tanker safety equipment, with a full range of PPE, and have been established for over 40 years.

**Dreamtec 40**

<http://www.dreamtecsoftware.com/uk>

**DTN 58**

DTN is a global, data, analytics, and technology company that delivers trusted operational intelligence for organisations with complex supply chains worldwide.

**Econoprint 28**

Supplier of print, promo, media and marketing services to the fuel distribution industry.

**Essar Energy Transition (EET Fuels) 3 & 4**

Essar is a leading player in the decarbonisation of the UK economy through its delivery of the UK's first low carbon refinery and energy transition hub at Stanlow, England. Essar is transforming for tomorrow, with significant investment in low carbon energy transition projects.

**Emco Wheaton 86**

Pioneering Fuel Systems for a Sustainable Tomorrow. With a rich history of innovation, EMCO Wheaton is your go-to provider for advanced, eco-friendly fuel systems that drive efficiency, reliability, and sustainability in the ever-evolving world of energy.

**Exloc Instruments UK Ltd 87a**

A leading provider of hazardous area equipment in the UK.

**Exolum 45**

<https://exolum.com/>

**Filtertechnik 80**

A manufacturer and supplier of high-quality filtration solutions for oils and process fluids.

**Fletcher Stewart 70a**

A family-run business with decades of experience in the global distribution of specialist equipment. Distributor of SORB@XT – a 100% organic binder that can be used on water, roads and all other surfaces in the event of damage.

**Four Data 49a**

<https://fourdata.io/>

**FoxInsights 77**

Remote monitoring intelligence for heating oil, diesel, lubricants, LPG, and waste oil. Data-driven, customer-oriented solutions that creates added value for sales, marketing, and logistics.

**Fuel Additive Science Technologies Ltd 63**

Manufacturer of high-performance fuel additives that protect fuel, improve combustion, and solve real-world issues across heating oil, gas oil, and diesel markets.

**Fuel Oil News 70c**

Supporting Today. Shaping Tomorrow. Fuel Oil News: Informing, supporting, and advocating for the fuel distribution industry – helping businesses thrive today while shaping a sustainable future.

**Fuelsoft 43**

<http://www.fuelsoft.co.uk>

**Greenery 14**

National fuel supplier and manufacturer of biodiesel from waste, helping customers through the energy transition. In-house haulage fleet Flexigrid provides flexible haulage solutions for third parties across the country.

**Harlequin Manufacturing Ltd 46**

<https://www.harlequinplastics.co.uk>

**Hazchem 6**

Supplying quality workwear, PPE and safety equipment to the fuel distribution industry.

**IFC Inflow 59**

A leading UK-based supplier of liquid tanker loading equipment and safe tanker access and fall prevention systems with nearly 40 years of experience in the tanker loading industry.

**Indox Energy Systems 97**

Manufacturer of equipment for the transport, distribution, and storage of fuels and liquefied gases (air gases, LPG, LNG).

**Integer Micro Systems 69**

<http://www.ims-integer.com/>

**Intertek 64**

Caleb Brett in the UK provides inspection and laboratory testing services to measure quality and quantity of crude oil, gas, petroleum, petrochemical and chemicals products.

**J W Hinchliffe (Tanks) Ltd 81**

A UK-based specialist contractor providing fuel and oil tank services for over 40 years.

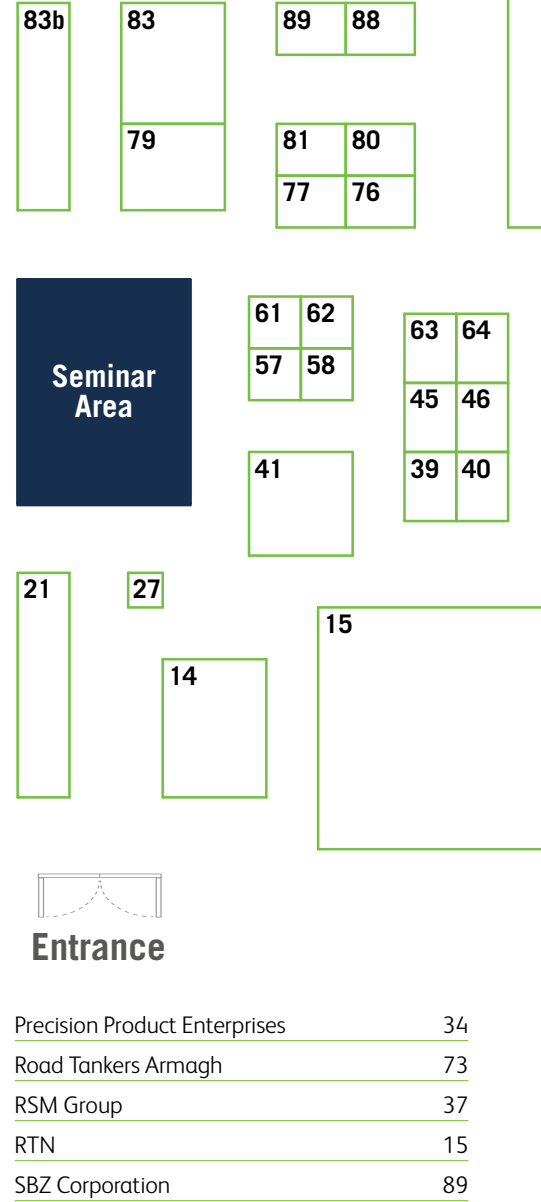
**Just Tanker Spares 7**

<https://justtankerspares.com/about/>



## EXPO FLOORPLAN AND EXHIBITOR LIST

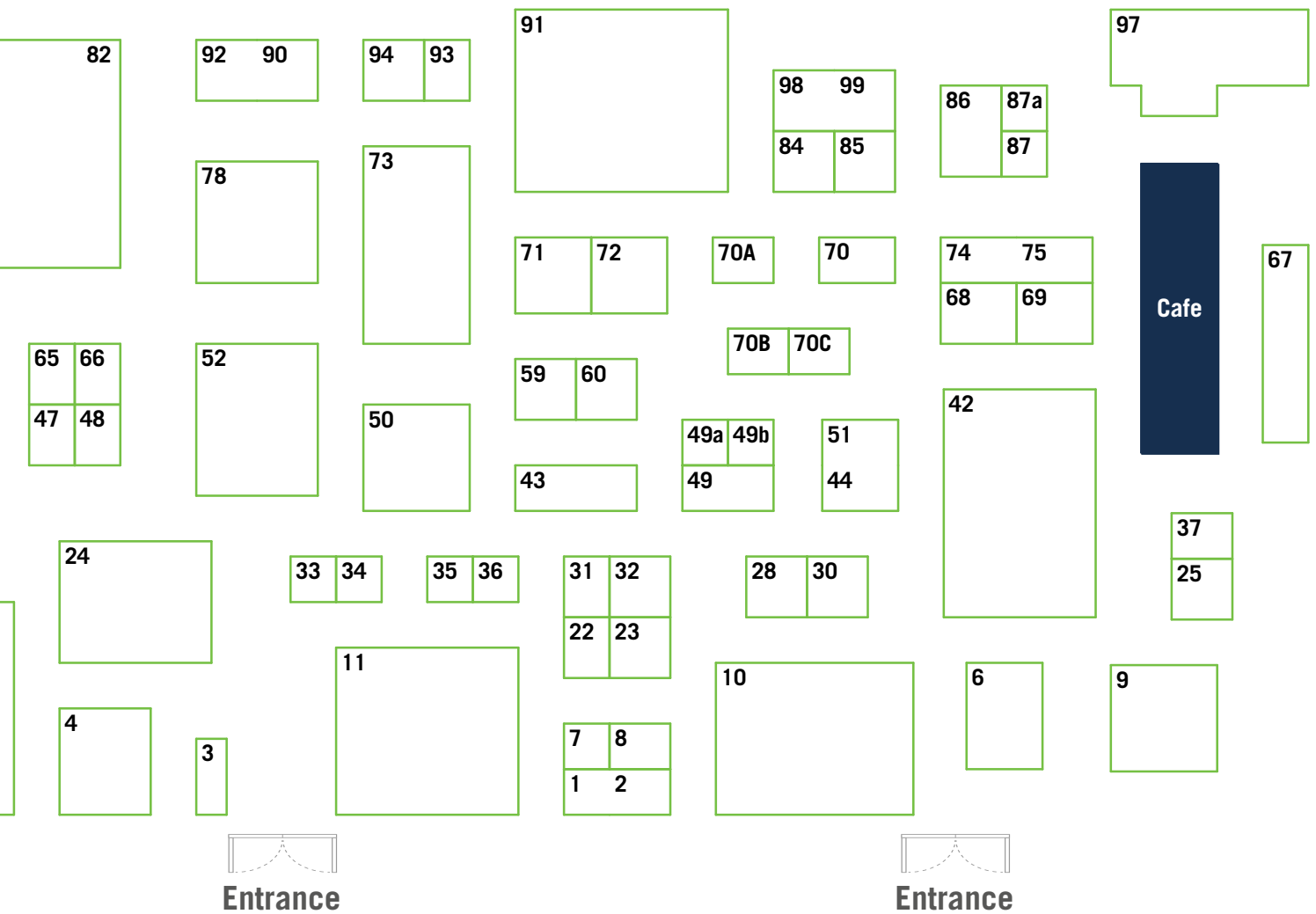
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| Ajak Energy                        | 39       | HAZCHEM SAFETY LTD                      | 6       |
| Ajax solutions                     | 1 & 2    | IFC Inflow                              | 59      |
| Alfons Haar                        | 71       | IMS Integer                             | 69      |
| Alpeco                             | 84       | INDOX Energy Systems                    | 97      |
| Boilerjuice                        | 94       | Intertek Caleb Brett                    | 64      |
| Celestia TST                       | 76       | J W Hinchliffe (Tanks) Ltd & Inspectank | 81      |
| Cobo tankers & services            | 91       | Just tanker spares                      | 7       |
| Cobo tankers & services            | 83B      | Kässbohrer UK                           | 82      |
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| Concrete Canvas                    | 61       | Magnus Monitors                         | 57      |
| D.T.S. Ltd                         | 83       | Magyar                                  | 11      |
| Designed for safety                | 65       | MB Energy                               | 70      |
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| DTN                                | 58       | MechTronic Ltd                          | 24      |
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### **Magyar 11**

<http://www.gmagyar.com/>

### **MB Energy 70**

Part of the MB Energy Group, MB Energy does business as both an importer and a wholesaler of petroleum products and biofuels to energy retailers, service stations, and major commercial clients.

