

ALLANTONE SUPPLIES LTD

SERVICE ROUND-THE-CLOCK



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Allantone Supplies focuses on keeping the maritime traffic that bustles around the UK well supplied with fuel. Running a short-notice, niche operation, the company makes customer service its top priority



Harwich-based Allantone is a well-known name in the bunkering industry. It operates a coastal bunkering service predominantly on the east, south and south-east coasts of the UK 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The company has always prided itself on its ability to quickly respond to the needs of its customers, covering anywhere from Newcastle to Southampton at short notice.

Currently, Allantone operates two ‘dumb’ tankers—Naja and Rana—and three seagoing vessels—Sauria, Culex and Musca. Naja and Rana are stationed at Gravesend and Harwich respectively: with no engines, they could be described as floating fuel stations, able to service any and every ship that needs to refuel with gas oil. “Naja is moored permanently at Gravesend, offering fuel to passing trade such as tugs, pilot vessels and leisure vessels,” explains co-director Dave Lenton. “She can accommodate from as little as 200 litres per minute up to 90,000 litres per hour.”

Moored in Harwich, sister tanker Rana is able to provide services for small craft and larger vessels alike. Both dumb tankers are able to carry out multiple deliveries and are equipped with the very latest technology.

Allantone’s three seagoing vessels each have a capacity of 350,000 litres. One is stationed in London each week, one is located at Harwich, and the other goes as and where required, according to work that comes in. All three vessels have a five-year classification society ticket, permitting them to go coastal. This means



Sauria is licenced to go coastal



Culex has a capacity of 350,000 litres

that Allantone can cover anywhere around the UK, giving it a major commercial advantage. The company has combined floating storage at any one time of 1,000 tonnes; it can arrange lubricants if required; and can also supply fresh water.

Being ex-naval, the size of the seagoing vessels means they can service both large and small vessels—and it is this capability that gives Allantone its niche, explains co-director Tony Lenton. “The size of our ships makes us unique in the market. Our competitors all operate very large tankers: the smallest you’ll find is probably around 2,500 tonnes. For ports and estuary work that is just too big to carry out certain jobs. The size of our vessels, however, means they

are perfect for that sort of work.”

This niche capability means Allantone is perfectly placed to offer services on operations such as wind farms. The company has worked with the Greater Gabbard wind farm, 14 miles off the Suffolk coast and the biggest wind farm in the world, thanks to its ability to supply large quantities of gas oil, reliably and at short notice. “Our vessels are the perfect size and have the right carrying capacity for the wind farm business,” says Dave. “Our clients tell us they like our barges because they are a comfortable size: they can service large and small vessels and do small and big deliveries.” Logistically, the ships are never more than 20 to 30 hours away from these projects along the east and

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south coasts: the clients know Allantone’s record of reliability and are reassured by the fact that in the event of an emergency there will always be a back-up vessel ready to supply them.

Other clients include the vessels that dredge aggregates, oil companies that require product moved between depots and the ever-present river and harbour tugboats

operated by global customers such as Svitzer. “We’ve worked with various European trading houses and ship owners. Basically, we supply anything that floats!” says Dave. Major customers include names such as Fluor and MPI Offshore; historically, the company has also had years of experience working with NATO, supplying services in and out of Devonport.

In fact, the Allantone name has been in use since 1969. Dave, his younger brother Tony and their father Charles all worked for the original Allantone, which was shelved in 2007. However, Dave and Tony, by then operating their own oil trading company, felt this was an opportunity to incorporate a well-respected name in the industry and reintroduce it as a physical service. In 2009 they acquired their first barge, Rana, and began operations, and

to this day continue to place the firm emphasis on customer service that has long characterised the brand.

The flat structure of the company is key to its ability to respond swiftly. “If a decision needs to be made then we can do so very quickly,” says Tony. “It’s another edge that we have over large corporate companies in our market. We have all the correct systems and protocols and procedures in place; but we run it very efficiently. We’re small

“OUR EVENTUAL AIM IS TO BUILD A COUPLE OF NEW VESSELS, WHICH WILL OPEN UP MARKETS FOR US IN NORTH-WEST EUROPE”



Rana, one of two dumb tankers



View of Sauria

enough to be able to do without red tape: the only approval needed is mine and Dave’s.”

This short-notice ability really sets Allantone apart, says Dave. “We can look at any delivery and we pride ourselves on always helping the customer and getting the job done. We’re the sort of people who will go out there and find a way of doing it, so as not to let the customer down.”

“A lot of large corporations and large companies these days think of their customers in a different way: they just think of a job as revenue and they don’t provide a service,” Tony agrees. “But we still offer the personal touch. It’s a work ethic, not a ploy to get business: it’s just the way we do things.”

The Lentons’ many years of experience in

the trade has also enabled them to extend Allantone’s services to include oil trading, assisting customers in acquiring fuel at other ports. “I have built this up using 21 years of experience in the market, and my vast knowledge and contacts,” says Dave.

As for the future, the company aims to take its expertise and the Allantone brand into new markets. “Our eventual aim is to build a couple of new vessels, which will open up markets for us in north-west Europe,” says Dave. “And that is work-in-progress as we speak.” **BE**

For more information about Allantone Supplies Ltd visit: www.allantone.co.uk



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