



### Investment now paying dividends

#### At-a-glance updates

- ▲ +500k cumulative overhaul running hours **with zero safety or integrity issues**
- ▲ New state-of-the-art dual-fuel engine test bed in the pipeline for Alba Power's Aberdeen service centre
- ▲ ISO14001 accreditation achieved, FPAL "Verify" imminent and ISO18001 on the way
- ▲ New extended workshop/spares centre facility in Aberdeen now fully operational
- ▲ 2009 another record year for Alba Power
- ▲ New key staff appointments in 2010 for business development and control systems

One recent turbine repair brought home to all of us at Alba Power the value of maintaining our substantial investments in Avon and Olympus spare parts and components (three million stock lines, and still counting!).

A gas turbine on a North Sea installation had been declared unserviceable due to a severely damaged combustion can. Following inspection, we confirmed that we had all necessary replacement components available ex-stock, at which point everyone went into full turbo-action mode.

The turbine came onshore the next day, was stripped by Alba Power in 24 hours, on our test bed within three days and on day five was on its way back offshore. Normal service was resumed within an impressive seven days of shutdown.

"Last year was another year of record investment for Alba Power, but that is what underpins our ability to deliver an ultra-responsive, fully accredited service to our customers," said Managing Director Terry Alderton.

"During 2009, we doubled the size of our service centre and stores facilities in Aberdeen, continued our strategic investment in the world's largest stockholding of Avon and Olympus engines, spare parts and components, and stepped up our focus on company safety and integrity accreditations to world-class standards.

"The greatly increased size and diversity of our parts stockholding make us a prime first-time source of support for turbine owners worldwide who need to minimise production downtime."

#### Inside...

The man entrusted with coordinating and implementing Alba Power's QHSE audit and accreditation processes has a healthy respect for "company discipline" going back to the early years of his career.

"I started working with gas turbines on aircraft carriers in the Royal Navy many years ago," recalls QHSE coordinator John Goddard. "There's nothing like sailing with hundreds of tonnes of high-octane fuel plus an armoury of conventional and nuclear warheads on board to concentrate the mind on health and safety matters!"

The Royal Navy was John's introduction to the world of quality audits and safety targets, and it stood him in good stead for his later civilian career in the gas turbine industry.

He has amassed a considerable depth of experience in the rotating equipment sector, having started out in field inspection and service in the early 1980s.

"Health and safety is always a major consideration when working on a customer's site, and my field experience in producing risk assessments and method statements was an excellent grounding for when I moved over formally into QHSE," he says.

John joined Alba Power in 2004 with a remit to set up a quality management system and gain accreditation to ISO9001, and his audit experience proved invaluable in reaching that target. "I'm proud to say we gained our accreditation in five months, and still use that same quality system for our much larger operations today," he explains.

But QHSE work is, by definition, never-ending, and John confesses he still gets "that special buzz from a flawless audit." Alba Power gained high accreditation in its B2 Achilles and ISNetwork audits, and FPAL "Verify" certification is imminent.

"Our ISO14001 accreditation for environmental management systems has recently been achieved, and this will shortly be followed by ISO18001 for occupational health and safety," John explains.

"These will give us world-class levels of accreditation, and give our customers the confidence that they are dealing

with a supplier and specialist service provider who can demonstrate that robust systems and procedures are in place in all the key management control disciplines."

"And it's also been very heartening to see the beneficial effect of enhanced QHSE systems on the workshop floor, where our practices are undoubtedly more disciplined than ever before and where everyone's competency has been significantly raised."



*"world-class industry-recognised standards embedded throughout the company"*

John is justifiably proud of how far Alba Power has come in raising its QHSE standards in a relatively short time. "Gaining accreditation is very hard work for smaller independent service providers like us, and would not have been possible without the enthusiastic and positive commitment of every member of the team," he says.

"But, after the pain, we now have the gain – industry-recognised standards embedded throughout the company which will function as strong foundations for the next phase of our growth and expansion."



It takes a special breed of engineer to design, manage and commission a gas turbine test facility, but it's a challenge that Alba Power controls manager Steve Scott is well equipped to meet.

"I'm already well advanced in the design of the new state-of-the-art dual-fuel test bed here at our Netherley turbine service centre, and it is on course to be fully operational by the end of the year," he reports.

To most of us, such a project would be a daunting prospect, but for Steve the whole process of installing a new test facility underpins the credibility of a professional control engineer.

"This is the third test facility I've worked on, and designing and commissioning my first in 2002 is still the most satisfying achievement I've had in my professional career to date," he says. "I'm sure the new Alba Power test facility will be every bit as fulfilling."

Steve has worked in gas turbine control quite literally, as they say, man and boy.

He started as a controls technician on a Youth Training Scheme straight from school in Lincoln, England, and then followed the classic time-served apprenticeship route, which included gaining distinction and honours in his City and Guilds in electronics and control system philosophies.

This was followed by working his way through the service ranks in both Aberdeen and Houston from a field engineer with extensive offshore experience to a test facility development manager immediately prior to joining Alba Power in 2009.

Steve admits he thrives on the challenge of consistently meeting the high technical and service standards expected in the gas turbine sector. "This is an industry which is entitled to look for high-quality products, service and people because of the significant impact associated when gas turbines have to defer operational output," he says.

And, despite his 23 years in the industry, Steve is looking forward with enthusiasm to meeting the technological challenges of the next generation of gas turbines in areas like low-emissions technology.



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And as well as overseeing the commissioning of the new Alba Power engine test facility, Steve also has another professional ambition which he hopes to realise with Alba Power.

"We have invested hugely in turbine parts and components in recent years, and I am looking forward to similar growth and expansion in the controls side of our business – that would be a very logical direction for us to follow in the near future, and give us an even broader service portfolio which would immediately benefit many of our customers," he explains.

"We are already working actively with customers to deliver innovative, cost-effective upgrades of failing or obsolete controls and ancillary equipment, and in the near future we plan to start offering integrated turbine and controls refurbishment packages, along with help-desk support for this new facility."

"I believe gas turbine users around the world will greatly appreciate this kind of ultra-responsive, 'one-stop-shop' service."

*Look out for an article on "Controls engineering in modern operations" by Steve Scott in the next (Summer 2010) issue of The Bulletin*