### **MechTronic Ltd 21 & 24**

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### **Meller Flow Trans 50**

<http://melleruk.com/>

### **Mitchell & Webber Industrial services 79**

<https://www.mitwebservices.co.uk/>

### **National Logistics Training Consortium (NLTC) 36**

Setting the Gold Standard in Fuel & ADR Training. A UK provider of specialized ADR and petroleum-specific training solutions.

### **Navigator Terminals UK Limited 32**

<http://www.navigatorterminals.com>

### **Oamps Hazardous Industries 47**

<https://www.oamps.co.uk>

### **Oilshield 72**

<https://www.oilshield.co.uk/>

### **ORTEC 93**

Software provider for planning and optimising logistics processes.

### **Otodata Tank Monitors 44 & 51**

Designs, develops, manufactures and sells award-winning tank monitors, management software, and mobile app to businesses worldwide.

### **PEIMF+ 85**

Representing organisations in the downstream petroleum industry in the UK and Ireland, with 130+ member companies across contractors and ancillary services.

### **Pepperl+Fuchs 62**

<https://www.pepperl-fuchs.com/usa/en/>

### **Petroineos Fuels Ltd 68**

<https://www.ineos.com>

### **Petroleum Driver Passport Scheme 8**

Training and assessment scheme for all petroleum product drivers; developed and owned by the Downstream Fuel Distribution Forum.

### **Phillips 66 Limited 41**

A leading UK wholesale fuel supplier, with strategic supply positions at 30 terminals nationwide. Our network is underpinned by our Humber Refinery, which plays an important role in the UK's energy security and provides around 1,500 jobs (including contractor roles).

### **Precision Products Enterprises 34**

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### **Road Tankers Armagh 73**

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### **RSM Group 37**

<https://rsmgroup.uk/>

### **RTN Lakeland 15**

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### **SBZ Corporation 89**

Supplier of fuel additives and related solutions that support the safe, efficient movement of fuels through terminals, storage facilities and distribution networks worldwide.

### **Scully UK Ltd 22**

Established in 1936, pioneered dynamic self-checking and failsafe overfill prevention, point level detection, and static grounding controls for the safe and efficient transfer and storage of hazardous and volatile liquid products.

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Provider of advanced fuel filtration and equipment solutions to protect fuel quality and operational reliability.

### **SOS Sales 10**

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### **StuvEx by STIF 49b**

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### **Tasca Tankers 9**

<https://www.tascatankers.ltd.uk/>

### **TEC 23**

Fluid transfer experts.

### **TectoGroup 48**

<https://tectogroup.co.uk/>

### **The Oil Market Journal 74 & 75**

<http://www.the-omj.com>

### **Touchstar 90 & 92**

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### **Tranemo Advanced Workwear 87**

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### **Valero Energy Ltd 52**

<https://www.valero.com>

### **Williams Tanker Services / TIP Tankers 42**

<https://williamsts.com/>

### **Wolfe Power Club 70b**

The Number One Energy podcast on Apple and Spotify and number seven in the business category.

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# A DAY IN THE LIFE...

**Blaid Raybould**

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 **BLAID RAYBOULD**, HEAD OF UK GROUND FUELS AT GREENERGY, TO DISCOVER HOW BLAID SPENDS A TYPICAL DAY.



## My alarm goes off at...

5:30am. Or at least that's the intention. In reality, it's more of a battle between me and the snooze button until 6:00.

## The first thing I do is...

Fend off an attack from my kitten as I walk out of the bedroom, ultimately tripping over her and wishing I'd stayed in bed.

## I prepare for the day ahead by...

If the weather is good, I like to walk into work and get some fresh air before the working day. Unfortunately, I live in London so it's rarely good weather and the air isn't too fresh. Failing the walk, I head to the gym which sets me up for the day.

## I can't leave the house without...

An umbrella... unless it's raining, in which case I've forgotten it.

## My typical day –

As head of UK Ground Fuel, no two days are ever the same for me, but my focus is always on my teams, our customers and our suppliers. My morning always starts with a jug of coffee, a scan of what has been happening in the market and a catch up with the teams on the trading floor.

I spend some of the day working with the UK sales team, reviewing performance, evaluating opportunities and trying to understand what is happening across our portfolio. At the same time, I work closely with supply and operations, making sure product is where it should be and moving smoothly through terminals and customer sites across the country.

Some work is planned and strategic, other moments are unexpected and require quick action: a terminal outage, issues with an incoming vessel and geopolitical events that causes the market to swing, turning

a calm Tuesday into an intense job to make the best decisions to protect our customers and our business.

Some days I'm travelling and out meeting customers and partners, talking growth and long-term plans. Other days I'm desk-based, living in spreadsheets and Teams calls. Either way, I've found every day at Greenergy happens at pace, which keeps things entertaining!



## My most memorable work moment...

Going onboard my first oil tanker when I was working as an operator and understanding the magnitude of the vessel and the scale of operations... it put into perspective what I was doing when I was sending instructions from behind a desk.

## The most challenging part of my job...

Making sure I have a plan A and B all the time – I can easily wake up to a situation that is very different situation to when I left work the day before – the world of fuel supply doesn't stop overnight.

## The best part of my job...

Working in a company of good, hard working and intelligent people where I enjoy coming into the office every day.

## I relax after work by...

I like to meet with friends and my partner and make the most of what is happening in London – I'm not very good at sitting still for too long.

## My favourite meal is (breakfast, lunch or evening meal)...

Dinner – My boyfriend has never made us a meal that isn't 10/10... I could never eat under-seasoned food again!

## On my bedside table is...

A glass of water and house plant.

## The last thing I do each day is...

Set 6 alarms for the next day and place my phone at the other end of the bedroom. I sleepwalk and so I need to stop myself turning it off in my sleep!

## I'm normally in bed by...

11.30pm – as soon as my head hits the pillow, I'm gone!

# Thoughts for the day: **Commercial reality vs transition ambition**

AFTER SHARING HIS TYPICAL DAY WITH US, BLAID SHARED HIS THOUGHTS ON THE ADOPTION OF RENEWABLE FUELS, CUSTOMER PRIORITIES AND WHAT FUTURE SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE.

**From your vantage point managing UK ground fuels, where do you see the biggest gap between the ambition of the energy transition and what customers can realistically adopt today – and how can the industry help bridge that gap?**

With regards to alternative fuels, UK incentives for biofuels, such as biodiesel, have fallen far behind the mandates we see across Europe. HVO is a good drop-in fuel to replace diesel, however the differential above diesel that customers and consumers have to pay comes at a considerable cost. Increasing the amount of renewable fuel that fuel suppliers are obligated to supply to the UK market could help stimulate demand in the UK.

**What are UK customers prioritising right now when it comes to fuel choice? And how has that shifted over the past 12–18 months?**

Over the last 12 months, there has been significant change in our domestic refining capacity, following the closure of the Prax LOR

and Petroineos Grangemouth refineries in 2025. In the initial months following both closures, there were material shifts in the UK balances, leaving many customers with restricted supply and needing to react quickly to secure products for their homes, forecourts and depots. Security of supply and reliability has been a top focus for our customers.

**Is the industry spending enough time helping customers reduce and decarbonise fuel use?**

Fuel supply has always been a low margin, high volume business in the UK with tight margins and capital-intensive infrastructure, therefore scale does matter. Fuel suppliers support customers in reducing carbon emissions through adoption of renewable fuels, optimising blends, improving supply chain efficiency and providing clear data to enable informed decisions.

As an industry we continue to enhance our offer of renewable fuel solutions and create strong partnerships with our customers to support them navigating the energy transition.

**When you look ahead five years, what does “success” look like for UK ground fuels – for the sector as a whole?**

Resilience, adaptability and commercial sustainability.

Ground fuels still underpin huge parts of the UK economy – from logistics and construction to agriculture and emergency services. In five years’ time, success is a supply chain that continues to deliver securely, competitively and without disruption, despite market volatility and the energy transition.

As demand patterns change and the energy transition presents more scalable and viable alternatives, we need to be able to adapt and integrate without compromising energy security, whilst remaining competitive for the consumer and attractive to business.

Ultimately, success for our sector is to remain a critical part of the UK’s evolving energy system, managing the decline of traditional fossil fuels and developing ways to deliver alternative fuel solutions.



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# The ATEX approved truck tester is here: Raising the standard for tank truck safety.

A NEW, HAZARD AREA-APPROVED, MOBILE TRUCK TESTER FROM SCULLY SIGNAL COMPANY USES ENHANCED DIGITAL FUNCTIONALITY TO VALIDATE CRITICAL ONBOARD SYSTEMS WITH REDUCED DOWNTIME.



At petroleum terminals and truck/trailer repair workshops, overfill prevention and grounding systems are only as reliable as their last verified test. As compliance requirements tighten globally, the ability to validate tank truck safety systems has become operationally critical.

**Celebrating 90 years** of safety, reliability, and innovation, Scully Signal Company has expanded its capabilities by introducing its new Mobile Truck Tester 1000 (MTT 1000) with hazardous area approvals and enhanced digital functionality, positioning the unit not just as a workshop tool, but as a next-gen, field-ready instrument for modern fuelling operations.

## Hazardous area approved for terminal use

The approved MTT 1000 for use in hazardous environments under ATEX and IECEx certifications. The tester itself is certified for use in Zone 2 environments with an intrinsically safe interface to the socket, enabling safe deployment in petroleum loading lanes and other classified areas where explosive atmospheres may be present under abnormal conditions.

This approval allows terminal operators and service technicians to conduct sensor wet-tests, verify grounding, and verifying Safe Loading Pass HLCO tests, minimising downtime and quickly identifying any issues while the vehicle is still in a hazardous location.

## Comprehensive system validation

The MTT 1000 is designed to validate three critical onboard systems prior to loading:

- Overfill prevention



- Ground verification
- Truck identification

Compatibility includes 2-wire optic and 5-wire optic sensors, ensuring coverage across all fleets and varying equipment configurations commonly found in UK and European distribution networks.

## Designed for true single-operator testing

A key operational benefit of the Mobile Truck Tester is its ability to support single-person wet testing. Using a phone or tablet (in a safe area), users can simulate a wet sensor without requiring a second operator.

The tester also supports individual sensor testing through a socket adapter and wire harness provided in the kit, enabling targeted diagnostics when troubleshooting. This reduces unnecessary component replacement and shortens repair cycles.

For fleet managers and independent repair facilities, the result is faster turnaround, clearer fault identification, and improved documentation.

## App-driven documentation and traceability

The mobile application enhances both usability and record-keeping. Test results are displayed clearly and can be generated as

shareable reports. Logs can be archived by truck ID, customer, or work order, creating a structured test history aligned with compliance expectations.

