

Downstream

The official magazine of the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers

Autumn 2009

Recycling old oil terminal components



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COVER PICTURE



Recycling is the new mantra and it's surprising what can be salvaged from an old oil terminal.

Find out what on page 6.

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Big demand for FPS CPC courses

Uptake of the new FPS-ORS bespoke course for the Driver CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence) has been huge.

More than 70% of the individual driver training days currently available through FPS to meet CPC requirements have already been booked.

Drivers must complete a minimum of 35 hours of periodic training during every five year cycle to continue to operate professionally.

"We're delighted with the take-up of the FPS courses, which we have designed specifically to meet the needs of the fuel distribution industry. They are not generic 'off the shelf' LGV courses, and distributors have been quick to realise that," said Ken Taylor, one of the course organisers.

The courses comprise a variety of modules. The most popular of the day courses so far is a driver training assessment. An FPS-appointed assessor follows the driver throughout the

course of a normal working day, from initial vehicle check to completing deliveries and returning to the depot and then analyses strengths and areas for improvement.

"This will provide the driver and his employers with detailed, valuable knowledge and it has the added benefit of absolutely minimal disruption of the driver's normal working day," said Ken.

Full details of the courses will appear in the Winter issue of *Downstream*.

YOUNG DAVID IS ALREADY ONE OF THE OLD SCHOOL!



Severn up: Newly-qualified David Mould is congratulated by his father, Andrew.

Congratulations to Severn Fuels' David Mould, one of the last under 18s to have gained his HGV Class 2 licence under the old driver qualification scheme that has now been superseded by the Driver CPC (Certificate of Professional Competence).

David, aged 18, the son of Severn Fuels' boss Andrew Mould, undertook his ADR for bulk fuels and gases six months ago and has now finished off his training in style. Said Andrew: "We are delighted for him - he has worked hard for it, he can now drive anything up to an eight wheeler."

David started at 16 working for Production Lubricants, an associated company of Severn Fuels, in the warehouse loading and unloading lorries – as well as helping with the odd emergency delivery. "David will now move on to learn the whole of the lubricants and fuels business" said Andrew.

Severn Fuels started in 1981 and now runs a fleet of 13 tankers, ranging from mini tanker to artics. The company covers South Wales, Bristol and the Forest of Dean and has recently entered the LPG business, making it a 'one stop shop' for all fuels, gases and lubricants.



Gleaner's emergency plans put to test

Few people like to think about the consequences of a fuel tanker overturning. But being prepared with a plan of action is essential for distributors these days.

It doesn't get much more realistic than the exercise staged by Elgin-based FPS member Gleaner Oils in a local quarry.

Exercise Speyside was undertaken in conjunction with recovery specialists from the town's Sheriffmill Garage and representatives from the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency.

Events started with Gleaner receiving an emergency call to say one of its 12-tonne tankers arriving with a fuel delivery to a local quarry had become stuck in soft sand on the site and subsequently toppled onto its side.

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Gleaner rushed a response team to the site where they found the driver dazed. Alerts were sent to the Grampian Fire and Rescue Service, SEPA, the Scottish Ambulance Service and the Sheriffmill recovery team as the Gleaner crew set about placing containment booms and absorbent pads around the tanker and preparing to offload the fuel into another Gleaner tanker which had been brought to the site.

The Sheriffmill team then began the operation to recover the tanker. Canvas straps were placed over the body of the tanker and tensioned by a heavy recovery vehicle as a compressor inflated airbags that had been placed under the tanker body to gradually right the vehicle.

But with that out of the way during the day, the entire simulation was repeated in



the evening, with the added variation of the driver being trapped and in a deteriorating condition in his cab! That brought in firefighters and specialised cutting rescue equipment from Elgin and Rothes. The windscreen of the cab was removed and the driver eventually rescued following use of hydraulic cutting and spreading equipment.

Gleaner Operations Manager Jimmy Turnbull thanks Grampian Fire and Rescue Service, SEPA, Sheriffmill Garage and Speyside Quarry for taking part. The exercise was spectacular enough to win extensive coverage in the Northern Scot newspaper.

Meetings fundamental to industry's future wellbeing FPS fighting hard for distributors

FPS has been lobbying hard to ensure that oil is not unduly penalised as the Department of Energy and Climate Change searches for ways to switch the UK to renewable heat sources.

Pressure for renewables

The Renewable Heat Incentive will put a tax on all fossil-derived fuels and, at a recent workshop, the oil sector, along with LPG, coal and gas, came under strong pressure from a large contingent from the green and renewable fuels lobby.

FPS Chief Executive Susan Hancock said: "The Government is desperate to be seen to be green and it is particularly keen on measures that will cost little, or better yet, be self-funding. The Renewable Heat Incentive falls into the latter category and the workshop presented a very testing working atmosphere for us. It was essential that we were there to make a strong case and counter any inaccurate statements. At meetings such as these, green and renewables groups can exert huge pressure on government, and the whole oil distribution industry could find itself being steamrollered into a potentially disastrous corner."

The workshop was one of several in a hectic few months where FPS has represented the industry at important meetings on new and proposed legislation.

HMRC and marine fuels

In September, FPS President David Hatherell of Thomas Silvey and a number of FPS members accompanied Susan Hancock to a meeting with HMRC to discuss the workability of proposals to regulate supply of duty free marine fuel for commercial shipping.

Energy Services regulations

FPS representatives met the Department for Transport to discuss how the Energy Services Directive on transport fuels will be implemented. FPS technical input was essential to ensure that distributors do not end up with regulations that prove unworkable.

FPS attended a similar meeting with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Northern Ireland, to discuss the Energy Service Directive's impact on heating fuels in the province.

FPS has negotiated voluntary agreements for its distributor members in both mainland Britain and Northern Ireland to help customers reduce energy used for



heating. The agreements are an alternative to legislation and make compliance workable. Members refer customers to the OilSave website, www.oilsave.org.uk, (below left) which contains full information to help them become more energy efficient.

Fuel Quality Directive

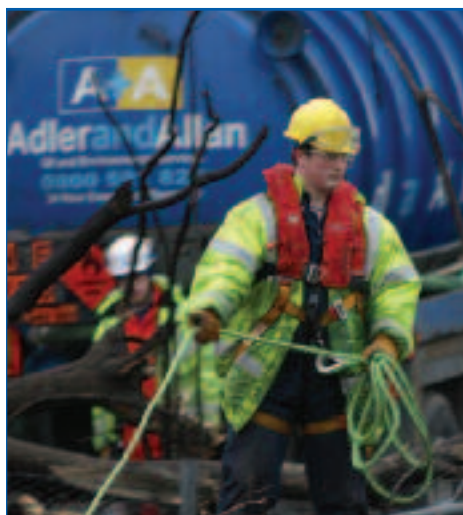
FPS also attended two meetings on how the Fuel Quality Directive will work. These covered how another grade of gas oil will be introduced – a move fraught with pitfalls. The meetings were also attended by the oil majors, importers, interest groups like the NFU, historic vehicle groups and the marine industry.

UKPIA Statistical Review

FPS representatives were also at the launch of UKPIA's 2009 Statistical Review, along with Government ministers and MPs. "It was a valuable networking event where we could raise points about the industry informally," said Susan Hancock.

Emergency planning

With swine flu still posing a serious potential threat to the nation's health, Erich Reichburger represented FPS at the Cabinet Office to learn about the government's emergency planning procedures for a future outbreak if it should prove crippling disruptive to services, including heating oil distribution.



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When a litre of fuel is not a litre

In legal terms, the litre is a set volume, but it is not defined at any specified temperature. However, variations in liquid fuel temperature result in volume expansion or contraction and the temperature of fuel delivered from refineries is a controversial topic.

