

South Yorkshire firm takes lead in £3m project to accelerate switch to zero emission trucks

A South Yorkshire automotive specialist is heading a government-backed project to accelerate the adoption of zero emission trucks.

Magtec, the UK's leading designer, manufacturer and integrator of drive systems for electric and hybrid vehicles, is being supported by the Department for Transport and Innovate UK, in a £3.25 million project involving NHS Wales.

It is to create a predictive tool for making accurate comparisons for prospective electric vehicles within a fleet, while estimating electric vehicle infrastructure requirements and costs, giving fleet managers the confidence to embark on the Net Zero journey.

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The Rotherham-based firm is working on the trial with Dynamon, the fleet data analytics specialist, and electrical infrastructure specialists UK Power Networks Services.

Andrew Gilligan, managing director of Magtec, said: "The move from internal combustion engine to electric vehicle fleets is disrupting procurement in the public and private sectors with uncertainty around costs and infrastructure.

"Fleet managers are under pressure to electrify their fleets but there is little data to support their investment decisions. This project will fill the gaps in knowledge and

help accelerate the take-up of zero emission trucks, creating new jobs here at Magtec and across our supply chain in South Yorkshire.”

As part of the project Magtec is supplying 10 18-tonne zero emission electric trucks to NHS Wales. They will be used to help with the collection and distribution of laundry at four locations across the country. The vehicles will be equipped with rapid charge systems.

The company is also increasing its workforce by a third, adding another 50 engineering and operations roles to the 150-strong team.

Dynamon is developing its proven feasibility software – based on advanced artificial intelligence – to predict battery state of charge, road performance and grid load. UK Power Networks Services is developing a tool for estimating EV installation costs and installing charging infrastructure across the different NHS sites – Bridgend, Cwmbran, Denbigh and Newport.

The first two vehicles begin road tests and enter service in the coming weeks.

Transport Minister Trudy Harrison said: “This exciting project is an important step in our journey to reducing our reliance on fossil fuels as we introduce cleaner HGVs to our roads.

“The fleet industry plays a vital role in keeping the UK moving and it’s crucial it joins the journey to a greener future. That’s why I’m delighted to see Magtec benefitting from the Government’s £20 million zero emission road freight trials and I look forward to seeing the outcome of this project as we invest in research to decarbonise all aspects of our transport network.”

For the Welsh government, Deputy Minister for Climate Change Lee Waters said: “It is great to see NHS Wales making a commitment to trialling electric heavy goods vehicles as part

of its ambition to be net zero by 2030. I am also pleased to see the part it is playing in reaching our 'Team Wales' commitment, signed up to at COP26 last year, for at least 30 per cent of new medium and heavy duty vehicles sold in Wales to be zero emission by 2030."

Kieran Coughlan, head of strategic advisory services at UK Power Networks Services, added: "This project is hugely exciting because it will demonstrate how large organisations in the UK can cost-effectively transition their fleet. It's another tool we can use to support business to meet the financial hurdles of switching to electric vehicles, whether through financing, integrating new technologies, or optimising existing infrastructure."

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