The app offers insight and access to options beyond what the tester itself offers:

- Advanced fault notifications provide detailed failure modes.
- Backup and restore capabilities protect historical data.
- Global real-time clock adjustments ensure accurate time stamping across regions.

## Supporting compliance through practical innovation

For terminal operators, fleet managers, and service providers alike, the shift toward documented, repeatable field verification reflects a broader industry trend: compliance is continuous.

By combining hazardous area approval, multi-system compatibility, grounding verification, and structured digital reporting, the MTT 1000 supports a more disciplined approach to truck testing.

As the downstream fuel sector continues to evolve, tools that reduce downtime while strengthening safety integrity will define future best practices.

**To learn more about the Mobile Truck Tester, which model suits your requirements, and Scully's 90-year commitment to overfill prevention innovation, visit Stand 22 at UKIFDA.**

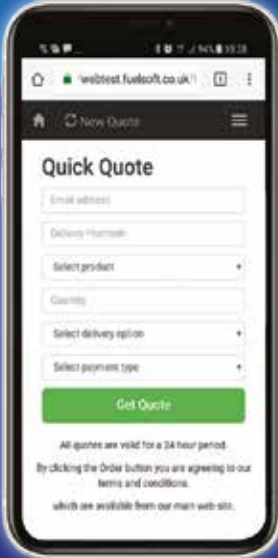


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Delivering Insight is your monthly business-critical briefing. Designed to give SME distributors clear, actionable guidance to work smarter and more profitably. Although larger distribution groups may have in-house HR teams, fleet managers, compliance officers and analysts, many SME FODs operate without those resources. Delivering Insight is your virtual support team – a growing knowledge base that builds into a valuable reference library for your business, helping you make informed decisions that safeguard your business today and strengthen it for the future. This month, we’re asking the question:

# Fixed price fuel option: Should distributors be offering one to their customers?

## Introduction

For fuel distributors, pricing strategy has always been a balancing act, but in today’s volatile market, it has become a highly critical commercial risk decision.

Fixed-price fuel offerings, which allow customers to lock in a set rate for a defined period or volume, promise certainty for customers and stronger retention for distributors. But they also introduce exposure that, if not carefully managed, can quickly erode margins.

So, should FODs be offering fixed price contracts – and if so, how can they do it safely?

This article explores this question – outlining the key benefits and considerations for both distributors and customers before offering practical recommendations.

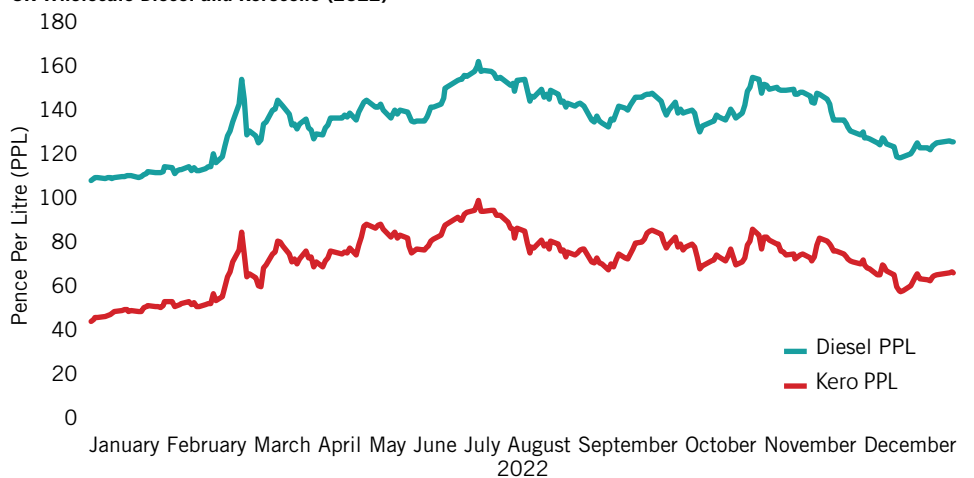
## Section 1: Wholesale Pricing – Volatile Markets

Wholesale prices are based on published settlement prices (the price at which the market closed on a specific day) that reflect product trading in Northwest Europe. As demonstrated all too well by recent global events, prices can fluctuate sharply due to factors beyond the control of either the customer or the distributor. Influencing factors include geopolitical events, shifting supply and demand dynamics, and even the performance of the Great British Pound (GBP); as oil and refined products are traded in USD, the stronger GBP performs against USD, the lower the price for the UK buyer.

Key examples of significant volatility in recent years include the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused an unprecedented demand shock and led to a collapse in oil prices. In contrast, Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine caused prices to surge in March 2022.

The following chart shows the volatility of UK wholesale diesel and kerosene prices in 2022, as a result of the Russia-Ukraine war.

UK Wholesale Diesel and Kerosene (2022)



More recently, prices surged after US-Israel strikes on Iran on the 28th of February 2026, marking the start of the Iran war. Conflict in the Middle East has severely disrupted global energy markets, with Iran effectively closing the Strait of Hormuz, a vital chokepoint for approximately 20% of the world’s oil exports, by targeting vessels attempting to transit the waterway.

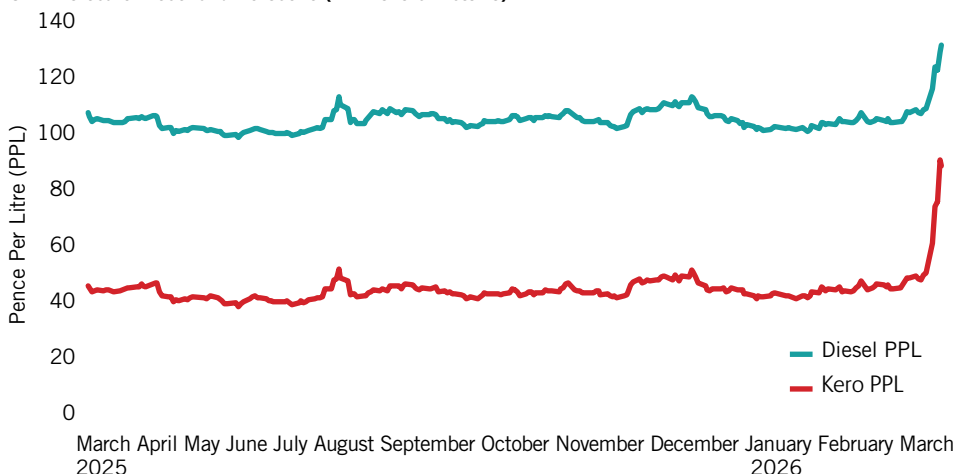
The chart below shows UK wholesale diesel

and kerosene prices over the last 12 months, highlighting recent volatility.

During periods of peak volatility, intraday prices (which fluctuate minute-by-minute) can change dramatically, causing published settlement prices (the official closing price for the day) to also vary significantly day-to-day.

In the last 12 months, the largest daily variance for wholesale diesel was ~8ppl and ~15ppl for wholesale kerosene at the

UK Wholesale Diesel and Kerosene (12-Months Historic)



beginning of March, as a result of the Iran war.

During the first week of the war, UK wholesale diesel rose roughly 22ppl and kerosene by 38ppl, demonstrating how rapidly prices can surge in response to geopolitical events, even over a short period. (charts right)

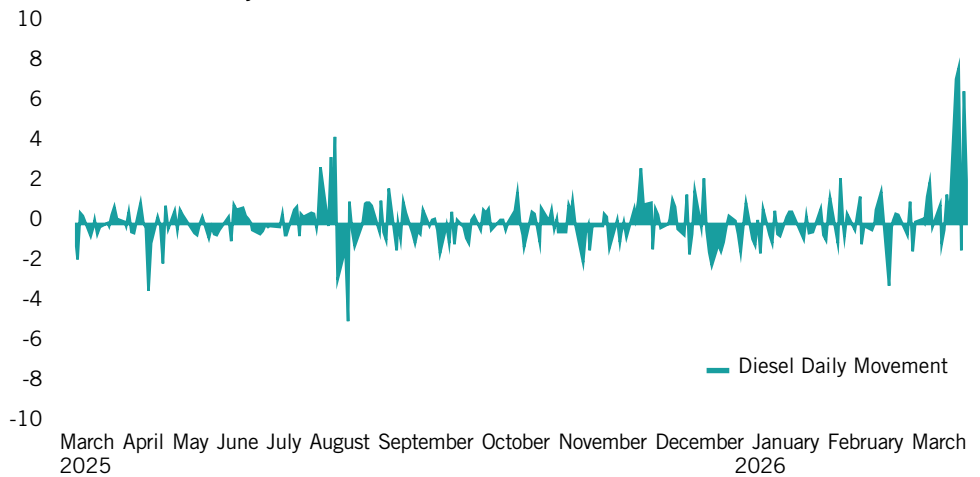
**Section 2:  
Fixed Price Offerings**

FODs may offer fixed price contracts, allowing customers to lock in the cost of fuel for a predetermined period and volume. A wholly fixed or ‘hedged’ price, whereby the total ppl cost is agreed for the contract duration, differs from contracted supply priced at a fixed premium above a published wholesale benchmark, commonly known as index-linked pricing.

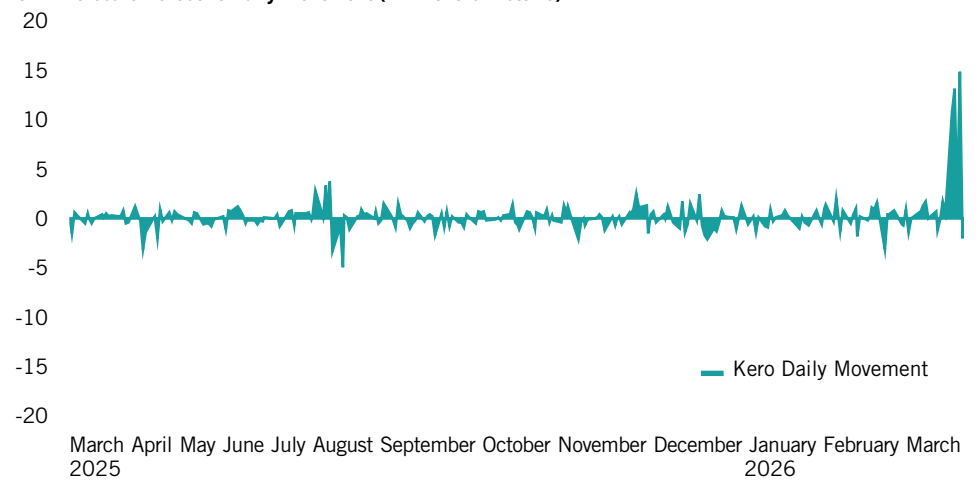
In a fixed price offering, customers typically nominate the expected volume (either annually or monthly) and contract period upfront. Agreements commonly range from three to eighteen months, although some providers offer terms of up to twenty-four months.

