

# DB Cargo UK and Network Rail conduct landmark track-testing of HVO fuel

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A 'carbon-busting' Class 66 locomotive fuelled with 100% renewable Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil (HVO) made a landmark journey on the UK rail network this week (Wednesday, December 16th).

The Class 66 locomotive (66150) operated by DB Cargo UK transported a consignment of long-welded steel track from British Steel's plant in Scunthorpe to Network Rail's depot in Eastleigh, Hampshire.

Network Rail was the first of DB Cargo UK's customers to trial the use of the environmentally-friendly fuel on one of its services, following earlier successful load bank trials carried out by the freight operator on a Class 67.

It is estimated that substituting traditional red diesel for the new HVO fuel reduced the train's carbon emissions by as much as 90%.

Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said: "From the first hydrogen-powered train on the network earlier this year, to a locomotive fuelled entirely with treated vegetable oil, this really has been a landmark year for green and clean innovation on our railways.

“Rail freight offers significant benefits to the environment, taking lorries off the road while keeping our economy moving. Harnessing sustainable sources of energy like this will help us to achieve our bold and ambitious vision for a net zero carbon transport system by 2050.”

DB Cargo UK’s Head of Sales Roger Neary said by working with Network Rail the company had taken another major step forward in proving HVO fuel as a viable alternative to the use of traditional red diesel in its locomotive fleet. “We are delighted that Network Rail agreed to work with us on this exciting project that could ultimately lead to a significant reduction in our carbon footprint and that of our customers.

“Rail freight is already a much greener alternative to road haulage, so to reduce our carbon footprint even further will, I hope, make businesses re-evaluate their own transport strategies. If they want to reduce their own carbon emissions, then rail freight is the obvious choice over road.”

DB Cargo UK now plans to carry out further live tests on its fleet of Class 67 and 60 locomotives. HVO –Hydro-treated Vegetable Oil –is marketed as “one of the world’s purest and greenest fuels”.

It’s synthetically made through the hydro-treatment process from vegetable oils or animal fats which significantly reduces harmful carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>) emissions when used in diesel vehicles and machinery.

*Photo credit: DB Cargo*

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