



# WindEnergy

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COMMUNICATION HUB FOR THE WIND ENERGY INDUSTRY

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## Marine Surveys

## WIND TURBINE CLUTTER

## Employing Apprentices

# Working at Height



# GIANT OAKS FROM ACORNS GROW

## QUO VADIS CONFERENCE 2014 HAMBURG

In 2007, Kevin and Sigrid Donovan organized a conference for owners and operators in the wind energy sector. It was held at SKF's facility in Luton with 36 delegates, a number of which were SKF employees. The focus of this first conference was to provide an outlook as to what the future of the wind industry could look like and this was reflected in the name that they gave to the conference – Quo Vadis – Latin for “where are you going?” One thing that Kevin and Sigrid could not have foreseen was just how Quo Vadis would grow in the ensuing years to be the very unique and influential annual gathering that it has now become.



### 8TH QUO VADIS CONFERENCE

The location for the 8th Quo Vadis Conference was the city of Hamburg and the venue was the Hotel Hafen, a landmark building towering over the river Elbe in the heart of the busy harbour area.

There are many features that make Quo Vadis a unique event. Firstly, attendance is by invitation and this is so that owners and operators can be brought together in an environment that encourages mutual support and sharing of experiences. This enables turbine OEMs to be excluded from the event and this helps to create a platform for sharing.

### FAMILY ATMOSPHERE

Then there is the family atmosphere. The wind industry is a close knit community and this is even more so at Quo Vadis with Kevin and Sigrid's direct involvement with each of the attendees. This year there were over 80 delegates at Quo Vadis, most of whom had been at previous Quo Vadis conferences and this aspect of return visitors is what makes Quo Vadis really special.

For those returning to the event, it is a time to catch up with friends from the industry, and for those attending for the first time – they are all welcomed into the family. Kevin and Sigrid work hard at this by creating space throughout the two days for people to have time together in both a relaxing and informative environment.

### SOCIAL EVENTS

Everyone is invited to arrive on the day before the conference, and this year a bus tour of Hamburg was laid on followed in the evening by a dinner in the Au Quai restaurant, a specialist fish restaurant right on the water front.

### CONFERENCE

The conference too has its own unique atmosphere. This is in large part down to the style and confidence with which Clifford McSpadden, co-director with Kevin Donovan, leads the whole event. At last year's Quo Vadis in Berlin, Kevin and Clifford introduced GWA Supplies, the business that sources parts and consumables for wind turbines, and they were able to report that they had listened, learnt, and had grown in this past year in both the quantity and the range of components supplied to the industry.

### SPEAKERS

Delegates heard from a wide range of speakers during the day...

- Maria McCaffrey, Chief Executive, RenewableUK**  
 Maria highlighted the challenges that the industry is facing on both a political and financial basis, and how the industry is rising to these challenges with a pledge to be the least cost form of energy generation by 2020. She highlighted the fact that in the UK, wind contributed to a record 24% of the generated electricity – so wind energy is no longer an alternative, it is now a core producer.
- Richard Granger, Schaeffler Technologies**  
 Richard presented the problems associated with 'white etched cracking', a phenomenon that occurs when the metal in bearings is hardened more than the original material, and he explained how surface treatments are being developed to address it.

CONTINUED...



- **Jason Halsey, Power Plant Manager – Sheringham Shoal, Statkraft**  
Jason shared how he and the team at Sheringham had the objective of safely undertaking WTG operations (from Siemens) with no drop off in availability, and all within a 7 month period. This has been a pioneering project within the industry and is a model that many others can learn from.

- **Keir Harman, Regional Head of Asset Operations and Management, DNV GL**  
Keir asked the question 'how do wind farms perform in the long term?' and addressed the three main causes of poor performance: wind, availability, and the power train. The conclusion was that whilst each of these can vary over time, a correctly maintained wind turbine should show not drop off in performance as it gets old.
- **Richard Smith, Principal Engineer, Romax Technology**  
Richard focused on main bearing failures, and introduced the practice of flushing bearing grease as a means of extending the operating life of bearings.



- **Markus Billman, Fraunhofer IISB**  
Marcus took a lot of the mystery out of the electronics that operate in the heart of a converter. By the end of the presentation, there was a better appreciation of the IGBT and the demands made on it performing in the field

- **Scott McSpadden, Material Logistics and Client Manager, GWA Supplies**  
Scott compared the operating data that is accumulated in all shapes and formats with metal ore that can be mined. In its natural state it is of limited use. However, by converting this data (ore) into knowledge (metals and alloys) it can be a powerful management tool. This approach has been used to develop SPUD – the spare parts usage database – that is a tool for forecasting and budgeting spend on spares using historic data.

**QUO VADIS HALL OF FAME**

At last year's event in Berlin, Sigrid Donovan introduced the Hall of Fame, highlighting three delegates who had attended each of the seven Quo Vadis events. Well, this year Jon Beresford, Huw Smallwood and Steve Higman were back for the eighth time and retain their position in the Quo Vadis Hall of Fame, and if the feedback from this year's event in Hamburg is anything to go by – they will all be back next year.

**SPONSORSHIP**

Quo Vadis is a free to attend conference, and this can only be provided through the support of the sponsors Schaeffler UK Ltd., DNV GL and Romax Technology as well as the exhibitors: GasTOPS Canada, Hove A/S, Morgan Advanced Materials, Renewable Advice, Winergy, ZF Services.

**POSITIVE DELEGATE COMMENTS**

There were many positive comments from delegates Alex Grimwood, Marketing Manager for Renewable Advice who attended his first Quo Vadis summed up for all by stating...

*"It has been incredible. No other exhibition or conference that I have been at comes close. I have got to meet so many great people over these two days."*

And Stuart Naylor, Fred Olsen Renewables added... *"My sincerest thanks for organising what was for me the best Quo Vadis yet, a brilliant atmosphere and some of the most relevant and informative speakers. Each year this feels like less of a conference and more a group of likeminded folk getting together to discuss how to take the industry forward."* Stuart Naylor, Fred Olsen Renewables

**Global Wind Supplies (GWA Supplies)**



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