Once agreed, the price remains fixed for the duration of the contract regardless of movements in global oil and wholesale markets, no matter how volatile, giving businesses greater certainty over their fuel costs and budgets.

**UK Wholesale Diesel Daily Movement (12-Months Historic)**



**UK Wholesale Kerosene Daily Movement (12-Months Historic)**



**Fixed Pricing – A Simplified Guide**

| Step                   | Distributor                       | Customer                         |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Contract Agreement  | Set fixed term, volume, and price | Lock in fuel price, volume, term |
| 2. Hedging Strategy    | Hedge fuel purchase cost          | Receive scheduled deliveries     |
| 3. Market Fluctuations | Wholesale prices rise or fall     | Pay fixed price                  |
| 4. Managed Risk        | Manage exposure to price changes  | Fuel cost certainty              |

Fixed price contracts can take several forms depending on the supplier and the customer’s purchasing strategy:

- **Short-term or long-term fix:** Contracts may cover a few months to manage short-term price risk or extend across a full year or longer to provide longer-term cost certainty.
- **Partial fix:** Customers may fix the price on only a portion of their expected usage, purchasing the remaining volume on an index-linked or spot basis. This approach

allows them to balance price certainty with market flexibility.

- **Seasonal fix:** A price is locked in for a specific period, such as the winter heating season, helping customers manage peak demand and budget exposure.

In practice, the choice of structure is less about product design and more about risk appetite – both for the distributor and the customer. The more volume and duration that is fixed, the greater the exposure if wholesale markets move sharply in the opposite direction.

**Exposure management**

To offer a fixed price option, FODs need to manage their exposure to market volatility, ensuring they are protected if wholesale fuel prices rise above the agreed customer rate.

FODs can do this by using one of the following strategies:

- **Transactional/paper hedge:** Entering a financial agreement with a counterparty to lock in the price for the volume expected to be supplied under fixed price contracts.
- **Existing rack agreements:** Continuing to

lift fuel from existing supplier agreements, holding stock and setting customer pricing accordingly.

- **Fixed price agreements for lifting at the rack:** Entering a new agreement for lifting at a fixed rate and setting the customer’s fixed price higher.

In reality, access to these options varies significantly. Larger distributors may have established hedging relationships or supplier-backed agreements, while smaller FODs may rely more heavily on supplier pricing structures or limit fixed-price offerings to manageable volumes.

**Section 3: Benefits and considerations for customers**

Recent market volatility has again highlighted how unpredictable wholesale fuel prices can be, with dramatic and rapid swings. The key benefit of fixed pricing to customers is the provision of budgetary certainty, safeguarding against changes in fuel pricing and significantly reducing their exposure to the market. Without such controls in place,

volatility in the oil market means that budgets are impossible to plan and the profitability of any business can be jeopardised.

While wholesale prices can rise, they can also fall below the fixed rate, and customers remain obligated to pay the agreed-upon price. However, a fixed price mechanism should not be used to try to 'beat the market' e.g. fixing with the expectation that the daily market will rise. Fixed pricing should only be used in circumstances where locking in the cost can be beneficial for the customer. For example, a farm might choose a short-term fix which covers the harvest period, enabling it to plan fuel costs in advance and forecast revenue more accurately. Similarly, a residential customer may seek budgetary certainty to guard against potential spikes in heating oil prices during peak winter months, helping to manage household heating expenses.

Another advantage for customers is security of supply: those on fixed price contracts often receive priority during supply shortages (refinery outage, supply chain disruption, etc.). In 2025, two major refinery closures, Petroineos' Grangemouth refinery (April) and Prax Lindsey Oil Refinery (August) reduced the number of operational UK refineries to just four, down from nine fifteen years ago. These closures have cut domestic fuel production by around 25%, increasing reliance on imports and heightening supply chain vulnerability.

While suppliers aim to prioritise contracted customers, exceptional circumstances may still impact supply. For example, a "Force Majeure" event may delay, hinder, or prevent a supplier from fulfilling its obligations. Such events typically include any unforeseeable events beyond a party's control, including natural disasters, war, terrorism, strikes, epidemics, or government actions, and are usually addressed through a dedicated Force Majeure clause in the contract. In less severe cases, supply constraints may lead to temporary reduced or partial allocations, affecting a supplier's ability to deliver the contracted volumes. Amid the ongoing Iran war, disruptions to key shipping routes (Strait of Hormuz) and persistent attacks on energy infrastructure have tightened supply, meaning customers may experience temporary shortfalls.

### Understand obligations

Customers must also consider certain legal and operational factors before entering into a fixed price agreement. One key consideration is volume forecasting, as contracts usually require the customer to commit to purchasing a defined volume of fuel over a set period. If

## “FIXED PRICING SHOULD BE ABOUT CERTAINTY – NOT A BET ON WHERE THE MARKET IS HEADING.”

actual consumption is lower than expected, for example due to milder weather, reduced operations, or efficiency improvements, the customer may still be liable for the committed volume.

Many agreements include a "take-or-pay" clause, meaning the customer must pay for the contracted fuel even if it is not taken. This protects the supplier, who may have already secured the fuel or hedged the price in advance. Customers should therefore review the contract terms carefully, particularly those relating to volume commitments and flexibility. They should also be aware of early termination clauses, as exiting a fixed price contract before the agreed end date may trigger break or termination fees.

### Section 4: Benefits and considerations for FODs

Offering a fixed price option can deliver commercial advantages for FODs. In a competitive market, it gives customers an alternative to index-linked contracts or spot-price deliveries that fluctuate with wholesale prices. By providing price certainty, distributors can differentiate themselves from competitors and appeal to customers who value predictable fuel costs and prioritise budgetary certainty.

This offering may also be digitalised, with a streamlined sign-up process, online ordering platform, and automated pricing tools, making it easier for customers to access fixed-price contracts while enhancing operational efficiency for the distributor.

Fixed pricing can also support stronger customer relationships, loyalty, and retention, as customers are 'locked-in' for the duration of the contract. This can provide a more stable customer base and greater visibility over future demand. Contracted volumes may also help improve revenue and cash flow forecasting, which is particularly valuable for smaller businesses that need to manage working capital and stock purchasing carefully.

However, if a customer encounters financial difficulty and cannot accept deliveries and make payments, FODs may face delayed or irrecoverable revenue. Smaller distributors with limited cash reserves are particularly vulnerable,

making thorough credit assessments and appropriate financial safeguards essential before offering fixed price agreements.

Smaller distributors may also have more limited access to financial instruments or counterparties to hedge effectively. However, FODs must carefully manage their exposure to market volatility in order to offer fixed prices to customers, protecting themselves against any rise in fuel prices, which as current market conditions show, can be substantial.

Also, if fixed prices are set too aggressively in a competitive market, distributors risk locking in contracts at levels that become unprofitable if wholesale prices rise. In volatile conditions, even small miscalculations in margin can quickly scale across contracted volumes.

Finally, if a FOD's customer base is predominantly made up of residential consumers ordering in smaller quantities and at irregular intervals, FODs may be required to aggregate multiple customer commitments into a single larger volume before executing a hedge, enabling the distributor to reach minimum required trade sizes.

### Summary and recommendations

Fixed price fuel contracts can offer advantages for both customers and distributors. Customers gain budget certainty and protection against sudden price spikes, while distributors can strengthen customer retention, stabilise demand forecasts, and improve cash-flow planning.

To mitigate risk, FODs should take a conservative, phased approach: begin by offering fixed price contracts to a small test group of reliable customers. Use simple spreadsheet modelling to calculate break-even margins against supplier costs and build in contingency buffers for potential price swings. For example, a 10,000-litre contract at 80ppl could be stress-tested against wholesale fluctuations of 5ppl to gauge financial exposure.

Finally, providing a hybrid mix of fixed price, fixed premium, and spot pricing allows FODs to offer flexibility, meet diverse customer needs, and strengthen commercial relationships, while carefully managing risk and safeguarding margins.

### Conclusion

For most FODs, fixed pricing is not a default offering – but a strategic tool. Used selectively, it can strengthen customer relationships and improve visibility. Used carelessly, it can expose the business to risks that are difficult to recover from.



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# What price oil? Q1 2026 in review

IN ASSOCIATION WITH *THE OIL MARKET JOURNAL*

A QUARTERLY REVIEW OF THE MOVEMENTS OF, AND IMPACTS ON, BRENT CRUDE AND HVO DIESEL PRICES. WITH INSIGHT AND DATA SUPPLIED BY THE OIL MARKET JOURNAL, WE HIGHLIGHT SOME OF THE KEY EVENTS THAT HAVE IMPACTED PRICING OVER THE QUARTER.

## World on the brink: U.S. strikes, Iran conflict and oil shock rock global order

### From Venezuela to the Gulf, US and Israeli attack on Iran sends energy markets spiralling and raises fears of a prolonged war

The world is facing its most dangerous geopolitical crisis in years, after the Israeli and U.S. military action in Iran, escalating tensions in the region, and retaliatory strikes on key energy infrastructure sent shockwaves through global markets and diplomacy.

In just over two months, events stretching from Latin America to the Middle East have redrawn the geopolitical landscape, raising fears of prolonged conflict and a severe global energy shock.

### From Caracas to confrontation

The upheaval began on **January 3**, when U.S. forces launched a surprise mission into Venezuela, disabling its air defences and capturing the country's president and his wife in a dramatic escalation of American intervention abroad.

Just days later, on **January 7**, tensions with Russia intensified after the United States seized a Russian-flagged oil tanker in the North Atlantic between Iceland and the United Kingdom.

Washington quickly moved to reshape Venezuela's oil sector. By January 9, President Donald Trump had convened major oil executives to draft plans for reviving the nation's vast but troubled oil industry.

### Iran unrest and a warning

Attention soon shifted to Iran, where anti-government protests turned deadly. By **January 13**, an estimated 2,000 demonstrators had been killed.

In a move that further inflamed tensions, President Trump publicly backed the protesters, declaring that "help is on the way" – a statement widely interpreted as a warning to Tehran.

### Greenland gambit and military build-up

At the **World Economic Forum in Davos on January 21**, Mr Trump announced that the United States was seeking ownership of Greenland for "world protection," though he insisted force would not be used. He later claimed a "framework" agreement had been reached with NATO.

The following day, the U.S. significantly expanded its military presence in the Middle East, deploying the USS *Abraham Lincoln* carrier strike group – a move seen as preparation for possible confrontation with Iran.

