

The Parliamentary Blades Project Newsletter — 15 March 2017

Welcome to the Parliamentary Blades Project newsletter. In this first edition we cover the latest developments in the project including:

- Project background
- Project timeline
- Brand the Blades schools project
- MVOW's investment in skills development
- The People Behind the Blades

We hope you find the articles of interest and do hope to see you at the reception on the Isle of Wight on the 21st April.

About the Project

The Parliamentary Blades Project was initiated by MHI Vestas Offshore Wind (MVOW) in 2016 during Offshore Wind Week, with more than 30 MPs signing components during a reception at the Houses of Parliament.

The components form part of two 80m blades that are being manufactured at the MVOW advanced manufacturing facility on the Isle of Wight. When produced the blades will be fitted into two separate V164-8.0 MW wind turbines, the largest commercially available wind turbine in the world. Each turbine produces enough energy with just one rotation to power an average UK household for 29 hours (13,3KWh).

The first blade containing components signed by MPs is currently in production at MVOW's manufacturing facilities on the Isle of Wight. When completed the blade will continue its journey to the Walney Extension Offshore Wind Farm off the coast of Cumbria. The second blade, which will enter production shortly, will showcase the best British offshore wind has to offer to the export market, with the finished blade going into operation in a German offshore wind farm at Borkum Riffgrund.



The Parliamentary Blades Project is a celebration of the UK's pivotal role in delivering affordable offshore wind, and MVOW's UK advanced manufacturing facility and skilled workforce who, thanks to exporting their market-leading product are generating significant value for the UK economy.

For more information on the project [click here](#).

Project Timeline





Brand the Blades Schools Competition Launch

Last week saw the launch of our Brand the Blades schools competition, part of the Parliamentary Blades Project.

The competition is open to schools across the country and is designed to inspire the leaders of the future to take a greater interest in STEM subjects and the opportunities in the growing offshore wind supply chain. The Parliamentary Blades Project will engage young people with UK technology, engineering and advanced manufacturing and the roles these play in driving economic growth and the shift to a low carbon future.

The competition offers schools and their pupils a chance to win an exciting prize bundle including:

- A bespoke and interactive STEM workshop to take place at the winning school. The workshop will be delivered by a team from MVOW, who design, produce and maintain these record breaking machines.
- The winning entry on a plaque that will be placed in the V164-8.0MW offshore wind turbine that hosts one of the Parliamentary Blades, part of the Walney Extension Offshore Wind Farm in the Irish Sea. A second plaque will be presented to the school.
- A week's loan of the interactive and innovative MHI Vestas Offshore Wind Oculus Rift (virtual reality) technology. Pupils will be able to experience what it is like to head up to the top these gigantic turbines in order to get an appreciation of the engineering challenges involved.
- A prize bundle worth up to a combined total of £100 of MVOW merchandise.



For more information and to enter please visit: brandtheblades.com where you will find an information pack including lesson plans and teacher resources.

MVOW's Investment in UK skills

The significant ongoing investment in training and skills development is a fundamental tenet of MVOW's approach; essential for safety, quality, and employee value.



By the end of March 2017 MVOW will have grown from 110 staff to 500 in the UK, and by 2018 we expect this number to be over 600. Most recently in January 2016, MVOW recruited over 70 additional production jobs, taking the total directly employed to well over 300.

MVOW was the first company to deliver sustainable advanced manufacturing jobs in the UK for large-scale offshore wind turbine components. Our facility on the Isle of Wight has been serially producing 80-meter blades since May 2015. The blades have been designed and tested in the UK over the last five years.

In addition to this visible direct MVOW industrialisation in the UK, there has also been significant industrialisation and associated innovation and skills development in MVOW's UK supply chain. MVOW's expansion in the UK has resulted in hundreds of indirect jobs over the last two years.

MVOW is committed to the UK for the long haul and has invested in significant skills programmes. For example, with partners Solent LEP & the Isle of Wight College we are investing circa £1 million in a four year training programme at our Isle of Wight production facility. This will give an independently recognised composites qualification to the majority of our staff.

Our operational staff in the UK are highly trained, and these skilled high value jobs are often created in areas with lower than average economic performance.

MVOW invests heavily in developing existing staff and bringing on the talent of the future. At Humber Gateway MVOW is working with site owner Eon, providing five years of turbine training for up to 15 apprentices, and in terms of existing staff, MVOW funds high potential UK operations managers through Masters of Business Administration.



The People Behind the Blades

The most advanced offshore wind turbines in the world are designed, tested and manufactured on the Isle of Wight - a great UK success story.

Over the course of the Parliamentary Blades Project we will be looking at the team of people that produce these record-breaking composite structures - the People Behind the Blades.

Marcus Guster- Production Operative

At just 19 years old, Marcus is at the start of his career with MVOW at their advanced manufacturing facility on the Isle of Wight. He is a Production Operative and forms part of the team producing the Parliamentary Blades. Marcus said: "We do the main building of the blades, putting all the materials in, ensuring that the work is up to the standard dictated in the drawings, and achieves quality assurance sign-off."

Marcus added: "MVOW have great training opportunities for me and my career. If you want to develop yourself, MVOW are very supportive and will try and put you forward for training and I've really benefited from this. I haven't been here for very long but already I have gained a lot of new skills. It has really helped me to get to know the process quickly and allowed me to experience lots of aspects of production. My next goal is to take a craning course and then my NVQ Level 3 qualification in composite engineering."



Marcus Guster, above, marks up materials on the production line.

More stories of the "People Behind the Blades" will be available on our social channels, at:



[facebook.com/MHIVestasOffshoreWind](https://www.facebook.com/MHIVestasOffshoreWind)



[linkedin.com/company/mhi-vestas-offshore-wind](https://www.linkedin.com/company/mhi-vestas-offshore-wind)



[youtube.com/MHIVestasOffshoreWind](https://www.youtube.com/MHIVestasOffshoreWind)



twitter.com/MHIVestas



Thank you for reading the Parliamentary Blades Project newsletter

We will continue to follow the progress of the project in future newsletters.

These will cover:

- The latest news on the two Parliamentary Blades being manufactured
- More interviews with People Behind the Blades – both within MVOW and the wider supply chain
- Updates from the Burbo Bank Extension offshore wind farm
- News from the Brand the Blades schools competition