The changes in volume caused by temperature can be addressed by Standard Temperature Accounting (STA) – standardising the measured volume at a fixed temperature, 15°C.

The UK and EU metrology legislation permits the fuel to be measured as an STA litre. Recipients therefore get a set measure of energy rather than a set volume.

Retail fuel pumps historically deliver a litre of fuel by volume and make no reference to temperature. But it is now legal to install STA pumps. National Weights and Measures has published two guides relating to STA, one for the industry and one for the layman. They are available at www.nmo.bis.gov.uk/Content.aspx?SC_ID=460



New life for old oil terminal components

Even oil terminals can be recycled, as Chevron, the power behind Texaco distributors and filling stations, has demonstrated at its recently closed Poole terminal in Dorset.

Serviceable equipment such as tank gauges, vapour recovery pumps and traffic control barriers have all been rescued and reused and much other material was recycled.

Some 300 tonnes of concrete and bricks were crushed on site for use in reinstating the land. This avoided 15 truck loads going to landfill and avoided new material being brought to the site.

More than 200 tonnes of steel from tank and pipe work were taken for recycling and copper and lead cabling was recovered and recycled.

Bio-remediation of the soil at the site was also carried out to treat hydrocarbon contamination. Some 450 tonnes of soil

was treated, with the clean material used to reinstate the site.

“Once again this saved 20 loads of contaminated soil going to landfill as hazardous waste,” said Mark While, Manager, Logistics Europe. “It also meant we didn't have to import the same volume of clean material.”

Chevron hopes to return the site to the Poole Harbour Commissioners by the end of the year.

Chevron carried out a similar recycling and re-use programme when it closed its Nottingham facility in 2006 and has employed the policy again at Poole. Previously, when facilities like terminals closed, the sites were demolished and materials all sent to landfill waste sites.

“We learned a lot from our work at Nottingham,” said While. “And we’ve proved that it is possible to recycle almost anything.”

FPS course for new drivers

Although the Driver CPC scheme meets most industry requirements for driver training, FPS's driver induction training course occupies a niche for on-the-job training of newly qualified drivers and experienced drivers new to the industry. It covers 'hose reel' deliveries of heating and transport fuels to homes, farms, transport companies and commercial premises.

The scheme, devised by FPS, equips firms and drivers with a 'good practice protocol' to keep risks to a minimum and customer service to a maximum. It has been designed to allow candidates to complete modules at their own pace and the training is delivered primarily via a DVD or video and a workbook. Assessment is via a multi-choice tick box questionnaire. To prove competency and complete the training, a half-day vocational assessment is also on offer. More information can be obtained from FPS office and the course can be ordered via the Publications page on the FPS website – www.fpsonline.co.uk.

New UKPIA Director

UKPIA, the trade association representing the UK's main oil refiners, has appointed Hugh Tucker as Technical Director. He



takes over from Malcolm Watson, who will continue working part time as Technical Adviser until his retirement at the end of 2009. Hugh Tucker has worked in the oil industry for over 30 years, much of it with Total. He joined UKPIA in 2008 as Technical Co-ordinator.

Service providers merge



E&S Environmental Services has merged into the Adler and Allan Group, a leader in rapid response services to the UK oil industry.

E&S is at the forefront of introducing new technologies to the fuel distribution and forecourt market with products and methodologies to ensure optimum fuel efficiency and extending the useful life of stored fuel.

With a base in Oxfordshire, E&S is one of a handful of companies with UKAS tanker testing approval and builds and operates bespoke fuel polishing machines. E&S holds the European licence for the Masstech tank testing system and is heavily involved in the introduction of Phase 2 vapour recovery.

E&S specialises in the diagnostic testing of tanks, lines and vapour recovery systems and has diversified into tank cleaning and fuel polishing, road tanker inspection and testing, and pipeline leak detection.

All of E&S's business lines are complementary to Adler and Allan's and provide significant opportunities for the Group to increase its forecourt presence and add highly technical service lines to Adler and Allan customers.

E&S directors, Nobby and Andrew Clarke join the board of Adler and Allan and will continue to run the E&S operation.

Mark Calvert, Managing Director of Adler and Allan, firmly believes the merger will further enhance the company's strength in this sector.

He said: "E&S is an excellent fit with Adler and Allan and together we will be better positioned to respond to new opportunities presented by the introduction of biofuels and assisting our customers in an increasingly challenging regulatory environment."

A&A Group employs 290 people and operates from bases throughout the UK.

Biofuels banned as city ponders emission effects

The American city of Seattle has temporarily stopped buying biodiesel for its fleet of vehicles because of concerns that the soy-based mix it was using was more harmful to the environment than regular diesel.

But Brenda Bauer, Director of Seattle's Fleets and Facilities Department, said the city could start using a different type of biodiesel made from waste grease – byproducts of food production.

The soy-mix ban followed the release of a US Environmental Protection Agency report that said ethanol production was potentially worse for the environment than gasoline.

Increasingly, critics say the production of crop-based alternative fuels – ethanol made from corn and biodiesel made from soy – is detrimental because of the amount of land needed to grow crops and greenhouse gas emissions.

Most recently Seattle had been using a blend of 40 percent biodiesel and 60 percent ultra-low sulphur diesel.

Using locally produced waste grease-biodiesel could be more environmentally friendly than other options, Bauer said. "It's definitely something that would otherwise go in a landfill."



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Kettlewell on the boil at summer events

Kettlewell Fuels' stand at the Great Yorkshire Show in Harrogate sported a Legend racing car filled with balls and the company held a daily competition for visitors to guess how many balls were in the car. Texaco merchandise was donated as prizes for all three days of the show. On the middle day, local radio station Stray FM visited the stand and did three live broadcasts where Kettlewell Fuels Director, Janet Kettlewell was interviewed. The company has run advertisements on the radio station for some time and also sponsors a category for 'The Local Hero Awards' which recognise people who have made a significant contribution to the local community.

Talking about her stint on the airwaves, Janet said: "We have developed relationships with the presenters which helped to ease the strain of three live interviews over the course of an hour. I was able to ensure that once again the 'local, friendly, family business' image was portrayed emphasising the value of our family living and working within the local community. We also had a lady come onto the stand who wanted me to sing her the Kettlewell Fuels radio jingle, but I declined politely."

Kettlewell's outdoor promotion programme has also included attending the Bedale Point-to-Point, offering customers hospitality, sponsoring one of



the races and placing an advertisement in the racecard and attending the North Yorkshire County Show near Northallerton, close to the geographical centre of their delivery area.



sails into Northern Ireland markets

Mabanaft has acquired significant new storage in Belfast, to supply distributors in Northern Ireland.

The company, whose MD Mark Rolph told Downstream in March that it was looking for suitable expansion opportunities, has signed an agreement with NuStar Terminals. It further supports Mabanaft's strategy to continue to develop and enhance its profile within the distributor market and throughout the United Kingdom.

Stephen Rhodes, Marketing Manager – Mabanaft Limited said: "This

agreement represents another new and exciting opportunity for Mabanaft as we seek to continually grow our presence within the oil distributor sector. Northern Ireland has a strong and sustainable demand for petroleum products – Mabanaft is now looking forward to working closely with the market place to establish a long-term presence in Northern Ireland".

"With a diverse range of pricing tools at its disposal, Mabanaft's entry into Northern Ireland will provide distributors with alternative purchasing options and additional supply security".

Graham Jenkins, Sales Manager of NuStar Terminals, added: "We have a modern and robust oil storage facility located in Belfast that is highly regarded in Northern Ireland. We are confident that with the combination of Mabanaft's marketing ambition and NuStar's operational strength, distributors in Northern Ireland will support this important development."