### Markets rattle, courts intervene

Financial markets began reacting sharply in February. On **February 2**, gold and silver prices fell steeply, dragging oil lower after Kevin Warsh – a critic of quantitative easing – was nominated as Federal Reserve chair.

In Britain, the **Bank of England** held interest rates steady on **February 5** but warned of rising unemployment and downgraded its inflation outlook, fuelling expectations of a looming rate cut.

Political turbulence deepened in Washington when the **U.S. Supreme Court** struck down Mr Trump's tariff measures on **February 20**, complicating the administration's economic strategy.

### Diplomacy collapses into war

A brief diplomatic opening emerged on **February 26**, when U.S. and Iranian officials met in Geneva.

But hopes of de-escalation quickly evaporated.

On **February 28**, U.S. and Israeli forces launched coordinated strikes on Iran, marking a dramatic turning point and triggering fears of a wider regional war.

### Energy shock and retaliation

Iran responded swiftly.

On **March 2**, it launched an attack on Saudi Arabia's largest oil refinery at Ras Tanura, while attacks on Qatar's Ras Laffan complex forced QatarEnergy to declare force majeure, disrupting twenty percent of global gas supplies.

The impact was immediate. Energy markets surged amid fears of prolonged disruption across key oil and LNG infrastructure with the extremely important Straits of Hormuz closed. According to Platts 20-21 million barrels per day of crude oil and refined products is shut in. Some 1,000 tankers are now waiting to transit the Straits. Europe has lost 37% of European jet kero import supply and Africa has lost 47% of jet kero import supply.

By **March 3**, the International Energy Agency had convened emergency talks in Paris, as governments scrambled to stabilise markets.

That same day, President Trump met with senior energy officials to assess the rapidly deteriorating situation. However, the decision to release 400 million barrels of oil did little to cool the market and prices continued to rise.

### \$150 Oil warning

With supply chains under strain, warnings of a price shock are growing louder.

On **March 6**, Qatar's energy minister cautioned that crude oil prices could spike to **\$150 per barrel**, a level that would likely trigger inflationary pressures worldwide and threaten economic stability.

### A world at a crossroads

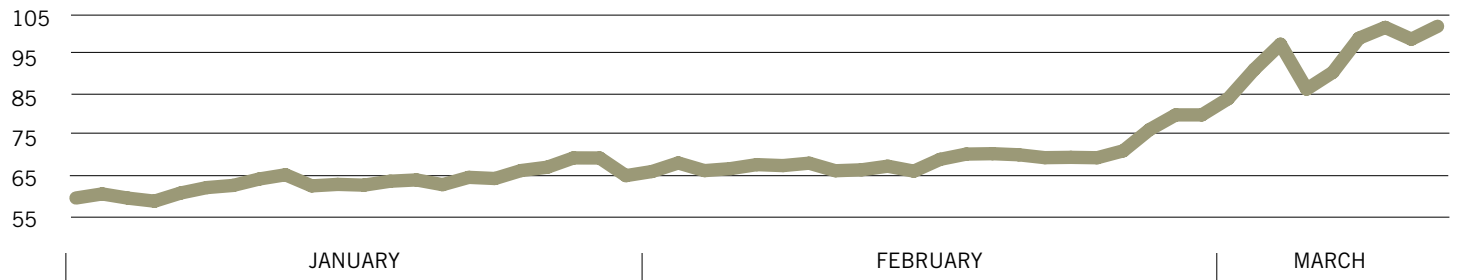
What began as a successful, targeted intervention in Venezuela, encouraged President Trump to embark on a rushed campaign in Iran and has spiralled into a multi-front crisis involving major powers and critical energy infrastructure.

With diplomacy faltering and military activity intensifying, analysts warn that the coming weeks will be decisive.

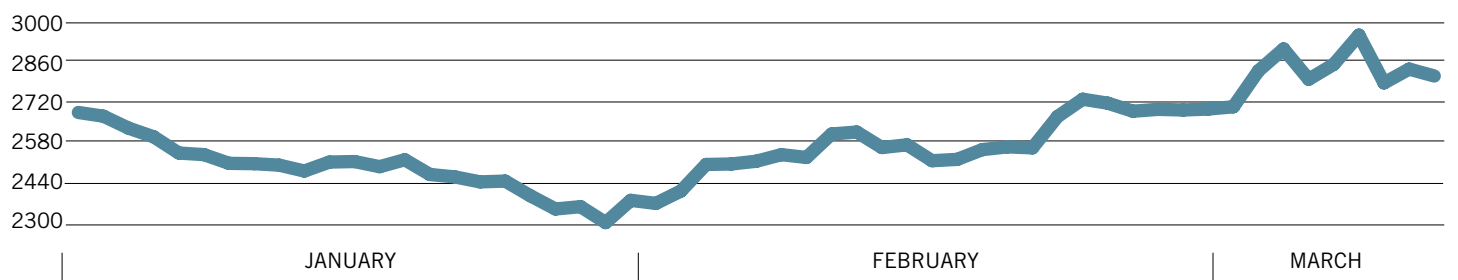
The risk now, they say, is not just regional instability – but a war that could reshape the global order.

## Q 1 prices 2026

### ICE Brent Crude - \$/b (ICE EU) (Month 1)



### HVO Class II - \$/t (Biofuel - Argus)



## Q1 2026 Key dates

### JANUARY

#### 3rd January

US military launch special mission into Venezuela, disabling the Venezuelan air defences and take the Venezuela President and his wife captive.

#### 7th January

US seizes a Russian flagged tanker in the North Atlantic between Iceland and the UK.

#### 9th January

President Trump holds talks with the leaders of oil companies to formulate to general plan on how to revive the Venezuelan oil industry.

#### 13th January

President Trump tells Iranian anti-government protesters that "help is on the way" after 2,000 protesters were killed.

#### 21st January

President Trump tells the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland that the US wants ownership of Greenland for world protection but will not use force to take it. Later he said that he had reached a "Framework" agreement with the NATO on Greenland.

#### 22st January

US military continues to build up assets in the Middle East including the deployment of the USS Abraham Lincoln Carrier Strike Group.

### FEBRUARY

#### 2nd February

Gold and silver prices fall sharply, dragging oil lower following the nomination of Kevin Warsh as the FED chairman. Mr Warsh is an experienced FED official and opposed to QE. (Massive QE during the COVID crisis caused a large rise in inflation and an asset price bubble.)

#### 5th February

Bank of England leave interest rates unchanged but lower inflation outlook and highlight rising unemployment, raising expectations of a March rate cut.

#### 20th February

US Supreme Court rules against Trump's tariffs.

#### 26th FEBRUARY

US and Iran hold talks in Geneva.

#### 28th February

US and Israel attack Iran.

### MARCH

#### 2nd March

Iran attacks Saudi's largest refinery at Ras Tanura. QatarEnergy declares force majeure on gas exports from an attack on the Ras Laffan complex.

#### 3rd March

IEA meet in Paris to discuss taking action to stabilise energy markets. President Trump to meet US Energy Secretary tonight to discuss global energy markets as a result of the military campaign against Iran.

#### 6th March

Qatar Energy Minister warns crude prices could spike to \$150/b.

All data and analysis provided by The Oil Market Journal. To find out more and request a free trial:

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# An Iran Conflict special market briefing FROM THE OIL MARKET JOURNAL

## What is happening on the jet kero market?

- Price of jet kero\* is spiking
- Outperforming crude prices
- Outperforming other refined products

\*Jet kero is used as aviation fuel and also as heating oil in the UK and Ireland

## Why are crude prices not rising as much as refined products?

- United States government and the OECD hold large emergency reserves of crude oil.
- U.S. has 439.279 mb of commercial crude stocks.\*
- U.S. has 415.441 mb of emergency reserves.\*
- This equates to almost 1 barrel in emergency reserves for every barrel of commercial stocks.
- IEA and U.S. have released crude reserves in previous wars to moderate prices and ensure supply.
- The global market started 2026 with an oversupply of 2.2 million barrels per day.\*

\* Sources: US Department of Energy, The Oil Market Journal

## What is happening on refined product markets year-to-date?

Jet Kero price +119.68%      Brent Crude price + 52.58%  
 Diesel B7 price + 30.69%      Petrol E10 price + 13.51%

## What is happening on refined product markets 25th February to 6th Mar 2026?

Jet Kero price +87.33%      Brent Crude price + 30.83%  
 Diesel B7 price + 23.48%      Petrol E10 price + 8.10%

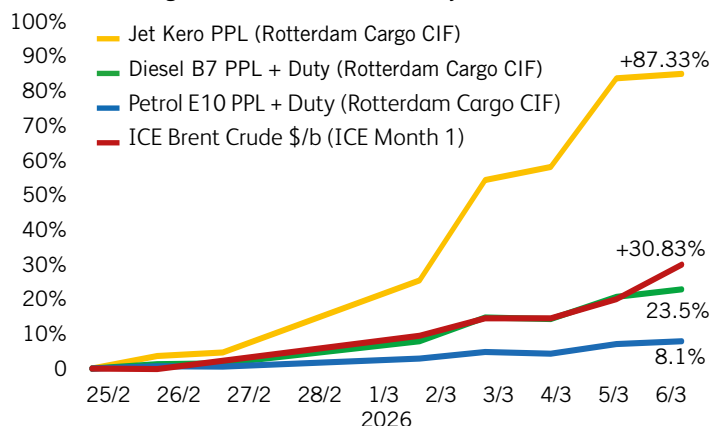
See Chart 1 below

\*Jet, diesel and petrol prices are based on Platts North-West Europe cargoes, basis Amsterdam, Rotterdam and Antwerp converted into Sterling pence per litre including UK RTFO and taxes, excluding VAT  
 Sources: The Oil Market Journal, S&P Global Energy (Platts), Brent Crude is the front month futures price. Source: ICE, The Oil Market Journal

## Fundamentals are different for each product

- Jet kero is mainly bought by airlines and delivered “just in time.” Stocks are held in storage at terminals and at airports. Demand has been rising in the “post-COVID” aviation recovery.
- UK “lost” two refineries in 2025 with the Petroineos and Prax refineries closing adding to the tightness in the European jet kero market.

**Chart 1: PPL Changes v Brent Crude 25th February to 6th March 2026**



- In 2025, 37% of European jet imports passed through the Strait of Hormuz.
- Diesel demand is in long term decline in Europe due to the transition towards electric cars.
- European refineries produce surplus volumes of petrol which were traditionally exported to West Africa. However, with the new 650,000 bpd Dangote refinery now online in Nigeria, this European export market has closed and there is now an oversupply of petrol in Europe.

