Published by: The Society of Operations Engineers

President: Gerry Fleming IEng CEnv FSOE FIRTE

Chief Executive: Peter Walsh CEng CEnv FSOE FIEAust

The Society of Operations Engineers is a licensed member of the Engineering Council
Registered in England: Company No 3667147
Registered Charity: No 1081753
A Company Limited by Guarantee

Registered Office: 22 Greencoat Place, London SW1P 1PR
Tel: 020 7630 1111
Fax: 020 7630 6677
Email: soe@soe.org.uk
www.soe.org.uk

Editor: Brian Tinham BSc CEng MInstMC FSOE FIPlantE FIRTE
Email: btinham@findlay.co.uk

Contributing Editors: Brian Weatherley, John Challen, John Kendall, Ian Norwell, Laura Cork, Steve Banner, Toby Clark

Art Editors: Martin Cherry, Neil Young
Illustrations: Phil Holmes
Production Manager: Nicki McKenna
Email: nmckenna@findlay.co.uk

Advertisement Manager: Craig Molloy
Email: cmolloy@findlay.co.uk
Tel: 01322 221144

Publisher: Peter Knutton

Transport Engineer is the official journal of IRTE.
Produced on behalf of IRTE by Findlay Media Ltd, Hawley Mill, Hawley Road, Dartford, Kent DA2 7TJ
Tel: 01322 221144
www.transportengineer.org.uk

abc Transport Engineer is distributed free of charge to SOE members, dependent on membership sector. For non-members, the annual subscription rate (12 issues) is £75 UK and EU, or £77 airmail outside EU. For other SOE members, the discounted rate is £30.

Printed by: Pensord Press UK,
ISSN: 0020-3122

CPD MEMBER The CPD Certification Service

Some of the articles and guidance included in Transport Engineer may make a contribution to your personal CPD requirements.

IRTE
engineering success

So you want to cut costs, carbon and EC fines?

Time is running out. Not only is the EC currently taking legal action against the UK for its "failure to cut excessive levels of nitrogen dioxide" from diesel engines by the 2010 deadline, but in just six years we're in danger of missing another Brussels deadline – that imposed by RED (the Renewable Energy Directive).

This directive requires at least 10% of energy consumption throughout transport to come from renewable fuels by 2020. That may not sound much, but a report by consultancy Element Energy for LowCVP (the Low Carbon Vehicle Partnership) has already shown that compliance would require full uptake of 10% ethanol in petrol (E10) and 7% biodiesel in diesel (B7), plus the ready availability of significant volumes of 'double-counting' blendable RED-compliant biofuels.

Is that likely? No. Which means that it's way past time to start taking alternative fuels seriously, or face further EC fines. And while the DfT's (Department for Transport's) £23 million Low Carbon Truck trial – focused mostly on dual-fuel diesel and LNG/CNG (liquified and compressed natural gas) and their bio equivalents – is a laudable step in the right direction, it's plainly not enough.

That's presumably why the government has finally established a transport energy task force, with DfT and LowCVP taking lead roles, along with the Treasury and DECC (Department for Energy and Climate Change). Others involved include environmental NGOs as well as representatives from the oil, biofuel and advanced fuels industries, the agricultural sector, alternative fuels processors, the automotive industry – and, necessarily, investors.

This group of worthies (led by Chris Mottershead, of King's College London) held their first meeting late in September, with a goal of agreeing appropriate mechanisms and fuel choices to meet the 2020 RED target sustainably and cost effectively. They also have in their sights linking any choices to opportunities for UK growth. And a clue to the urgency: Whitehall wants the task force report on desks by March 2015.

Whatever its findings, though, forcing a wholesale change to renewable fuels requires several actions. One is instilling operator confidence: that job is currently underway with the Low Carbon Truck trial – so we can tick that box. Another is making the new fuels readily available and affordable. Those are happening too, with more LNG/CNG refuelling stations opening almost monthly, and fuel duty on natural gas fixed low for at least the next decade. So another tick.

But what's needed now is a legally and politically acceptable incentive for operators to convert their vehicles. Funding some or all of that considerable on-cost might go a very long way to winning hearts, minds – and wallets. Such incentives are not without precedent. Look at DECC's £20 million EDR (electricity demand reduction) scheme, which pays large firms to cut electricity consumption and hence their own costs. Why such generosity? Because the government expects to save taxpayers money by not building hideously expensive new power stations.

So, yes, most operators might well profit from switching to dual-fuel or gas trucks, but so again would taxpayers. And not only in terms of EC litigation and serious fines averted, but also a much-needed uptick in the UK's economy due to further reduced transport costs.

Brian Tinham BSc CEng MInstMC FSOE FIPlantE FIRTE