Mabanaft has operated in the UK from London for over 40 years. It supplies automotive and heating fuels to customers from storage at Grays, Cardiff, Avonmouth, Immingham, Seal Sands, Grangemouth and now Belfast.

Simon's safety firsts at Immingham

Accident prevention watchdog RoSPA has used its 2009 awards to present Simon Storage with Orders of Distinction for the safety records of the company's Immingham East and West terminals. The Orders go only to recipients who have achieved a minimum of 15 RoSPA gold awards.

Martyn Lyons, MD of Simon Storage, said: "Simon has taken a lead role in identifying and defining how process and personal safety standards can be improved after the Buncefield incident in 2005." The company is investing more than £2m in improvements to its UK facilities over the coming three years to ensure it meets new safety requirements post-Buncefield.

As an established leader in the design and development of bulk liquid and gas handling systems, Simon has been an active

participant in the work being undertaken by the Process Safety Leadership Group (PSLG) and its predecessor Buncefield Standards Task Group (BSTG) following the explosion at Buncefield, Hemel Hempstead, in December 2005.

As a key contributor to the PSLG, Simon has committed itself to improving industry-wide standards of control at fuel storage sites and revising current procedures to protect people and the environment both on-site and off-site. The company views containment policy improvement plans as the most significant regulations to affect the industry in recent years. The containment policy identifies and outlines requirements for primary, secondary and tertiary containment systems. Primary systems ensure fuel does not escape from vessels where it is normally held. Secondary and tertiary systems prevent pollutants from escaping the site if primary containment fails.

80% of EXPO space now sold

Exhibitors have already booked 80% of the available stand space for the annual industry showcase, FPS EXPO 2010. The event will be held at the International Centre, Harrogate, on 21 & 22 April 2010.

"We're delighted with the enthusiasm and numbers to date," said FPS EXPO Organiser Vanessa Cook.

"The high number of stands sold confirms that exhibitors recognise FPS EXPO as the most effective and cost-efficient way of presenting themselves to fuel oil distributors. It is the best shop window there is."

Downstream is offering a selection of attractive support advertising packages to cover the pre-show issue, which exclusively carries the Official FPS EXPO 2010 Event Guide, and the post-show review issue of the magazine. For details, contact Shirley Price on 01584 877442 or email shirley.price@btconnect.com

The FPS 2010 Golf Day will be held at Pannal Golf Club, near Harrogate, on Wednesday 21 April. Booking forms are now available from the FPS Office on 01565 631313.



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PROCESS SAFETY:

Paper trail will be prudent...

'Process safety' is currently the subject of lots of new regulation that will impact on distributors whose storage falls under COMAH's upper or lower tiers, and on the wider industry, so prudent distributors should be working to meet the needs of 'process safety' within their companies.

This does not mean huge amounts of extra work or employing extra staff. It simply means that distributors should ensure that product remains contained and safe during the three stages of handling it.

FPS Safety Adviser Michael Ong said: "Most distributors have met the requirements over many years, but have not necessarily documented the process. In my opinion, this needs to be done and all staff concerned made aware of the system and the part they play in it."

The three stages of handling, and the measures needed for safety compliance, are:

1/ Collection from the depot / terminal and delivery to the customer

The requirement is that a well-trained driver understands his/her duties, including action to be taken in an emergency. Every effort should be made to ensure safe delivery and drivers should receive regular training updates and refreshers on the subject.

2/ In store in the depot – for those that operate a wet depot

All items of plant and equipment used in product storage, loading, unloading and containment should be regularly inspected, tested and maintained and records should be kept.

3/ In transit on the road – meeting vehicle legislation

Companies and their employees must work within the terms of the Operator's Licence. This means complying with regulations on vehicle inspection, testing and certification, including certification and testing required under ADR, and ensuring the stability of load, reporting defects and rectifying them.

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"Most distributors have met the requirements over many years but have not necessarily documented the process"

FPS already offers a range of help on process safety.

FPS members can download documents from fpsonline.co.uk to help guide them through the PSLG requirements.

Compliance audits carried out by FPS take in 'process safety' aspects and the audits will pinpoint any action that distributors need to take to ensure they are in line with the regulations.

Regular updates on legislation etc are in the monthly circulars sent by FPS to members, and advice is also available at the end of the phone or via the office.

FPS also chairs three meetings a year of the Distributor Safety Forum to enable distributor representatives to discuss safety related issues. All distributors are welcome to take part. Issues arising are highlighted in the monthly FPS circular.

MechTronic team grows by two

MechTronic welcomed two new members of staff this summer – Ronald Sousa and Tony Hoodless. Ronald joins the team straight from completing his Master's in Mechatronics and Robotics at Leeds University and strengthens the company's research and development department. Tony joins the workshop team and will manage the stores area. With more than 15 years' experience in the field, it's a role made for him.

"These two new additions emphasise our position as a forward-thinking and growing company with its sights firmly set on continuing long-term success," says Director Trevor Poulter.



NWF refocused on better profits

The sale of its garden centre business boosted the profits of Cheshire-based NWF Group as it continues to focus on distribution of fuel, food and feed. Pre-tax profits increased in the year to May 31 by 47.6% to £6.2m. Revenue increased by 5.4% to £380.6m. The £14.5m sales of NWF's garden centre business boosted the group's working capital and reduced its net debt by 63% to £19.3m. NWF's fuel business produced record operating profits up from £2.2m to £4.1m on the back of a fall in oil prices and a very cold winter as well as strong depot management. The group's food distribution business profit rose from £500,000 to £2m but feeds business operating profit fell from £3.1m to £2.8m because of volatile raw material prices and a reduction in milk output.

Pedal power pushes charity funds up by £400

More than 100 miles in just six hours was the challenge MechTronic's Ben Wilkie (centre) and Andy Spencer (left) set themselves to raise cash for children's health charity Action Medical Research.



And, after a gruelling 103 miles from York University to the outskirts of Bridlington and back, the pair banked £400, as well as managing to find the only bit of the UK not deluged by summer downpours.

"Luckily the rain held off, but the return leg of the ride was a bit of a test due to strong head winds" said Andy. "As well as spending all week working together, five of us actually cycle together every Sunday morning, usually covering 30 to 40 miles. There's Ben; his twin brother, Brad; our oldest apprentice, Ryan Parr; Martyn Wilkie, one of the directors, and me. And, no, we can't keep up with the young lads!"

THE FPS TRANSPORT & OPERATIONS UPDATE was a highly successful series of presentations and discussion workshops, held at the Holiday Inn, Great Barr, Birmingham, in September.

Chaired by Ian Macmillan of Swan Petroleum, 30 representatives of FPS member companies gathered to get a day-long lowdown on tanker law enforcement, changes in ADR, biofuel problems and other industry issues. *Downstream* reports on the proceedings.



Matthew Barker, VOSA, on roadside inspections

How risk of checks can change

Delegates were given an insight into how companies and industries are prioritised and targeted for roadside checks under the ORCS (Operator Compliant Risk Score) scheme.

Each sector of the transport industry is monitored and scored at the roadside on a colour code system (red – full check needed; amber – full check optional; green – no check without a reason). The sectors with the most infringements are the most frequently targeted. Within individual sectors, operators are scored on a similar system and again the most frequent offenders are most often pulled over.

The index score is worked out by dividing the total number of offence points accrued by the number of events. Targeting the worst performers encourages them to improve, so that industry and operator averages frequently interchange.

Operator scores are worked out by



taking into account offences and events over a rolling period of two years.

In the near future, the points ratings given to various offences is set to change. Drivers' hours offences will attract more points while load weight offences may go down.

Spot fines – fixed penalties – for drivers have been introduced to encompass foreign drivers who previously could not be fined if they had no UK address, but the measure is also to help keep minor misdemeanours out of overloaded magistrates' courts.