## Jet kero pricing

### Jet kero price nearly doubled during the 1st week of March 2026

- Refined product supplies via the Straits of Hormuz have been lost including from the important 550,000 bpd Ras Tanura refinery in Saudi Arabia.
- China has banned refined product exports due to the concerns over Middle Eastern supply – China traditionally exports surplus “barrels” of refined product to Europe.
- Indian refineries are running low in crude oil. India is also an important supplier of “additional barrels” of jet kero to Europe.
- There is extremely strong demand from Asian buyers for jet kero with a tanker u-turning from Europe to Asia with 93 million litres of product.

## Jet kero days cover

Day’s cover is the number of days that stocks will last based on current daily demand. It is calculated by taking the total amount of oil in storage and dividing by daily demand.

Typically, oil traders use the weekly data for United States as a “proxy” for the rest of the developed world.

Early-March, the United States had days cover of:

- Crude 43.02 days
- Diesel 32.66 days
- Petrol 30.5 days
- Jet 24.5 days

The low level of jet “days cover” means the price for jet fuel is more exposed

## HVO... the low emission, non-OPEC, liquid fuel alternative to Jet Kero

In stark contrast, HVO prices are up just 0.73% in 2026

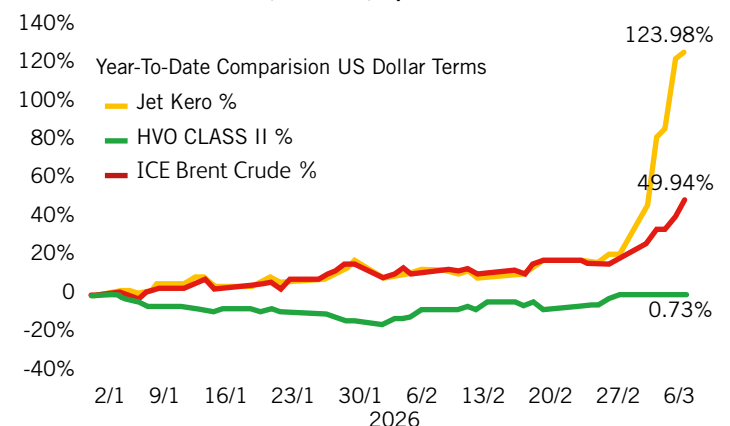
See Chart 2 below

All data and analysis supplied by The Oil Market Journal

Oil prices, news and analysis on the Rotterdam spot market and the oil futures markets in London and New York. To find out more:

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**Chart 2: HVO... low emission, non-OPEC, liquid fuel alternative to Jet Kero**



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# PORTLAND MARKET REPORT

MAY  
IN VIEW

## WHY US ACTION IN THE MIDDLE EAST HAS HANDED POWER TO THE REGIME IT INTENDED TO SUPPRESS.

For as long as oil in the Middle East has been produced, observers have agonised over the Straits of Hormuz. What would the impact be on oil markets, if this 100km wide stretch of water was to be closed to maritime traffic? Our monthly reports have covered the topic multiple times, but always from a hypothetical perspective. At the beginning of March, theory became reality, and the effect on prices has been savage and deeply worrisome. The International Energy Agency has gone as far as to say that the current blockage of the Straits of Hormuz is the most severe oil and gas supply disruption ever.

First some basics on why the Straits of Hormuz matters. The main oil and gas producing nations of the Middle East (Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi, Bahrain, Qatar, UAE) are located in the Persian Gulf, which is West of the Straits. In order to get their oil onto world markets, it must be shipped eastwards via the Straits. That volume of oil equates to 20m barrels of crude per day (bpd) or 20% of global oil consumption (100m bpd). The shipping channel also carries around 25% of the world's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and 10m bpd (10%) of global refining capacity.

Despite the oil supply glut at the start of the year, removing 20% of the world's oil supply (effectively overnight) was always going to send prices skywards. At the end of February (before the US / Israeli attacks), Brent Crude was around \$70 per barrel (bbl). As we write this report (15th March), the price has rocketed to \$103 / bbl. This 50% rise in crude prices has been surpassed by increases in refined fuels, where the situation is even bleaker. Diesel (excluding all taxes and local costs) has risen by 60% from 48 pence per litre (ppl) to 78ppl, whilst jet fuel (Kerosene) has almost doubled (up by a staggering 96%) from 49ppl on Feb 27th to 97ppl. Petrol (gasoline) has experienced the lowest price rises of the refined grades, with "only" a 40% increase, from 41 ppl to 59ppl, in the same 10 working day period.

So, what is going on here? The first obvious statement is that prices across different grades are moving at different speeds, reflecting the fact that all products

have their own specific markets and levers around supply and demand. Gasoline has risen the least because most petrol in the world is produced in the Americas and West Africa. Thus, this grade is geographically less affected by the problems in the Middle East. Jet Fuel production on the other hand is heavily focussed on the Middle East, with approximately 25% of global jet fuel and over 40% of European jet fuel, coming from the region.

## “THE EFFECT ON PRICES HAS BEEN SAVAGE AND DEEPLY WORRISOME.”

This makes jet fuel (and to a lesser extent, diesel) more susceptible to price increases than the crude oil that they derive from, because they suffer from the problem of "replaceability". In effect, markets are recognising that it is much more difficult to replace lost refining capacity, than it is to replace lost crude production. After all, we know that there is sufficient crude oil in the world (even outside of the Middle East) to meet global demand. As we saw in the aftermath of the Ukrainian invasion in 2022 (when Russian crude was removed from the market), the crude market did rebalance in the end. Refinery capacity is a different story; you can't just build a refinery overnight to increase supply and nor can existing refineries easily change their configurations to meet extra jet and diesel demand. This problem is particularly acute in Europe, where refineries are basically giant gasoline processing machines (another reason why petrol is the least affected refined grade), with limited diesel and jet fuel capability.

The rapid increase in refined prices has immediately hit consumers at the pump and it would seem clear to anyone but the most

diehard MAGA supporter, that President Trump has made a bad miscalculation. After 4 years of trying to tame the inflationary beast created by the Ukrainian invasion, the President has created an even bigger monster and for a politician that promised to bring US prices down, this surely spells trouble at the forthcoming mid-term US elections. In fact, the only way for oil to fall back down to reasonable levels is for the President to somehow convince himself that the military victory he so easily promised (and seemingly announces on a daily basis) has been achieved. At that point the conflict could "cool-off", the Straits re-open and prices should experience a sharp downturn; markets can, and do, collapse just as fast as they rally!

One final factor that the President failed to consider has been the paradoxically beneficial effect of all of this on the Iranian Oil Industry! Iran is still the 7th biggest producer in the world (4m barrels per day) and unlike every other nation in the Gulf, their ships are able to safely navigate the Hormuz channel. In fact, shipping data shows that 16.5m barrels of Iranian crude was exported via the 24 miles of nautical Iranian waters within the Straits of Hormuz, in the first 11 days of March. And with oil prices having rocketed up to circa \$100 (from \$60 at the start of the year), Trump is adding around \$160m per day straight into Iranian coffers.

None of this will feature in any Truth Social posts of course, and nor will the fact that at this juncture, it would seem that Iran and not the USA, holds the key to reopening the global energy market.

For more pricing  
information,  
see page 54

# From sensors to infrastructure: the next step for telemetry



TELEMETRY HAS MOVED FROM BEING A HELPFUL OPTIMISATION TOOL TO BECOMING CORE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR MODERN FUEL DISTRIBUTION.

AS DISTRIBUTORS INCREASINGLY RELY ON ACCURATE, TRUSTED DATA TO PLAN DELIVERIES, MANAGE RISK AND REDUCE UNNECESSARY COST, THE FOCUS IS SHIFTING FROM WHAT TELEMETRY CAN DO TO HOW IT IS DESIGNED TO PERFORM IN THE REAL WORLD, OVER THE LONG TERM.

IN A SECTOR WHERE A MISSED DELIVERY HAS SUBSTANTIAL FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS, THE RELIABILITY OF DATA MATTERS AS MUCH AS THE FUEL ITSELF.

IN THIS INTERVIEW, FUEL OIL NEWS SPEAKS WITH **DR MICHAEL KOLB**, CHIEF TECHNOLOGY OFFICER AT FOXINSIGHTS, TO EXPLORE THE THINKING BEHIND THE COMPANY'S LATEST GENERATION OF TANK MONITORING DEVICES. FROM ELIMINATING INSTALLATION ERRORS AND EXTENDING SERVICE LIFE, TO RE-EXAMINING THE VALUE OF ON-SITE VISIBILITY AND FUTURE-PROOFING SYSTEMS AGAINST EMERGING REGULATION, KOLB EXPLAINS HOW ENGINEERING DECISIONS MADE TODAY CAN FUNDAMENTALLY CHANGE HOW TELEMETRY SUPPORTS DISTRIBUTORS TOMORROW.

## Designing for the real world

FoxInsights' starting point, Michael explains, was not features but failure – identifying where telemetry breaks down in real-world conditions and designing those weaknesses out.

*"We refused to compromise on a fit-and-forget philosophy."*

## What were the non-negotiables?

Reliability in the harshest environments was our absolute baseline. We refused to compromise on a fit-and-forget philosophy.

That meant achieving a battery life of up to 15 years and a housing that surpasses IP68 standards using automotive-grade materials.

Another non-negotiable was removing the black box nature of telemetry.

We insisted on the integrated E-Ink display so that anyone, from a driver to a homeowner, could trust the device without needing an app.

## Telemetry devices often look simple, but where did the real complexity sit?

The real complexity is energy orchestration. Adding a high-contrast display and multi-standard connectivity while increasing battery life by 150% compared to previous generations required a ground-up redesign of our power management.

The FoxRadar's radar technology was also refined to reduce the dead zone to just 7cm,

while still ignoring internal obstructions such as cross-braces – a significant engineering achievement.

## How much of the final design was driven by field feedback versus engineering ambition?

It was a symbiotic process. Field feedback told us that installation errors and blind deployments – where you don't know if a device is working until you leave the site – were the biggest pain points.

Our ambition was to solve this not with more software, but with hardware. That's why we integrated the tilt sensor and the display – not just to build a better sensor, but a better installation experience.

## Why does visibility at the tank still matter?

*If reliability is the foundation, visibility becomes the differentiator – particularly for those working on site.*

Digital portals are great for planners, but they are invisible to the person standing at the tank.

By adding a world-first E-Ink display to a battery-powered device, we provide a reliable on-site reference.

An installer knows instantly if the device is level and connected. A driver can verify the volume before and after a fill. And a customer gets peace of mind at a glance.

It humanises the data.

