

Seminar: Alternative transport fuels/electric mobility strategy formation

Author: Annick Driessen, MindsinMotion.net<annick.driessen@mindsinmotion.net>

Up until this year, most firms and local or regional authorities venturing into alternative drivelines or fuels for their car fleets made the transition to natural gas, biofuels or, for the adventurous, biogas or even hydrogen. But suddenly electric mobility is hot. If you're with a local or regional authority and unsure whether to plan for electrification or stay on your chosen path, if any, a seminar can help you decide.

who	DHV Consultancy and Engineering
what	Seminar: Alternative transport fuels/electric mobility strategy formation
when	Tuesday 23 June 2009
where	Laan 1914 nr. 35, Amersfoort, The Netherlands
costs	free
URL	http://www2.dhv.com/Display.aspx?ID=2475

In the Netherlands electric driving, or e-mobility, has quickly won popularity amongst politicians. Large-scale introduction of electric vehicles (EVs) is recognised as a good

[E033 image 1](#)

opportunity for the country to literally clear the air, while taking the European lead. Leading the way is something politicians on the national level feel the country has to do once in a while in order to be considered 'the smallest amongst the large countries', instead of merely one of Europe's smaller countries.

No way back?

But many firms, local governments and regional bodies have already begun the transition to biofuels or other forms of sustainable mobility some time ago. And once a choice has been made, incentive policy measures, spatial planning and the likes all revolve around that particular choice and it is difficult to switch to another driveline (hybrid or all-electric) or fuel type. Earmarked money can only be spend once. So at what point is it sensible for local governments to make a choice and to what extent is it wise to leave other options open?

Consultancy and engineering firm DHV organise a seminar on strategy formation in the realm of alternative fuels and sustainable mobility, on June 23rd. The seminar is cut out for local and

regional policy makers and civil servants.

Highlight: sustainable mobility consultancy

We talked to John Pommer, head of mobility consultancy at DHV, and to his colleague Pieter Tanja, senior consultant sustainable mobility.

“We all know we cannot reach that figure”

John, who will be leading the seminar, tells us what a mobility consultant does. “Most people at DHV are engineers working on large infrastructural projects. We, on the other hand, apply ourselves to the 'soft side' of mobility: sustainable mobility, demand management, regional accessibility and safe transport.

[E033 image 2](#)

“With regard to sustainable mobility, we've written the underlying document about electric driving for the action plan of The Netherlands Society for Nature and Environment (SNM), which aims at one million EVs by 2020. Of course we all know that we cannot reach that figure, but for me it is about stating ambition. We've provided the facts and figures for the document and we pleaded for a programmatic approach and for cooperation between the different parties involved: local authorities, fleet managers, knowledge institutions, manufacturers, energy providers et cetera.”

“Some local governments think they have to switch”

The subject for this particular seminar came from local governments seeking advise. “Some want to make a drastic switch to EVs or think they should because electric mobility seems an easy solution to both air quality and climate problems, producing almost zero noise,” says Pieter. “Do we now need to promote sockets instead of filling stations?’ they wonder. Amsterdam, for instance, started with biodiesel, but is now heavily betting on hydrogen and, as of late, on EVs as well.”

On every decision level people have their own reasons to ponder switching. Pieter: “Provinces and municipalities are thinking of air quality and climate. Municipalities often want to take the lead and promote themselves through sustainable mobility. Companies and consumers decide based on costs and availability, although to some firms, like TNT, responsible entrepreneurship means a great deal too.”

The consultants do not advise to switch to e-mobility if another path has already been chosen. Both John and Pieter predict that various kinds of alternative propulsion and fuels will keep existing next to one another.

[E033 image 3](#)

“There is a mission for us still”

DHV offers fleet scans, to find out which method or type of fuel suits a fleet. “We survey all options for a transition to alternative drivelines or fuels, looking at the total costs of ownership and emission advantages or disadvantages for a particular fleet. The scan can be a basis from which to decide,” Pieter explains. “Owners of fuelling stations wonder what would be the market volume for alternative fuels. The aggregate picture of the scans provides them insight.

“By the way, most attention these days goes out to all-electric vehicles. People tend to forget there are plug-ins and hybrids as well. That gives a distorted picture, because prognoses often do include hybrids. So there is a mission for us still,” Pieter adds.

And what about public transport concessions, should they include a mandatory technique or fuel, or rather mere emission limits? Pieter tends to advise to look at the output. “Find out what suits your fleet best,” he says. That sounds reasonable in the midst of the EV hype.