Examiners have to make judgement calls and use discretion. However, computerised tick lists make this more difficult because, once an examiner records a transgression on the laptop

during a check, such as a failed headlight, the data is centrally recorded as meriting a penalty. This eliminates the option of discretion.

Asked about the attitudes of some examiners, he said that most staff are professional about their job, but admitted that, like everyone, officers can have bad days and he conceded that, as in every other area of work, inevitably there are a few sticklers.

Most common offences

Of all the drivers' offences, failure on fire extinguishers is consistently the most common – and this is true throughout the EU, not just in the UK. It comprises 35% of all offences. Failures to present the correct load documentation and driver's own qualification certificates are also high up the list of offences.

VOSA examiner teams now operate around the clock and are also empowered to immobilise vehicles.

Dangerous goods transport

Matthew Barker of VOSA, together with Keith White of the Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) hosted some lively workshops on movement of dangerous goods.

Amongst the many questions posed to the pair were some on the situation in Northern Ireland, which has not yet introduced all the latest ADR legislation and has yet to put a full O licence scheme in place. Keith White responded that the Channel Islands are in a similar position and both will probably go straight from ADR 2005 to ADR 2009.

Matthew Barker then described what information is now required in transport documentation. As well as the Instructions in Writing, other product information specific to the load being carried is needed, which can usually all be found in suppliers' MSDS.

Further information on prohibitions and appeals against prohibitions were described, and how prohibitions issued by the police fit into the system. It was pointed out that, once dangerous goods are included in the ORCS scheme, appeals against prohibitions will become more important in order to get points and records removed.

Switch loading was another topic that was of concern to delegates. Matthew explained VOSA's view that the signage needs to be changed unless there is an empty pot that had carried spirit or a load of distillate has already been carried in the pot. Despite being pressed by delegates, he said that it is too difficult to define what the leeway is on switch loading.

Keith White, Vehicle Certification Agency

ADR 2009 changes



Keith White, Principal Consultant on dangerous goods at the newly formed Vehicle Certification Agency, which operated under the Department for Transport, updated delegates on the changes that had been made to CDGRoad/ADR with ADR 2009.

Keith went through the different requirements relating to vehicles and drivers for carriage of dangerous goods by ibc as opposed to by tank, what constitutes a tank and the definition of an ibc and maximum quantities that can be transported.

The advent of a higher bio content in fuels means that some tanks may not be certified to carry the resultant mixtures and there will be a new UN number for biodiesel coming in with ADR 2011. Companies will have to check that their tanks are certified for fuels with a bio content of 10% or more.

He gave the background to the 'environmentally hazardous' mark that may have to be placarded on tankers and packages from 1 October 2010. It is up to the

supplier to work out if a substance requires this mark or not and the information should be found in the MSDS.

New tunnel codes are due to come into force on 1 January 2010. Keith explained the new coding system and provided a helpful list of the codes for a number of UK tunnels that might be used by distributors.

Old tanks in firing line

Old tanks, ie those constructed before 9 May 2004 that may not have been built to ADR and are therefore not ADR compliant, are likely to come under the EC's microscope before long. The UK has a derogation to allow these tanks to continue in use until 2019 and it is not known if it will be extended beyond that date.

In the meantime, a proposal had been put forward that old tanks should be inspected to a common standard from July 2011, based on written schemes that will be migrated into the VOSA-based inspections.

Employers' choices if the business needs to make

Steve Esmond, a partner with FPS legal services advisers Simpson



Millar, provided some sure-footed, straight-talking question and answer workshops on the options facing employers if they needed to slim staff numbers.

He concentrated on how to select individuals, drawing up a points system to analyse individuals' strengths and weaknesses in various aspects of the job. He stressed the importance of following the redundancy process, which comprises a

letter advising a person that his/her post is at risk; a formal meeting confirming that and going through the strength and weakness points; a follow-up dismissal meeting a couple of days later; and an appeal meeting if the person wants to make a case to stay. He advised resisting the temptation to rush the process, building in enough time to give both sides time to consider and discuss any issues involved.

He advised employers that they must invite redundancy targets to bring a colleague or union representative to each meeting, and he advised minuting the meeting and copying the notes to the redundancy



candidate to sign as true and correct.

If the case subsequently goes to tribunal, the hearing will want to establish if the points criteria are fair, reasonable and objective.

Employees facing potential redundancy can be offered possible suitable alternative employment in a lesser post with lesser pay within the

Phil Bloor, E&S Environmental Services

Combating biofuel bugs



Phil Bloor of E&S Environmental Services (newly acquired by Adler & Allan, see page 7) gave delegates a vivid picture of the mounting problems being caused by bacterial growth in large storage tanks and feeder lines with the move towards biofuels.

And he forecast that these problems will worsen as Britain moves up from B5 content to B7 and onwards.

Up to 20 different species of bug have been identified to date in fuel systems, he said, and all need water. They live at the interface between water in the base of the tank and the fuel above. Whilst bugs can grow in mineral fuels, they flourish in biofuels, which have a far greater affinity for water. The different bug species all have the same effect – forming an impermeable skin that blocks fuel flow.



As well as blocking filters, the acidic waste products produced by the bugs attack many tank materials, GRP-lined tanks being a particular favourite.

Phil said E&S's most active 'bug clearance' areas are London and the South East (36% of business) and Scotland (27%). The North East represented 17%, South West 11% and North West 9%.

Busy on forecourts

The bulk of E&S call-outs in these areas are to retail forecourts, along with bus companies, and it seemed that the pattern relates to the terminals that fed the forecourts. This is not as cut-and-dried as it appears, however, since the fuel should have left the terminal in perfectly clean condition. It all pointed towards the importance of housekeeping.

The first sign of biofuel bug trouble is usually filter blockage and E&S has a growing fleet of mobile service centres. Remedial work includes removing the bug growth from filters; adding biocides and de-watering agents; sludge and water clean-up; and cleaning lines through 'pigging' – shooting a rubber bullet through the system.

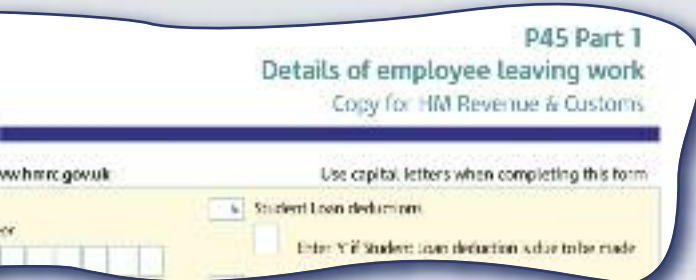
In addition to microbial contamination, ethanol in particular is proving problematic because of its affinity for water: it will absorb any water it comes into contact with. However, at a certain level, the water/ethanol mix will drop out of the petrol, leaving the remaining fuel with a low cetane number and outside specification to use as motor fuel. At that stage, the only solution is to uplift it.

Regular tank maintenance and rigorous de-watering are the keys to avoiding and minimising bug problems, he said.



In Thailand, where petrol is dyed blue, the effects of E&S's filtering on product are obvious. The fuel starts off a sludgy black and filtration restores it to its original state.

redundancies



employers' group of companies and, if they decide to accept, they are entitled to a four week trial.

If both employer and employee agree to vary redundancy terms in a compromise agreement, Steve advised getting the agreement drawn up by a lawyer and insisting that the other side consults a lawyer to sign off the agreement.

Asked if it was possible in straitened times to vary the terms and conditions of employment of a workforce – perhaps reducing working hours or pay – he replied that it can be done, but it is essential to follow the right procedures.

He also advised employers to ensure they have a good business case to justify the variations.