## What kinds of errors does on-site visibility eliminate that remote data alone can't?

*"It eliminates the "I think it's working" factor."*

Without a display, an installer might leave a site thinking the device is active, only to discover later it never joined the network.

The display provides a live connection test and a battery health check on site.

It also prevents measuring the wrong tank in multi-tank setups, as the level is immediately visible.

## Was there internal debate about whether adding a display was "over-engineering" – and what ultimately convinced you it was the right call?

There is always a debate when adding components that may impact cost or battery life. But, the cost of a single failed installation – requiring a return visit – far outweighs the cost of the display.

E-Ink technology, as used in e-readers, was the key. It only consumes power when the screen refreshes, allowing us to add operational value without compromising battery life.

## Why is eliminating failure modes before they happen so important?

*Installation, rather than hardware capability, has long been a weak point in telemetry accuracy.*

It is arguably the biggest cause of bad data.

Even a small tilt can cause the signal to reflect off tank walls or internal structures rather than the fuel surface.

Historically, these errors were often only discovered weeks later when data failed to match the customer's actual usage – eroding trust and triggering emergency deliveries.

## What does the tilt sensor change in practice – in terms of avoided call-backs, trust in data, and total cost of ownership?

The tilt sensor acts as a digital spirit level.

*"We are finally solving the "Garbage In, Garbage Out" problem at source."*

If installation falls outside correct tolerances, the display warns the installer immediately.

This right-first-time approach reduces call-backs, and for the distributor, it ensures high-fidelity data from day one – essential for true logistical automation.

## Do you see this as shifting responsibility away from installers, or simply removing unnecessary risk from the system?

It's about empowering the installer.

We're not checking their work – we're giving

them certainty.

By removing the risk of human error in mounting, installers can work faster with greater confidence, reducing deployment costs for distributors.

### **Battery life. Maintenance. Lifetime cost**

*Eliminating failure isn't just about installation – it's about longevity.*

### **Fifteen-year battery life is a bold claim.**

#### **What engineering decisions made that possible – and with what trade-offs?**

It's the result of 150% more usable energy and extreme hardware efficiency.

We moved to a system architecture that remains in a deep sleep for 99.9% of its lifecycle.

The trade-off was a much longer, more expensive development phase to optimise every micro-amp of current – to us this was essential.

In 2026, no distributor wants to be planning a battery-replacement programme for 2030.

#### **How should distributors adapt maintenance planning with devices designed to be “fit and forget” for a decade or more?**

Distributors should shift from a maintenance mindset to a deployment mindset.

With a 10-to-15-year lifespan, the hardware becomes a long-term asset rather than a consumable – outlasting many of the tanks it is sitting on.

This fundamentally changes total cost of ownership and improves ROI through long-term amortisation.

#### **Is long battery life about sustainability, cost, or operational resilience – or all three?**

It's the intersection of all sustainability, cost and resilience.

Fewer battery replacements mean less waste, lower labour costs, and fewer data gaps.

In the UK, where sites can be remote, operational resilience is often the most critical of the three.

### **Architecture. Security. Future regulation**

*Looking ahead, the focus shifts from device performance to system resilience.*

#### **You've designed the platform to comply with the upcoming EU Cyber Resilience Act.**

#### **Why was it important to build for future regulation now, rather than retrofit later?**

Retrofitting security into IoT hardware is nearly impossible and extremely costly.

By designing to meet upcoming regulatory standards now, we ensure that our partners aren't left with non-compliant hardware in

future.

It's about protecting our customers' long-term investments.

#### **Do you think cybersecurity and data governance are still underestimated risks in the sector?**

Absolutely.

*“We treat fuel data with the same security mindset as financial data.”*

As telemetry moves from a gadget to core infrastructure that triggers multi-thousand-pound fuel deliveries, the data becomes a target. If a hacker can spoof tank levels, they can disrupt supply chains.

#### **How does futureproofing at the architecture level protect FoxInsights partners as expectations around data security evolve?**

It provides regulatory peace of mind.

Partners can assure their customers, that their monitoring systems meets the highest security standards. The architecture also supports secure over-the-air updates, meaning devices can evolve without hardware replacement.

#### **What this unlocks for distributors**

*With these engineering foundations in place, the practical implications for distributors become clear.*

#### **From a partner's perspective, what does this new generation of devices enable that simply wasn't practical before?**

It unlocks difficult tanks.

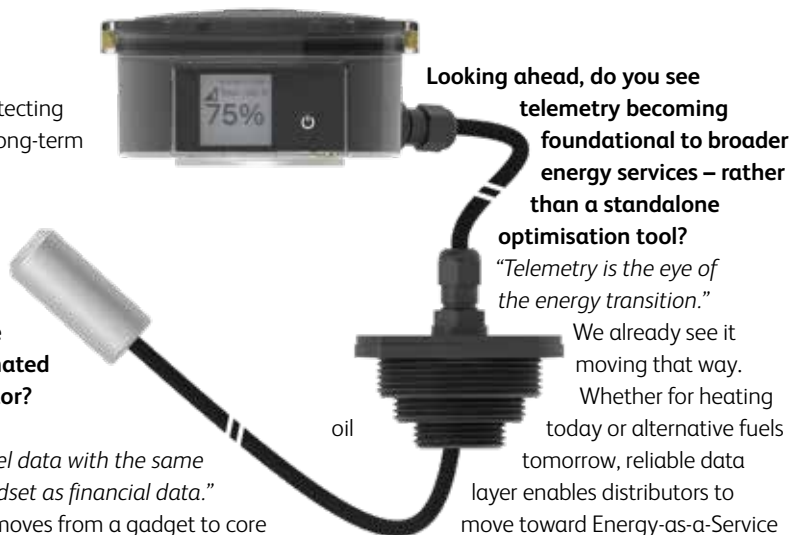
With a 7cm dead zone and advanced obstacle recognition, the FoxRadar can now accurately monitor shallow tanks, IBCs, and complex industrial vessels that previously produced unreliable readings.

Additional interfaces also allow integration with wider industrial systems, expanding the distributor's service offering beyond simply fuel.

#### **How does white-labelling change the way distributors can position telemetry within their own customer relationships?**

The large branding area on the device itself is about more than aesthetics – it's about brand stickiness – the customer sees the distributor's brand every time they check their tank.

Combined with a white-labelled app, this reinforces the distributor's position as a high-tech energy partner and service provider, not just a commodity supplier.



**Looking ahead, do you see telemetry becoming foundational to broader energy services – rather than a standalone optimisation tool?**

*“Telemetry is the eye of the energy transition.”*

We already see it moving that way.

Whether for heating today or alternative fuels tomorrow, reliable data layer enables distributors to move toward Energy-as-a-Service models – managing customers' entire energy needs automatically in response to real-time demand.

#### **What this means in practice**

- Fewer installation errors: Reduced call-backs and deployment cost
- Higher data accuracy: Improved delivery planning
- Longer device life: Better ROI and asset value
- On-site visibility: Increased trust and fewer disputes
- Future-ready systems: Reduced regulatory risk

#### **Closing thoughts**

#### **What's the most common misconception about telemetry that still frustrates you as an engineer?**

The idea that it is just a sensor.

The real value is in the data reliability not the hardware cost.

A cheap sensor with poor accuracy or a short lifespan is ultimately more expensive than a premium one.

#### **What problem in tank monitoring do you think the industry will look back on and wonder why it took so long to solve?**

Installation failure.

We've spent years dealing with sensors that were installed upside down, at an angle, or in the wrong tank. With integrated display and tilt detection, we are finally solving this at source.

#### **If you were designing FoxRadar again in five years' time, what do you think would be radically different?**

I believe we will see even more edge intelligence.

Devices won't simply report levels; they will predict issues such as leaks or tank integrity failures.

And the hardware foundations for that future are already being built.

# From theft to recovery: how technology delivered for Tate Fuel Oils

FOLLOWING OUR RECENT REPORT ON HOW TATE FUEL OILS USED DTS TECHNOLOGY TO THWART A THEFT INCIDENT, WE TAKE A CLOSER LOOK AT THE TECHNOLOGY BEHIND THE SUCCESSFUL RECOVERY – AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR DISTRIBUTORS CONSIDERING SIMILAR SYSTEMS.

WHILE THE ORIGINAL INCIDENT HIGHLIGHTED THE GROWING RISK OF THEFT ACROSS THE SECTOR, IT ALSO BROUGHT INTO FOCUS THE BROADER ROLE OF INTEGRATED TRACKING AND DEVICE MANAGEMENT IN IMPROVING VISIBILITY, CONTROL AND DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY.

## The technology behind the recovery

At the heart of the recovery was a tablet-based system supported by mobile device management (MDM) software, giving full remote control over each unit.

This capability proved critical. The system allowed the team to:

- Track the precise location of the device in real time
- Lock down access remotely
- Restrict functionality, rendering the device effectively useless to thieves

Unlike more basic tracking setups, the inclusion of MDM adds an additional layer of security – not just locating assets, but protecting the data held within them. As DTS explains, devices without this level of control remain vulnerable to misuse and data breaches.

The lockdown functionality also had a practical deterrent effect. With no accessible applications or obvious resale value, the stolen device offered little incentive for further interference.

One limitation, however, is common across all mobile tracking solutions: battery life. Once disconnected from a power source, tracking continues only until the battery is depleted, with the system recording a final known location before shutdown.

## Embedding the system in operations

For Tate Fuel Oils, the technology was not implemented as an anti-theft measure, but as part of a wider digitalisation strategy through DTS.

Ease of use for drivers was a key factor in the decision, alongside integrated truck-specific navigation and ongoing support.

Initial driver scepticism – shaped by previous experience with less integrated systems – was quickly addressed through hands-on onboarding and responsive remote support. This early engagement proved critical.

