



World Fuel Cell Council e.V.

Headquarters: Kroegerstrasse 5, D-60313 Frankfurt/M, Germany

Tel: +49-(0)-69-283851, Fax: +49-(0)-69-2838, Email: secretariat@fuelcellworld.org, Web: www.fuelcellworld.org

London Office: 16-A Electric Avenue, London, SW9-8JX, UK

Tel: +44-(0)-20-77386983, Fax: +44-(0)-20-77386983, Email: sglaser@fuelcellworld.org

20 October 2001

WFCC's response to the PIU Project on Energy Policy Review scoping note

Fuel cells are the crucial technology stepping-stone facilitating society's transition from expensive and dirty fossil-based hydrocarbon fuels to sustainable, renewable resources and true security of supply.

When operating on conventional fuels or biofuels, fuel cells offer far superior efficiency to combustion, almost immeasurably low emissions, and enhanced possibilities of CO₂ sequestration. When fuelled directly with hydrogen they offer the possibility of pollution and guilt-free motoring in true zero emission vehicles.

Billions of dollars have been invested in fuel cells for transportation, residential and utility-scale power generation, and battery substitution applications since the late 1990s. Indeed, the four largest car manufacturers will each have fuel cell electric cars for sale by 2004, with true mass production scheduled soon after.

In Britain we spend pitiful sums on developing the technology, and awareness levels are very low – evidenced by the complete omission of fuel cell technology cost forecasts* in the PIU's otherwise thorough scoping note!

Despite the presence of notable, world class players, state funding in the UK is lower than almost every other EU country, with the UK's annual budget about half that of Spain's. It is hoped that the new Carbon Trust will provide an opportunity to channel much needed funding and direction to a UK industry so far disadvantaged both internationally and within Europe.

To overcome the chicken and egg situation in fuelling fuel cell vehicles, Government must provide every fiscal incentive at its command to stimulate the new fuel markets. Government must also act now if it is to book a place at the feast for UK industry when – over the next decade – the greatest technological revolution in over a century occurs.

A Welshman invented fuel cells in London over 150 years ago. Our international friends investing billions believe that technology can provide many of the answers; when in Britain will we?

The World Fuel Cell Council is an international trade association for companies pursuing the fastest possible commercialisation of fuel cells, including auto/oil companies, manufacturers, suppliers and users, and has one member from the UK.

* recently provided by WFCC to PIU transport consultant