

# ALBA POWER

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CORPORATE BROCHURE





# Winning customer confidence

Honoured for Outstanding Export Achievement in the Global Business Excellence Awards and Best SME in the Best Business Awards, Alba Power had a good 2010 and is poised for an even better 2011. Senior sales manager Grahame Martin explained why to John O'Hanlon

**F**ounded a mere ten years ago, Alba Power has become one of the UK's leading Rolls-Royce aeroderivative gas turbine specialists, offering a comprehensive range of gas turbine overhaul, maintenance and support services. Rolls-Royce Avon and Olympus units are used all over the world, and during its first ten years Alba Power has built its customer base to over 140 global clients, including many major power generation and oil and gas customers.





These are the company's two main customer groups, explains senior sales manager Grahame Martin. "Land-based power generators typically use gas turbines for 'black start' operations, something power stations need to have as a standby when their main generators may go off line. They can use their back-up gas turbines, usually aeroderivative gas turbines, to get them back up and running again. The other customer group consists of oil and gas producers. Their light weight versus exceptional power output makes aeroderivative engines well suited to offshore operation."

The requirements of these two markets are very different. Black start capability is a must and power generation companies are often required contractually to have a back-up facility in case their main form of power generation fails. The other use for the turbines would be for 'power peak lopping' at times of exceptionally high demand from the national grid network system.



Land-based installations are therefore commonly designed to function intermittently, whereas petrochemical production platforms need power all the time. "Our oil and gas customers typically run them 24/7. Since they are burning their primary product, in the form of natural gas, they have the advantage of being able to discount their fuel cost."

The two market groups share a business-critical requirement to have their installation available at all times, however. Alba Power ensures that this is the case. The company was founded to address a perceived inflexibility in the support available from the OEMs, says Martin. "We decided there was an opportunity to take a more flexible approach and serve the customers, working with them more as a partner: that has been our focus and our unique selling point."

Alba Power operates from a custom-built new gas turbine workshop and stores complex on the outskirts of Aberdeen, Scotland, the oil and gas capital of Europe. Set in six acres of land with space for future expansion, the facility has pristine strip and build bays, horizontal and vertical balance machines, comprehensive tooling, clean lines and inspection areas, as well as an extensive spares storage area.

After years of investment, Alba Power has built up the world's largest stock (over three million line items) of spare parts, components and consumables for Avon and Olympus gas turbines, all with full service history, traceability and certificate of conformity as appropriate. "We know which engine it has come from, what the hours and starts are, and where it has been installed. And any part needs to meet the required technical specifications. We can guarantee it is dimensionally correct and suitable for overhaul before we would consider overhauling any part, issuing it to the customer and supplying an industry enviable warranty."

Alba Power also carries a fleet of Avon 1533, 1534 and 1535 and Olympus "A rated", "B rated" and "C rated" gas turbines for immediate sale or exchange. Critically, adds Martin, while the OEM's competence stops with the engine, Alba Power takes responsibility for the overall package requirement, including controls, valves, pumps, motors and the like. This level of service has led to the company developing an impressive customer base in the UK and throughout the







world. Business is split roughly 50-50 between the UK and overseas markets, and Alba Power has worked with customers in Europe, the Middle East, the US, Africa and Australasia. "In December we were proclaimed a 'Premier Overhaul Facility' by the Australian government following a job we did there," says Martin. "With approximately 10,000 miles and a 10-hour time difference there were challenges to overcome; but Alba Power provided the client with a loan Avon for the overhaul term, keeping them involved and informed at every stage of the overhaul process."

Now Alba Power looks forward to more contracts in Australia and is actively looking to expand its international business in 2011. The company is growing in confidence and increasingly winning tenders like the one it landed last year for the municipal utility Stadtwerke Düsseldorf, against direct competition from the OEM and other independent operators.

As these contracts prove, Alba Power is equally adept at working on the customer's site as it is in its own facility, having developed a strong reputation for organizing and executing highly efficient and speedy field repair and overhaul services. The company retains some of the best field engineers in the industry, with extensive experience of on-site problem-solving. Its field teams are fully resourced with advanced inspection and tooling kits and a comprehensive stock of spare parts to eliminate the frustration of delays through extended waiting times for parts or tools.

In recent years, Alba Power has also invested heavily in state-of-the-art controls technology and experienced technical controls personnel to extend the range of its support services. It can now support all controls and troubleshooting needs 24/7, 365 days a year, with a vast amount of technical expertise in all variants of turbine control systems. It can also provide a bespoke retrofit to meet the exact requirements of the customer, including remote monitoring to aid trouble-shooting plus the capability to view the turbine control HMI live from anywhere in the world.

Martin is delighted that Alba Power has won some coveted awards and has come through the economic climate in the last two years relatively unscathed. But nothing pleases him more than to be able to point to a 100 per cent first-time pass rate on units tested at its gas turbine test facility

since it was set up in the new millennium. "As an independent company we rely on our ISO 9001 and 14001 approvals very heavily to establish customer confidence," he says.

2011 will see the commissioning of an all-new multi-million dollar dual fuel test bed facility that will provide customers with the most detailed baseline gas turbine data available, further increase confidence and gain for Alba Power an even larger share of this vital niche market. [www.albapower.com](http://www.albapower.com)