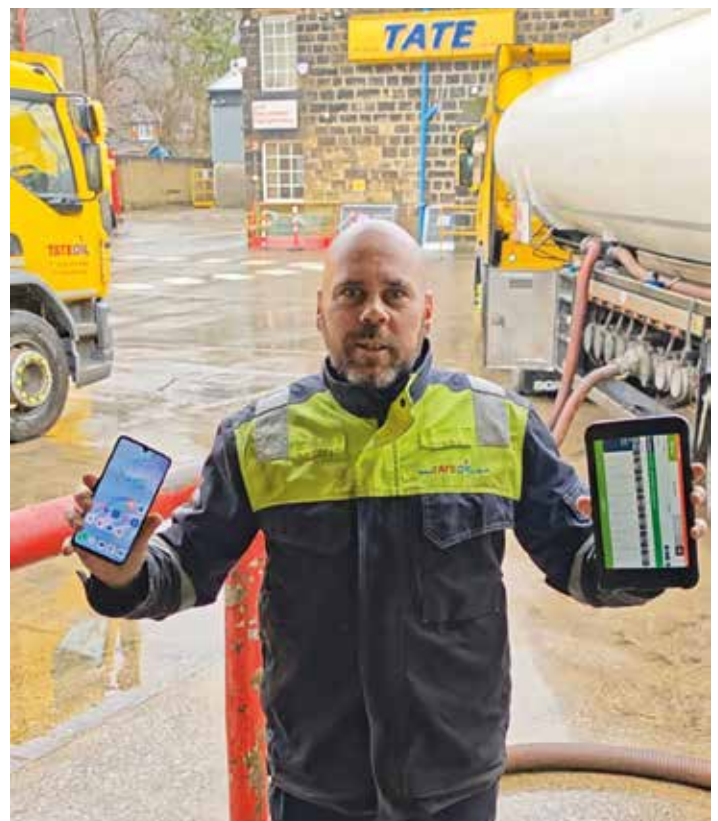
As a result, Tate achieved full adoption from the outset, enabling the business to realise wider operational benefits beyond security.

One of the most notable impacts has been in customer service. With 100% driver usage, office teams can rely on live delivery data via the DTS web portal, allowing them to respond to customer queries immediately – without needing to contact drivers or transport teams.

This has streamlined internal communication and improved responsiveness across the business.

## Lessons from rollout

Tate opted for a full “switch-on” approach, deploying the system across the operation in one move.



While this accelerated adoption and shortened the transition period, it also highlighted the importance of data readiness. In hindsight, more time spent reviewing customer data and system setup would have eased early pressures.

That said, the business sees the benefits of rapid implementation as outweighing the initial challenges – particularly in driving engagement and embedding the system quickly.

## Looking ahead

Beyond theft prevention, Tate sees technology playing an increasing role in improving broader operational standards, particularly around site safety and compliance.

The theft may have brought the technology into sharp focus, but its value extends far beyond a single incident – supporting more efficient, responsive and resilient operations day to day.



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# TANK STORAGE

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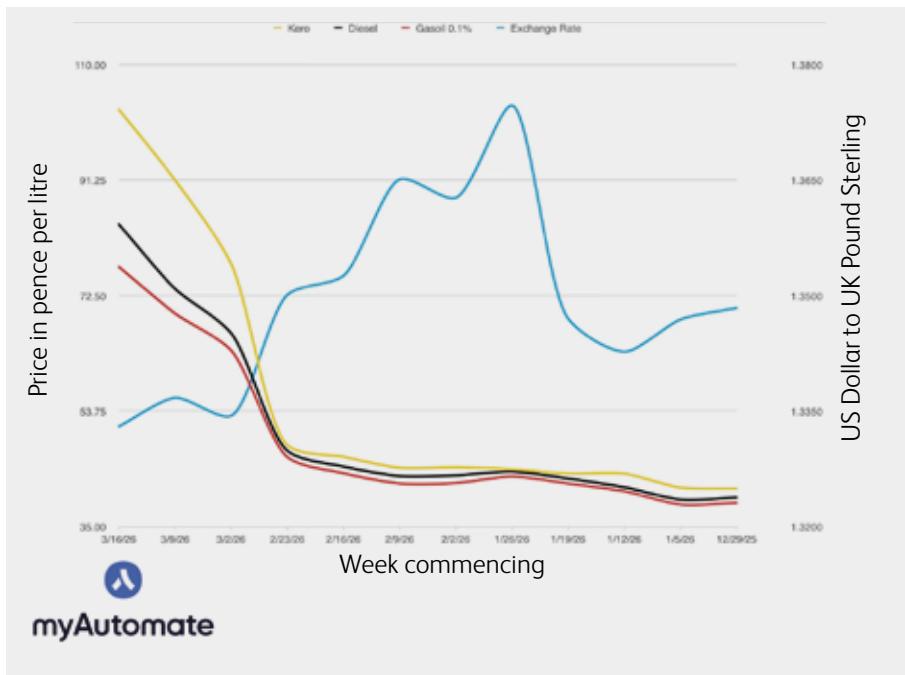


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## Wholesale Price Movements: 19th February 2026 – 19th March 2026

|                      | Kerosene | Diesel | Gasoil 0.1% |
|----------------------|----------|--------|-------------|
| Average price        | 77.21    | 65.96  | 62.58       |
| Average daily change | 4.30     | 3.66   | 4.30        |
| Current duty         | 0.00     | 52.95  | 10.18       |
| Total                | 0.00     | 118.91 | 72.76       |

All prices in pence per litre

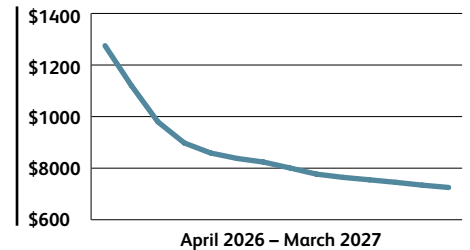


|   |   |
|---|---|
| Highest price<br><b>106.23</b><br>Thu 19 Mar 26 | Biggest up day<br><b>+15.29</b><br>Thu 05 Mar 26  |
| <b>Kerosene</b>                                 |   |
| Lowest price<br><b>47.14</b><br>Wed 25 Feb 26   | Biggest down day<br><b>-4.81</b><br>Tue 10 Mar 26 |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Highest price<br><b>91.82</b><br>Thu 19 Mar 26 | Biggest up day<br><b>+8.61</b><br>Tue 03 Mar 26   |
| <b>Diesel</b>                                  |   |
| Lowest price<br><b>46.34</b><br>Wed 25 Feb 26  | Biggest down day<br><b>-9.68</b><br>Tue 10 Mar 26 |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Highest price<br><b>81.19</b><br>Thu 19 Mar 26 | Biggest up day<br><b>+8.16</b><br>Mon 02 Mar 26   |
| <b>Gasoil 0.1%</b>                             |   |
| Lowest price<br><b>45.31</b><br>Wed 25 Feb 26  | Biggest down day<br><b>-7.49</b><br>Tue 10 Mar 26 |

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            | 90.02                       | 84.92  | 132.76 | 102.62                 | 90.73  | 137.96 |
| North East          | 88.97                       | 83.55  | 131.84 | 106.66                 | 89.00  | 135.67 |
| North West          | 90.54                       | 86.15  | 134.23 | 102.60                 | 91.19  | 137.64 |
| Midlands            | 89.04                       | 84.08  | 132.30 | 100.99                 | 89.44  | 136.45 |
| South East          | 89.14                       | 84.04  | 132.28 | 113.77                 | 93.38  | 135.88 |
| South West          | 89.49                       | 83.88  | 132.12 | 105.33                 | 89.23  | 135.41 |
| N. Ireland          | 89.60                       | 85.25  | n/a    | 101.29                 | 91.78  | n/a    |
| Republic Of Ireland | 103.36                      | 90.68  | 133.70 | 112.98                 | 96.05  | 137.93 |
| Portland            | 87.35                       | 81.60  | 128.99 |                        |        |        |

The price totem figures are indicative figures compiled from the Portland base rate using calculated regional variances. Buying prices are ex-rack. Selling prices are for 1000 litres of kero, 2500 litres of gas oil and 5000 litres of ULSD (Derv in ROI). Prices in ROI are in €. Wholesale prices are supplied by Portland Analytics Ltd, dedicated providers of fuel price information from refinery to pump. For more information and access to prices, visit [www.portlandpricing.co.uk](http://www.portlandpricing.co.uk)

WELCOME TO APRIL'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 **ZOE BLACKHALL**, CHIEF SUPPLY AND OPERATIONS OFFICER, BOILERJUICE.

## “DON'T MISTAKE BEING BUSY WITH MAKING PROGRESS” ZOE BLACKHALL

### Sum up your working life in 25 words or fewer.

20 plus years in supply chain and customer service across charities, packaging and fuel – championing people, driving transformation and continuous improvement in both the UK and Europe.

### Describe yourself in 3 words.

Pragmatic. Determined. Curious.

### What were your childhood / early ambitions?

I wanted to be a barrister. I even studied Law for a while – until I realised it was desperately boring. Absolutely nothing to do with my college being next to a pub, your honour!

### If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

To be in two places at once.

### The best advice you've ever received?

You don't value what you don't pay for.

### Your top tips for business success?

Communicate clearly; simplify everything; surround yourself with great people, and don't mistake being busy with making progress.

### What's the last photo you took on your phone?

My two little daughters in their World Book Day outfits.

### You can only eat one thing for the rest of your life, what is it?

Walkers tomato ketchup crisps or Coco Pops!

### The best thing about your job?

Shaping strategy, solving problems and helping people grow, succeed, and deliver incredible things, when they're supported, trusted, and empowered.

### The quality that you most admire?

Integrity – I really value honesty and transparency.

### What are you most likely to say?

Keep it simple and get it done!

### What are you least likely to say?

Let's just do it the way we've always done it.

### Describe your perfect day.

A morning out doing something fun with my little family, a tasty roast dinner and a great F1 race.

### Your favourite sports team?

McLaren Formula One – I love the precision and strategy of F1.

### If you could be any fictional character, who and why?

Mary Poppins, endlessly capable, always prepared, and able to firmly restore order with a bit of magic and a smile.

### Share your greatest personal achievement.

Being a mum to two adorable little girls and still holding down a career.

### Share your pet hate or biggest irritant.

Lies.

### What would your Mastermind specialist subject be?

Tim Burton Films.

### If you were PM what would be the first law you'd pass?

Removing the tax on education.

### If you had a time machine, would you go to the future or the past?

The past for sure, I'd go back and tell my dad about the



beautiful granddaughters he never got to meet and see grow up.

### What is number 1 on your bucket list?

Watching the Monaco Grand Prix from a big fancy yacht in the marina with a magnum of bubbly.

### If you were Editor of Fuel Oil News magazine, what's your first article?

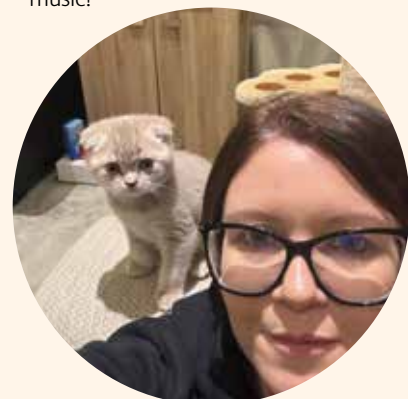
How working with BoilerJuice makes you awesome!

### What 3 things would you take to a desert island?

Bear Grylls, Gordon Ramsey and Wilson from Castaway.

### Something about you people would be surprised by?

I'm a big fan of heavy metal music!



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