Getting up to speed on the new Driver CPC qualification

Michael Ong, FPS Technical Adviser, hosted transport and operations clinic workshops. These included advice on the new Driver Certificate of Professional



Competence CPC under which drivers must complete a minimum of 35 hours of approved training during every five year cycle as part of their HGV licence.

Whilst HGV drivers who qualify from 10 September 2009 will have to take their driver CPC in order to get their HGV licence, existing drivers have

grandfather rights, but must complete five days' training by 2014. The easiest option is for drivers to sit a one day course each year.

In conjunction with ORS (OAMPS Risk Management), FPS is approved as a training centre and, with ORS, has put together a course that is specifically tailored to the oil distribution industry.

Rather than having a generic course, the FPS course is broken down into tanker-specific modules on subjects including

- health and safety;
- customer care;
- forecourt deliveries;

- use of ladders; and
- defensive driving.

In addition, FPS and ORS are offering a one-to-one tanker driver training day in which an assessor follows a driver through the course of a day's work to monitor how well the driver fulfils the exacting needs of the job, from loading up through to delivery. Details of the courses and their costs are available from the FPS office. *See also page 3.*

Other topics covered in the workshop were process safety (*see page 10*) and DSEAR, and Michael advised delegates on what they need to do to fulfil legislative requirements. Most of it, they will be doing already – it is just getting it into a documented and recognisable form.

The new ADR requirements relating to transport documents were described, with Michael warning delegates that their drivers need to know what inspectors are looking for when they ask to see these documents at a roadside inspection.

A number of other topics was touched on, including new HSE guidance on tank cleaning and the issues raised by the speakers on tunnel codes, ADR tank certification and environmentally hazardous products.



The FPS-backed CPC course is not a generic, catch-all package. It has been developed specifically to include the special situations and decisions that fuel oil delivery drivers face on a daily basis.



Sugar rush...

Report by Nik Welsh
Photos by Simon Kreitem
Courtesy of BP

Second-generation biofuels are becoming a commercial reality with the development of technology designed to access the harder-to-reach sugars locked up in a plant's cell walls

The vast majority of biofuels are produced by converting the simple soluble sugars found in plants, or starch in grain, into a liquid transport fuel such as ethanol. This technology is not new. Brazil has become a world leader in creating a sustainable fuels industry, and is the largest producer and consumer of ethanol produced from the soluble sugars found in sugarcane.

However, the bulk of a plant's sugar is actually locked up in its cell walls and is a complex mixture of cellulose (a polymer of six-carbon sugars), hemicellulose (a polymer of five-carbon sugars) and lignin – not a sugar but the glue that holds it all together. A mixture of the three components creates a rigid structure that both supports the plant and protects it from pests and disease.

Complex processing

These cell-wall sugar polymers offer enormous potential for the creation of the next generation of biofuels. As well as being capable of producing up to three times more fuel, this 'lignocellulosic' fuel can be created using plants that rely less heavily on nutrient-rich soil for growth. Plants such as 'energy grasses' contain large amounts of biomass, and are estimated to be able to produce between 4,500 and 9,000 litres (1,000 and 2,000 gallons) of biofuel per acre, compared with around 2,200 litres (500 gallons) per acre of another feedstock. This increase in yield would also reduce the amount of land required to grow the grasses needed to produce biofuels, lowering the agricultural footprint. Greenhouse gas emissions are also reduced by up to 90%, when compared to gasoline as a transport fuel.

There is a challenge, though. Nature made plants robust for a reason and, consequently, the process of extracting

energy from this part of a plant is that much more complex. The trick is in developing the technology to break down the lignocellulose. BP has been working in partnership with several organisations over the past few years, developing proprietary technology that uses a combination of chemistry and enzymes, developed from those found in nature, to break down the plant's cell-wall polymers, much like a cow's stomach breaks down grass. The process enables conversion of almost all the sugars found in cellulosic biomass to soluble five- and six-carbon sugars. After that, adaptations of conventional fermenting methods with micro-organisms that can use both sugar types can create liquids such as ethanol. In a technology collaboration between BP and Verenium, these processes are being proven and optimised in a demonstration-scale facility in Louisiana, US.

Getting at the sugars isn't the only challenge. The process requires a cheap source of enzymes and is reliant on land availability to create the 'green barrels' – in much the same way that the oil industry relies on access to the very best acreage in order to be successful. It also involves inventing a new type of agriculture, since a year-round supply of feedstock is required to keep the production facility operating.

But the opportunities outweigh the challenges and BP is already moving out of the laboratory and into the field, through its commercial joint venture partnership with Verenium to develop ethanol via these non-food feedstocks. Together, the two companies are investing in the construction of a plant to produce ethanol from these lignocellulose feedstocks, which will be located in Florida, US. The 164 million litre (36 million gallon) per year facility is expected to begin production in 2012. The joint venture also intends to



Field test: biofuels crop testing at Rio Hondo, Texas, where a Mendel/BP research partnership is developing biofuels feedstocks



develop a second site in the Gulf Coast region.

BP is already a major player in the global biofuels market – blending more than 6 billion litres (1.03 billion gallons) of ethanol and 7.5 million litres (1.66 million gallons) of biodiesel into fuels in 2008. Using sustainable agricultural feedstocks that minimise pressure on food supplies and the development of advanced technologies both offer huge potential for the company to continue growing this alternative business in a commercially and environmentally viable way.

Exploring the environmental damage minefield

On 1 March, 2009 the Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations came into force in England. KEITH DAVIDSON, Head of the Environment Team at law firm Pannone looks at some interesting features of the Regulations and the overlap with the Part 2A contaminated land regime.

Worth the wait?

After a 20 year build-up, the Environmental Liability Directive has finally been transposed into English law. Separate Regulations for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales are expected later this year. On first glance it would be easy to dismiss the Regulations as business as usual.

- The Regulations only apply to environmental damage after 1 March 2009
- Defra's Impact Assessment suggests that the Regulations will only cover the most serious cases of environmental damage – at most 48 cases of land damage each year. A closer look suggests that the Regulations will have a much wider impact.

Local Authority Contaminated Land Officers and the Environmental Agency (EA) will need to check if the Regulations apply before taking Part 2A decisions. The three regimes for dealing with land contamination will now have to be considered in the following order:

1. Environmental Damage Regulations
2. Remediation under planning controls
3. Part 2A contaminated land regime

Polluter pays if negligent

There is a two-track liability system. For the more risky activities that are regulated by environmental permits, there is liability without the need to show fault if the damage impacts land, water, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), protected wildlife species or protected habitats. It would be wrong to call this 'strict liability'. A polluting individual or company will have a defence if it complied with the terms of

its environmental permit or used state of the art practice.

For 'any other activity', there is fault-based liability. The Regulations only apply to damage of SSSI, protected species or protected habitats if the operator intended to cause the damage or was negligent. Negligent operators should always be liable if environmental damage to SSSIs, natural habitats or wildlife meets the relevant threshold tests.

Defra have introduced a new legal test for environmental damage which will no doubt cause confusion. The definition for environmental damage includes contamination of land that results in a 'significant risk of adverse effects on human health'. This would appear to be an easier threshold test to satisfy than the Part 2A definition of contaminated land – 'significant risk of significant harm'.

Duty to report to regulators

There is no general obligation under Part 2A to alert regulators about contamination. Unless the Local Authority or EA investigates the site or threatens enforcement action, there is no requirement for remediation. An owner or prospective purchaser of a contaminated site may deliberately choose not to notify regulators as voluntary disclosure could actually trigger liability.

