



Doug Parkinson, MLC

Leader for the Government in the Legislative
Council

Gary Woodhead

Managing Director CompAir Australasia

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First Tasmanian Vehicle to Run on Natural Gas

Leader for the Government in the Upper House Doug Parkinson today launched the state's first vehicle to be run on Compressed Natural Gas.

"Thanks to the natural gas project Cripps Nubake at Glenorchy is running one of its bread delivery vans on compressed natural gas (CNG)," Mr Parkinson said.

CompAir (Australasia) Ltd, Cripps Nubake and Isuzu Australia Ltd, in association with Powerco, Motors and the State Government via the Department of Economic Development, have joined forces to conduct the first-ever Tasmanian trial of Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) as a vehicle fuel at Cripps Nubake's Glenorchy bakery.

CompAir has installed and commissioned a trial gas compression facility at the bakery and an Isuzu NPR 300 dedicated natural gas truck has been brought in from Melbourne for the trial.

"The Cripps Nubake operation in Glenorchy has been using natural gas in their ovens for a while now.

"The global compressed air company, CompAir has recently installed a compressor that allows Cripps to produce CNG which can be used as a transport fuel.

“As we see fuel costs soar it makes a lot of economic sense to run vehicles on compressed natural gas.

“The current cost per litre of compressed natural gas is 70 cents versus \$1.40 a litre for diesel fuel.

“To run this vehicle on CNG as opposed to diesel will save around \$2,000 a year.

“As well as the significant economic benefits there are major environmental benefits to be gained.

“Discussions are currently being held toward establishing public access refuelling sites which would allow companies with small fleets to enjoy the benefits of CNG.

“Back in October 2001 as Chairman of the Joint Standing Committee on Environment, Resources and Development I hosted a forum on the use of Compressed Natural Gas as a transport fuel and said that the future availability of natural gas in Tasmania would offer economic, environmental and health benefits.

“I’m delighted that this prediction has come true and it is now inevitable that with gas rolling out in the state that we will see more vehicles like this powered by gas.”

CompAir Australasia’s Managing Director Gary Woodhead said that in the current environment of fast-rising fuel costs CNG offers a clean, sustainable and economically favourable alternative to conventional vehicle fuels and Liquid Petroleum Gas.

“With Tasmania now connected to Powerco’s natural gas reticulation network, local operators of heavy vehicles and fleets are ideally placed to access the benefits of this low-emission, low-cost, high-efficiency vehicle fuel,” Mr Woodhead said.

“CompAir has already installed highly successful CNG depots in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and the ACT and also in China, South East Asia and the Indian subcontinent, where the new vehicle fuel powers a range of vehicles including public and private fleets.

“In Australia alone, more than 700 buses in metropolitan areas are already running successfully on CNG.

“There are a number of Isuzu NPR 400 dedicated gas trucks operating in Australia.

“The largest fleet, owned by the Gosford City Council, has already shown fuel savings of around 22 per cent over diesel, plus greenhouse gas reductions of 18 per cent.

“The price of petrol, diesel and Liquid Petroleum Gas (LPG) have all risen steadily over the last decade, and spectacularly in recent months.

“LPG has more than doubled in the past ten years – but the equivalent cost per cubic metre of CNG has hardly changed, making it by far the most cost-efficient fuel source.

“Commercial fleets are likely to leverage off existing natural gas contracts and refuel at their depot. As a result the initial market uptake will suit ‘back to base’ fleets.

“While the recent Federal Government announcement on LPG assistance is aimed at the private vehicle fleet, the Federal Government offers assistance for commercial businesses with truck fleets to promote the potential uptake of CNG as a vehicle fuel.

“The energy content of natural gas is far superior to LPG and around 5 per cent better than diesel, which means you can travel further per litre of CNG than conventional or alternate fuels,” Mr Woodhead said.

“Now that Tasmania has access to Powerco’s natural gas, ideal local applicants for CNG as an alternative fuel include commercial fleet operators running trucks, buses, large cars or even forklifts”, he said.

Cripps Nubake Pty Ltd’s State Manager – Sales and Distribution Paul Gadomski said the company is excited to be the first to trial this alternative fuel technology in Tasmania.

"The truck will be utilised daily for delivery of bakery products in and around Hobart as a means of verifying the fuel and operating savings potential.

“We sincerely hope that other fleet operators around the state watch the trial with interest and embrace the possibility of change to the way we fuel our vehicles.

"If rolled out this technology will not only contribute to a cleaner environment with the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, it will also have the possibility to facilitate job creation in many industry sectors as the new technology is embraced."

Facts at a glance

- First vehicle in state to run on compressed natural gas.
- It is a two month trial.
- The current cost per litre of compressed natural gas is 70 cents per litre versus \$1.40 a litre for diesel fuel.
- To run this vehicle on CNG as opposed to diesel will save around \$2,000 a year.

Relative to the latest available vehicle and fuel technology, Compressed Natural Gas delivers a:

- § 90 to 95% reduction in particulates
- § 30 to 40% reduction in smog precursors
- § 10 to 15% reduction in net greenhouse emissions

Further information: Shaun Rigby on 0438021936