

Fossil-free fuels hit the news as Zero Petroleum has a week to remember at Farnborough International Airshow

03 August, 2022: This year's edition of Farnborough International Airshow will go down in history as the moment SAF and synthetic fuels hit the headlines and Zero Petroleum was front and centre at the event, making a noise – quite literally – meeting some like-minded businesses and creating some exciting new and future partnerships. Here are some bite-sized highlights of what we got up to at the show.

ICE COOL SYNTHETIC FUEL SCULPTURE

The event began with a buzz as over the course of two noisy hours, ice artist Csaba Vass carved a Red Arrows jet sculpture out of a two-metre block of ice – using a chainsaw powered by our synthetic fossil-free fuel. In the record-breaking scorching heat, the sound and the smell of the action demonstrated the reality of our sustainable fuel, which was poured directly into the chainsaw's tank with no modification. The action drew in the crowds, while the stunning ice sculpture was a centrepiece for visitors at the show for hours as it slowly melted in the near 40-degree heat.

Paddy Lowe said: “The very fact that this ice carving event happened on one of the hottest days on record in the UK demonstrated the challenge we are all facing. The airline industry is being challenged to go carbon neutral and synthetic fuels are a vital part of that. The ice carving event was a fantastic demonstration of what they can do and showed that going fossil-free does not cause any loss in performance. It also demonstrated the diverse need for these fuels: electric chainsaws are great, but charging one in the middle of a forest is not easy, whereas you can carry our fuel on your back!”

RECORD BREAKING PLANE AND PILOT

Taking pride of place on the stand was the aircraft that last year had achieved a feat that will go down in history as the moment when sustainable air flight started to become reality. The Ikarus C42 aircraft hit the headlines last November when Zero Petroleum partnered with the Royal Air Force and Captain Peter “Willy” Hackett flew it around Cotswold Airport to secure the Guinness World Records[®] title ‘First aircraft powered by synthetic fuel’. The record certificate was also on show, while Captain Hackett was ever-present to talk people through the experience.

Paddy Lowe said: “The record was an important moment for our company and it was great to have the plane and pilot with us for this important show. Willy was able to tell all our visitors about the flight and how the plane flew in exactly the same way as – and in some ways better than – it had with fossil fuels. It was fantastic to see people from the industry hearing first-hand from the pilot about how synthetic fuels can change the sustainability of aviation, without changing its performance.”



RAF PROJECT MOVES TOWARDS FAST JET AMBITION

On the second day of the show we were delighted to announce the next stage of our partnership with the Royal Air Force, with a new contract to scale up the technology. We were proud to welcome two high profile visitors to the stand, with Air Chief Marshal Sir Mike Wigston joining in the morning and Defence Procurement Minister Jeremy Quin visiting later to learn more about the programme.

Paddy Lowe said: "It was fantastic to be able to announce the next stage of our RAF partnership and to welcome such prestigious visitors. We are incredibly excited to start now on the important development of this technology to production-readiness in advance of deployment at scale to flight operations."

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The stand drew crowds again when a panel that included former Formula One World Champion Damon Hill – one of the company's seed stage investors – and Group Captain Peter 'Willy' Hackett – the record breaking RAF pilot – joined Zero Petroleum CEO Paddy Lowe for a fascinating discussion on the future of fossil-free fuels. All topics were on the table, including their potential use in motorsport; their future use in the defence and commercial aviation; and the desire to go carbon neutral in the private jet world.

Paddy Lowe said: "The world of sustainable fuels spans a wide range of industries and it was fascinating to discuss the topic with such a knowledgeable and engaging panel. We had a good audience on site and were also able to live stream the conversation wider online. It is important to have these conversations, because only by educating and engaging will we ultimately see action being taken."

FUTURE GENERATION FOCUS

A huge variety of individuals from different backgrounds attended the stand over the course of the week and just as important as the industry experts, media and politicians who paid us a visit were the school children welcomed from around the country on Farnborough's Family Friday. They are the future and we were delighted to be able to explain to them how sustainable fuels work and why they are an important part in our approach to dealing with Climate Change.

Paddy Lowe said: "Future generations need us to act now to stop and hopefully in some way recover from the effects of global warming. We were delighted to see so many young faces join us on Friday and to see how conscious they were about sustainability issues and how engaged and keen they were to learn about sustainable fuels and how they can help in the future."