The Regulations take environmental law in a new direction. In the event of environmental damage or an imminent threat of damage (e.g. a storage tank in a very poor condition is expected to leak), the operator must 'immediately'

(a) take preventative action (b) notify regulators and (c) carry out agreed remedial measures. Breach of the notification requirement is a criminal offence. It will be interesting to see how this aspect of the Regulations will be enforced. Companies will need to have emergency procedures in place to notify regulators promptly in the event of any pollution incidents.

Finding out about environmental damage or inadequate response actions in the course of due diligence could also trigger reporting obligations.

More expensive remediation

Where there has been environmental damage, the cost of remediation under the Regulations may come as a shock to operators. In addition to remediation, investigation and monitoring costs, the total clean-up bill can include:

- (a) Complementary remediation – if a habitat is destroyed, creating a new habitat of equivalent nature offsite;
- (b) Compensatory remediation – paying for interim losses until the habitat is restored;
- (c) All regulator costs – legal, technical, administrative, data collection. Interested parties (Non-Governmental Organisations, residents, bird watchers, etc.) can 'request' that the regulators take action and may become involved in remediation discussions.

Historic contamination

The first consideration for regulators inspecting contaminated sites will be whether the environmental damage was caused before or after 1 March 2009.

Historic contamination before 1 March 2009 will continue to be dealt with under planning controls and Part 2A. With the duty to consider the Regulations, this could result in further delays in Part 2A enforcement.

David enjoys his change of scene

Coming cold into fuel oil distribution in 2004, David Todd has enjoyed a rollercoaster ride in the five years he's been with Gleaner Oil and Gas.

Switchback oil prices and all the vagaries of servicing the fuel needs of some of Britain's most remote areas have been challenges to wrestle with, but despite the conditions, the group has grown.

"The market has been difficult but I am really enjoying the work," said David, who joined Gleaner as General Manager and became MD when the previous incumbent, Billy Laing, stepped up to the chairmanship.

Gleaner is Shell's branded distributor for the northeast and highlands and islands of Scotland and has over 70 branded filling stations, mainly in rural areas. In fact, Gleaner service some 50% of the land area of Scotland and 20% of its population through 10 depots and a fleet of around 40 vehicles. It means that Gleaner's bottom-line results have to be weighed against a keen sense of obligation to service a basic need of small communities in Scotland's most inaccessible territories.

"Some companies have consolidated on built-up areas and it's given us room to grow in the more rural parts of Scotland. We supply Shell fuels and our retailers get the benefits of Shell products including Shell Fuel Card acceptance while dealing through a local company," said David.

He joined Gleaner after 20 years in rubber engineering (yes, he's heard the ribald comments!), manufacturing components for the automobile and defence industries as well as window seals and other domestic products. But where years ago manufacture took place in the UK, economic forces dictated a switch to South East Asia where the raw material was produced. So for David to cut out huge amounts of travel, a career move was timely and Gleaner has proved a good one.

Based at the firm's head office in Elgin, Moray, he enjoys the after-work outdoor lifestyle that rural Scotland provides for him, his wife Jill and their two sons. Skiing, mountain biking and hill-walking are all on the doorstep.

And as MD of a powerful force in northern Scotland, the opportunities to revel in the scenery while travelling the depot network are always there.

Downstream Autumn 2009



David is now FPS Junior Vice-President and Scottish representative on the FPS Council. He is a strong supporter of the Federation and became involved shortly after joining Gleaner.

"FPS was a good way to learn about the whole fuel distribution business, as opposed to learning about Gleaner. I was coming from a different industry and it was essential to understand quickly how fuel distribution worked. FPS has brought me into contact with a lot of counterparts and it's good that the Federation is able to represent a real cross-section of distributors, from the biggest to very small operators. Very few trade associations are able to do that."

Oil-based fuels 'will dominate for decades'

Oil-based fuels will continue to be essential in satisfying the world's energy demands for decades to come. UK oil refineries will need further substantial investment to enable them to blend emerging alternatives with existing fuels, or to distribute those alternatives alongside conventional fuels.

Those are some of the conclusions of the 2009 UKPIA report on the role of UK oil refining in a low carbon future.

Looking to 2030, UKPIA sees oil as the world's most important source for transport fuels. Developing economies will be the main drivers of future demand. The report says that two trillion barrels of conventional oil are yet to be produced – twice as much as that already consumed. Sources such as heavy oil and oil sands will come more into play and energy efficiency gains will help resources go further.

The switch in UK road fuel demand from petrol to diesel is increasingly significant. It has caused a production imbalance with the UK (in common with the whole EU) becoming a net importer of diesel since 2006. Meeting the shortfall will require substantial investment – more than £800 million per refinery for a 'hydrocracker' upgrading unit to make use of the 'bottom of the barrel' residues.

The processes required to produce the extra diesel will also produce more CO₂,
Downstream Autumn 2009

countering the CO₂ saving of a diesel engine over petrol. So diesel becomes worse than petrol when measured on a 'well to wheel' lifecycle basis. "From a carbon saving viewpoint, diesel fuel in some vehicle applications may have no clear advantage over petrol," it says.

'Well to wheel' CO₂ savings

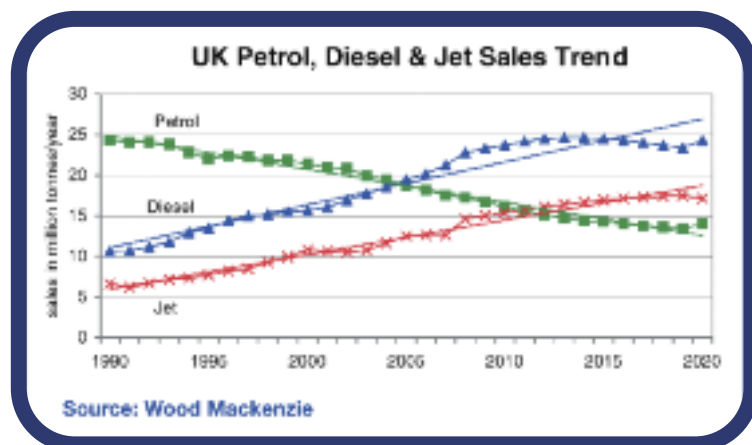
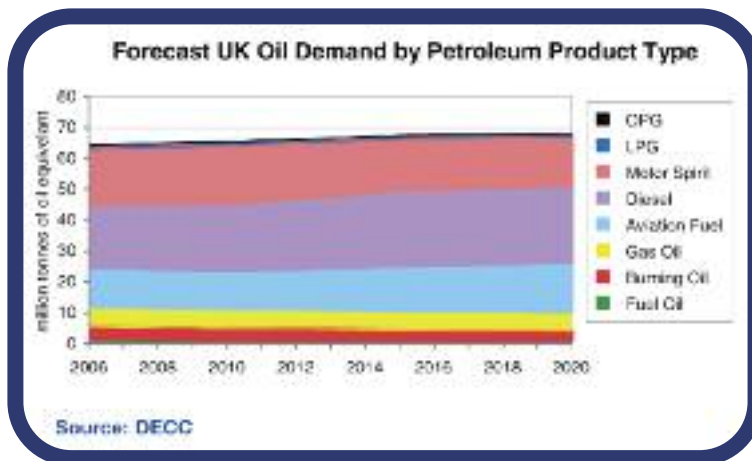
The 'well to wheel' CO₂ savings on some biofuels are also questionable. First generation biofuels like biodiesel and bioethanol come largely from 'food' crops while second generation biofuels come from processing biomass and waste products. "In the case of

range of alternatives will be tried and, says UKPIA, it is essential to measure their CO₂ outputs carefully.

The increased demand for jet kerosene fuel caused by the rise of low-cost airlines, is being met by imports, mainly from the Middle East. Forecasts indicate that demand will keep rising and the technical challenges associated with developing alternatives are considerable.

