

In conversation with...

Andrew Goddard, Executive Chairman at Morris Lubricants and newly appointed President of United Kingdom Lubricants Association (UKLA)



Congratulations on your 2-year appointment as President of UKLA. What is the role of the association and what is its contribution to members and to the UK lubricants sector?

The role of a strong industry body has never been more important. Post Brexit, the uncertainty and continually changing direction with regards to chemical legislation, to keeping abreast of issues facing members on a day-to-day basis, for example, present shortage of HGV drivers, are issues that impact our members every day. As a proactive trade body, it is vital that we provide members with the support they need to keep up to speed with the changes they may need to be implemented.

What has been the impact on the UK lubricants market as the UK continues its transition post Brexit and Covid? Are there longer-term implications for the sector? Has exiting the EU affected our potential to influence for example?

Hopefully not. As UKLA we still maintain direct links into all the EU lubricant associations, including both UEIL and ACEA, so hopefully despite a few legislative issues regarding Brexit, things should settle down and normal business will continue as normal.

Our industry is nothing if not resilient but ambitious sustainability targets and fast-changing technology, for example, in the development of emerging vehicle markets, is challenging. How will UKLA leverage its position to help mitigate such demands?

UKLA is leading by example, whilst working closely with UEIL we are looking into the work that their sustainability committee is undertaking. We must not be under any illusions the lubricant industry is facing some huge challenges in the near future, with no-one able to tell us what the future of the vehicle car parc will be in the coming years.

Does the sector's focus on sustainability mean a move away from lubricants to thermal fluids as the EV market increases? Or base oil supply move from mineral oils to synthetic lubricants?

Yes and no. Undoubtedly the EV sector is gaining traction, but for every two steps forward it seems to take one back; shortages of critical components for the EV market will make it incredibly hard to gauge what impact it will have in the short term. That said the "noise" certainly in the HDDEO marketplace is the rise of the hydrogen engine, simply a mobile gas engine. The good news is that this is essentially a modern ICE which will need a new type of lubricant to handle the intense pressure and heat generated in the combustion of this gas.

Until recently you were the Chairman of VLS (Verification of Lubricant Specifications). What are your personal objectives as you take up your new post of UKLA President?

These are very challenging times for all members. As Chairman of VLS it was to ensure that consumers got what they needed so their vehicles run in the most efficient manner. As I move to my new role as UKLA President, my focus is on our members and making sure they get the most benefit from UKLA to assist in the running of their businesses.

Given your considerable experience and lifelong insights in this sector, how do you see the future for lubricants? What message would you offer new companies at the beginning their lubricants journey?

It's so important to keep up-to-date with all the changes taking place at the present time. Chemical legislation as well as tariff changes mean everything can change with very little notice. Keep asking technology providers for their views as to the future. They have the latest updates from the OEMS and are in a great position to assist our members make the right decisions for the future.

As the 5th generation custodian of Morris Lubricants, a privately owned manufacturer with an impressive 150-year history, how important is the legacy you have inherited? And what do you hope to leave for future generations?

Ever since my grandfather took me around our works when I was about four years old, I never wanted to do anything else apart from get involved in the oil industry. The industry is about to face a colossal change in direction due to the drive for zero emissions. I hope that through the good work of organisations such as UKLA and ATC, the OEMS see sense and pursue the direction of producing a zero emission ICE which will mean our business has a long-term future manufacturing lubricants

LINKS

www.ukla.org.uk

www.morrislubricants.co.uk