Compete for investment

The report acknowledges the many changes under way and says that, for UK refineries to play their part, they will need to compete for investment against other international opportunities. "Their case will be assisted by clear, consistent and complementary policy direction in the UK and the EU." Decisions taken in the next few years will have significant influence on the sector's ability to make a difference in the future.



conventional biofuels there are also issues surrounding sustainability, indirect land use change and whether food crops are better used to provide food for a growing world population, an issue highlighted in a recent report for the G8 Group farm ministers," the report says.

Other alternatives are emerging, but there is no clear 'winner' in sight. A

Are investors

It's often said that the era of cheap oil-based fuels has gone for good. Tax of course plays its part but a major influence has been the emergence of index-linked finance funds and hedge funds using oil and the oil market as a money-making commodity. Their influence could be as great as \$30/bbl.

That's the view of KBC Market Services, a global economics consultancy serving the oil industry to provide objective analysis and advice to energy market decision-makers.

In a briefing note, KBC points out that oil was running at \$60/bbl when global supply was trailing demand between 2004-2006 and yet it is still running high today when supply is so greatly exceeding demand. The note says: Something has clearly changed in the energy market. Some force is now keeping oil prices higher than can be justified by energy market fundamentals alone.

We believe that this 'force' is the rapid inflow of cash from index funds that, beginning in 2004, have greatly

Jet's community service

Almost the entire workforce from Jet's head office in Warwickshire took to the streets of various nearby towns to help some of the area's most valuable organisations.

As part of the company's 'Fuelling the Local Community' campaign, Jet staff spent the day painting, repairing, building and gardening for seven different charities and organisations.

For instance, a team of Jet staff built a chicken coop for a home run by Castel Froma, a body which enables 57 severely disabled adults to live a comfortable and productive life. The coop will ensure the residents can enjoy fresh eggs in the morning. A robust pavement has also been built to enable wheelchair-bound residents to feed the chickens. Ten Jet employees set about rubbing down and painting the exterior fence of St John's Children's Centre whilst 11 members of the team tackled the picket fence and gardens at The Lawns care home. More members of the team were also busy renovating the kitchen, hall and grounds of the Scout campsite.

Jet's marketing manager, Tony Conway, said: "Staff at these organisations play such an integral role and it's good to do something positive for the people they support. Many local businesses have supported us by providing tools and supplies free of charge or heavily discounted and we are extremely grateful to those who contributed, particularly in such testing economic times."



Jet employees working on one of the many tasks.

Product Focus

NEW VACUUM PUMPS FOR SAFE LIQUID TRANSFER

Hytek has launched a new range of liquid extraction pumps which are ideal for transferring fuels, water and oils safely. Available in a choice of 2.7, 6 or 17 litre capacity, the pumps can be used to empty and store liquid from drip trays, bunds or even toilet cisterns. Because they are extremely lightweight and compact, they are great for installers or service engineers.



Hytek says that the vacuum pumps are also ideal for sucking up spillages. They are supplied with two suction pipes to fit most applications, and can remove liquids from inaccessible and difficult to reach places. The contents are removed by removing the top plug, and pouring out the contents, but Hytek also supply a bi-directional pump which will fill and empty at the prime of a handle. Hytek products are sold through distributors.



For a copy of the catalogue call 01279 815 600.

SMARTPACK BAG-IN-A-BOX

Johnsen & Jorgensen's SmartPack bag-in-a-box packaging system offers an eco-friendly packaging system for all types of lubricants and fluids.



SmartPack comprises a rugged, recyclable, corrugated cardboard outer which can be easily printed or branded and a double-layer plastic inner which squares up when filled so it does not rely on the external packaging to stay in shape. The outer also makes the boxes easy to palletise. The packs fold flat when not in use. SmartPack is available in five sizes, from five to 25 litres.

Contact: www.jjpack.com or phone Geoff Killock on 0161 874 1930.

stoking oil prices?

increased their energy market exposure. This cash is coming from passive index funds that now dominate, but do not entirely dictate, global energy prices.

These index funds are not speculators. They care little for the absolute price of oil: professional money managers seek only the benefits that the commodity energy market offers in terms of their overall portfolio of investments.

But these passive funds are not 'market timers' who keep their investment in place indefinitely. They trim their energy exposure at high energy prices and similarly build exposure at low prices. Through their dominant size, and because they are always net buyers, all of the petroleum commodity instruments have moved higher in price to

accommodate the significant incremental demand for oil represented by these index funds.

KBC believes the activity of financial investors has exerted a strong upward bias on crude oil prices that will be there for as long as they remain in the market, which looks like long term.

The note says: "We estimate that the price impact today of these index funds, together with the more active participation in oil futures markets of the large hedge funds, may be up to \$30/bbl. This is based on an estimate that current oil market fundamentals justify an oil price in the range \$30-40/bbl. We believe that the current premium comes from the incremental energy demand associated with the funds that come from index investors.

Tankers and ancillary equipment – 1

Chevron names Wincanton most admired carrier

Wincanton has been named **Most Admired Carrier in the Africa, Pakistan and Europe region for 2008** by Chevron.

In 2008, Wincanton transported more than three billion litres of fuel and travelled almost 15 million kilometres for Chevron across the UK without a single lost time injury. Wincanton was also commended for its best-in-class customer relations and cost leadership, becoming the first European carrier to win the award.

Prior to 2008, Wincanton worked closely with Chevron to introduce a loss prevention system (LPS) that has now been fully implemented and embraced by Wincanton employees, with both companies seeing the benefits. Areas covered were loading, unloading, safe and defensive driving, pre-trip inspections and ergonomics – all of which helped to bring about the first-rate safety record.

Chevron also recognised Wincanton for

its management of reports and the use of on-board computers.

Tom Hernandez, who manages Chevron's regional logistics, said: "We have been working with Wincanton for nearly 17 years and have developed a strong partnership that delivers on every level. The systems that Wincanton has introduced and are now in place in the UK really stand out among some stellar competition and we look forward to continuing to develop the relationship further for years to come."



Wincanton tankers covered 15 million kilometres for Chevron across the UK last year.



Happy partners. Left to right are Mark Legg and Bob King from Wincanton, and Keith Evans and Tom Hernandez from Chevron.

Mark Legg, Business Unit Director for Wincanton, said: "We're delighted to be recognised by Chevron and it's a great achievement for the 221 people that work on the contract. We empower our drivers to take responsibility for their own work, but at the same time they are encouraged to work with their colleagues to continuously improve our service to the customer.

"Wincanton continually evaluates this kind of best practice across the board, making sure we share successes as a company and apply them to the other sectors we operate in."

First Data Plus units put to work

Customers are now using a new pump metering system launched by Emco Wheaton last year.

The Data Plus system updates and replaces the previous Drumflow™ system, and uses electronic control technology and proven engineered components to give a user-friendly solution approved by the National Measurement Office.

The Emco Wheaton Data Plus EPMS automatically transfers delivery information – date, time, product, quantity and so on – directly back to the fuel oil distributor via GPRS in real time.

"Once received, this information can be used to validate that the correct delivery has been made, generate a customer invoice and provide a range of reports," explains Emco Wheaton's Jon Quy-Verlander.

Main features are an intuitive, large display with text prompts, and the fact that it can be calibrated from the keyboard to meter up to five fuels with different viscosities. The system comes with a hand-held remote control with digital volume display, stop/start control and adjustable emergency stop. The EPMS system can be supplied on new systems or retro-fitted to existing Drumflow™ equipped vehicles.



The new Data Plus system from Emco Wheaton.

Multi-product identification

The heart of any control system is the counter – and for Alfons Haar that means the tried, tested and upgraded xMaster. It runs on a new operating platform – preciCONTROL.

The xMaster offers a full range of functions and bulk delivery is now controlled from xMaster too, so there's no extra bulk button to pull or forget. Other features include cross-over prevention to allow the driver to input and monitor quantity and type of product for every compartment, and direct control over the foot and manifold valves to prevent inadvertent discharge of the wrong product.

xMASTER can electronically seal any or all compartments and continuously monitor the opening of all product valves and fill points to confirm normal or 'tampered' delivery when the module is activated and sensors fitted. Linking to GPS devices can be activated to prevent unauthorised delivery or the wrong delivery at the wrong place.

Multi-product identification means the system can electronically accept downloaded information on fuel type, specific gravity, temperature and which compartment it is being loaded into from the loading rack. Similarly, the receiving service station reads this downloaded information from xMaster to confirm that it is fine to unload.



Alfons Haar Precima 500 on a MAN tanker.

New focus for challenging times

West Yorkshire-based Williams Tanker Services has been refocusing its efforts on the refurbishment market.

“The reduction in customer investment in new equipment during 2009 has led us to concentrate on road tanker refurbishment, repair and service, while continuing to consolidate our position as a major supplier of tanks and trailers to the UK market,” explains sales manager Martin Bullock.

The company, sole UK distributors for leading Belgium tank and trailer manufacturer LAG and Dutch manufacturer Burg/Hobur, has more than one string to its bow – and it’s this diversity of expertise, says Martin, that is helping them succeed.

WTS can provide equipment from a standard build list, developed after years of experience, he says, or configure a bespoke solution. The company also provides skeletal trailers, box vans, refrigeration units and tippers.

Second-hand tank sales and hire, tank and trailer repairs, retrofit and refurbishment work, ADR and SLP conversions, and supply and fitting of discharge equipment are some of WTS’ other strengths. According to Martin, the past 12 months has seen sales of pre-used tankers ‘extremely active’.

And their road tanker inspection division is a success. It has full UKAS accreditation and has been appointed by the Department for Transport for mobile and in-house inspecting and testing of both ADR and non-ADR tanks.

Inspection engineers

With three full-time mobile inspection engineers and four Morley-based inspectors, it has continued to expand its customer base throughout the UK. This April, WTS was appointed by BP UK Ltd to issue Safe Load Pass certificates on their behalf.



The tank in the photo is a remounted tank from another chassis which was mounted onto the 05 DAF FAN CF75:310 6 x 2 chassis. All the equipment fitted is new.

“Despite the difficult economic situation faced by many companies, we are confident we will continue to strengthen our position as a major force in the UK market with new business areas and expansion of some existing product lines and services in the future,” promises Martin.

RTN determined in survival of fittest

When the going gets tough, Road Tankers Northern keeps going.

That’s the message from general manager Brian Edwards who, while predicting a tricky time ahead, is confident the south Yorkshire company has the expertise and experience to win through.

Following a recent expansion at their Barnsley site and a busy summer, RTN is gearing up for a hard winter.

“It’s going to be a hard run-up to Christmas and, depending on the weather, a lot of people will find it continues after Christmas too,” says Brian. “I tend to think there are too many tanker manufacturers in the market at the moment and there may well be casualties.



Could this be a new market? A very mini tanker spotted by eagle-eyed RTN staff on tour in Paphos, Cyprus.

RTN’s summer order book was full, with a demand for mini-tankers, and the company is now at work on a series of refurbishments for ‘05 and ‘06 tankers.



A specialist lube tanker supplied to New Era Oil in Harlow, equipped to carry 5x1000 litres.

“We want to offer people the best of both worlds,” says Brian, “tailor-made tankers and trailers, but also the choice of pre-used and refurbished models.”

He says the company’s strategy is to ride out the recession and be ready for the upturn.

“At the moment, though, we’re expecting a mean and lean winter, with the confidence that, in the survival of the fittest, we’re among the fittest.”

Tankers and ancillary equipment – 3

Smart tools help Countrywide in drive for green

Countrywide has taken delivery of three tankers sporting a combination of MechTronic products aimed at protecting the environment, reducing costs and improving productivity. A further three tankers are on order.

Countrywide have been supplying energy to farmers and rural customers for 50 years. Today, their products include diesel, kerosene, autogas, LPG, and renewables such as biomass and wood pellets.

First of the MechTronic innovations is the VisiLevel compartment gauging system, which tells the driver precisely what he has on board. This is especially useful in avoiding overspills and contaminations at the gantry, as well as avoiding the need to dip compartments.

The system records all loading and unloading events by date, time, product grade, volume and compartment number. This information can be accessed either directly through the driver interface or, if required, remotely via a GPRS link, which gives operations staff a real-time understanding of what the vehicle has on board. End of shift hard copy reporting via the cab printer is also available, as well as GPS positioning.

Countrywide's new trucks also feature the SmartNozzle anti-spill device.

"As we all know, spillages and contaminations can damage the

Countrywide's new high-tech trucks are fitted with MechTronic gadgetry

The VisiLevel compartment gauging system records all loading and unloading events by date, time, product grade, volume and compartment number.

environment as well as profits and customer relationships," says Darren Moor, Countrywide's Transport Supervisor.

Working in conjunction with the MaxFlow metering system, SmartNozzle ensures that the delivery is stopped short of an overspill, should such an instance occur. The device fits to any gun with a 2" BSP connection and is active on conventional gun and screwed connection filling.

A remote control with litre counter gives the driver up-to-the-moment information on the progress of the delivery against the space left in the receiving tank, increasing his control in avoiding overspills. And Smart Product Grade Indicators warn the driver of an incorrectly selected product type before he introduces it into the manifold system, cutting the risk of contaminating a customer's storage tank.

Product return is initiated at a 45-degree angle allowing easier coupling



and decoupling. The return sight glass and manual blow-down ensure the driver can change lines with less risk of drips and spills.

"MechTronics' investment in new product development will help Countrywide's trucks to be greener by being cleaner," says Mechtronic's Sales Manager Andy Spencer.

Formed in April 2004 with more than 100 years of combined road tanker experience, MechTronic has established a reputation for inventive products that, the company claims, are easy to operate and extremely reliable. The Leeds-based company's product line-up now includes manifold, product transfer, electronic metering and anti-contamination systems.

"Some of our best innovations have come from customers, who tell us about the challenges they face in their businesses on a day-to-day basis," says Director Marty Wilkie.

Celebrating two decades at the helm

More than 150 guests – customers and staff – helped Robert McNeill celebrate his 20 years at the helm of Central Welding. But the anniversary was nearly missed completely. It was only when the company was publicising its 2008 tanker of the year award in the local media that it was realised 2009 was a special year.

"The whole team at Central Welding was absolutely thrilled to have had another one of our tankers awarded tanker of the year – the second time in three years," said Sales Manager Mark Skelton, "but we also realised we had something else to celebrate too."

Working out of a 30,000 sq ft site in Toomebridge, Northern Ireland, Central Welding has, over the last two decades, won customers in Ireland and overseas.

"Central Welding has undergone many changes. I see it as evolution," says Robert. "What began in 1999 as a small engineering company involved in the manufacture of moulds and components for the tunnelling industry has become an original equipment manufacturer making rigid road tankers for the fuel distribution industry. "On the face of it, it would appear to have been a total reformation, but there are some things that have never

Robert McNeill and his father Anthony with the commemorative plates they received from staff.



changed – our attention to detail, our focus on customer satisfaction, our willingness to strive for perfection and our ability to rise to the challenges of the ever-increasing responsibility and accountability that we encounter as the industry evolves."

The birthday event, held at Café Vaudeville in Belfast, was a thank you to staff for their hard work and to customers for their loyalty.

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STAND STILL & NEITHER
DO WE.



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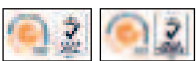


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