

Press Release  
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### Project LNG Motion Moving towards carbon-free transport with GCA

To deploy a network in Europe composed of 42 public service stations and a fleet of at least 200 vehicles, and to undertake a multidisciplinary study of the logistical stakes of gas.

This is the ambitious project of Axègaz and Group Charles André (GCA), filed under the title of LNG Motion within the scope of the European CEF (Connecting Europe Facility) programme.



*Jérôme Minfray, Stéphane Joffre, Edouard de Montmarin, Claude Blanc*

Shippers, local authorities, industrial vehicle manufacturers and transport and logistics service providers are supporting the initiative, which is implementing the transport decarbonisation policy steered by Europe.

The on-going revision of the European “climate and energy pack” includes plans for a further 30% reduction in CO2 emissions in road freight haulage by 2030. **“Looking at the efforts and investment which have been put in by industrial vehicle manufacturers to comply with the Euro VI standard, it looks difficult to reach this target using diesel power,”** says Edouard de Montmarin, Development Director at Axégaz Transport Solutions.

On the other hand, natural gas propulsion seems like the most-effective technology, and is immediately available to resolve the environmental issues of road transportation while protecting air quality in urban areas; it will enable a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the medium- and long-term. **“Gas is the only real alternative fuel to diesel, considering its environmental and economic performances, and provides the same flexibility with LNG.”**

### **Proven performances**

The advantages of gas power were highlighted in 2015 by a comparative study that is now a reference on the subject. It was undertaken at the initiative of Easydis, Casino’s logistics subsidiary, with the support and involvement of ADEME, Iveco, Axégaz, the engineering firm CRMT, and Transports Jacky Perrenot.

Employing different route profiles with loads by two Iveco tractors – a 460 HP Stralis Euro VI and a 330 HP Stralis LNG – the average decrease in CO2 emissions was 10%, and up to 70% using bio-methane or Bio-LNG! **“With 200 road haulage tractors running on Bio-LNG, the reduction in CO2 emissions is equivalent to the emissions from 20,000 city cars,”** points out Edouard de Montmarin.

For nitrogen oxides (NOx), the difference in favour of gas propulsion is just as significant, with a decrease of between 30 and 70%, and particle emissions are practically zero without a filter and the associated maintenance.

The division by two of noise pollution – which is a key factor in urban environments, particularly at night – and a 20%-cheaper price than diesel, as well as the availability of the resource, are other arguments in favour of natural gas.

### **A new phase with LNG Motion**

Two conditions now have to be fulfilled for a transition to this alternative fuel in its compressed form (CNG) or liquefied form (LNG) says Claude Blanc, Technical Director at GCA: **“We need a dense distribution network and high-performance vehicles to allow cost-effective adoption in every sector of road transport.”**

This is the goal targeted by the European LNG Motion project, in which Axégaz and GCA are collaborating. **“Our project represents a funding of more than €60M to roll out an LNG distribution network consisting of 42 public service stations in**

**9 European countries – of which France is one – and the acquisition of 200 LNG vehicles,”** comments Jérôme Minfray, Sales Director for the bulk branch.

### **A multidisciplinary study**

Located on identified transport routes, these investments are eligible for European funding of up to 50% of the amount, so as to cover a good part of the higher cost of gas-fuelled vehicles.

The Axègaz/GCA project consists in designing a normalised and standardised European infrastructure and then operating it under real-life conditions. In addition to the environmental aspects, it covers several other dimensions, emphasises Claude Blanc: **“There’s the technical angle of the configuration of the stations and vehicles, the economic facet of the logistics for resupplying the distribution network, and the human factor of the active involvement of drivers and operators.”**

### **The choice of a European leader**

GCA heads up a European network of 85 subsidiaries and affiliates in 15 countries and employs 7,000 people, of whom 4,500 are drivers. The firm brings its unique sectorial and multimodal specialisations to the project, with a fleet of 5,000 tractors and a declared sales turnover of one billion euros.

**“We’ve been certified several times by ISO and our customers, and our RSE approach and SHEQ system are an integral part of our day-to-day operations. We use high-tech tools and personnel who are qualified and trained in all the transport and logistics professions; the group cultivates values rooted in performance, the safety of people and property, and sustainable development,”** says Jérôme Minfray.

Stéphane Joffre, Gas Sales Director, adds, **“Our strengths are a regional proximity and a European penetration, based on a network that stretches throughout the logistics chain. As a specialist in the transportation of bulk products, a European leader in the shipment of dangerous goods – which includes gas – and an expert in vehicle distribution, GCA has been working towards the reduction of its carbon footprint for several decades.”**

The enterprise has been a signatory to the Objectif CO2 charter since 2009, and is steering its development towards a label. This involves the active renewal of fleets, giving drivers training, and a massive uptake of combined rail/road, waterway/road and short sea transportation.

### **A springboard to European objectives**

Drawing on these multiples fields of expertise and the initial adoption of Axègaz’s LNG Box stations, the entire project will be implemented up to 2020.

“The flagship for all this is our first location at Corbas with Lavarhone, which illustrates the multidisciplinary nature of the project. In addition to supplying fuel to a fleet of road haulage tractors, the chosen site is near a Novatrans combined rail/road facility and a Tea/Walon branch specialised in car distribution, and has a tank cleaning station. All these applications can benefit from the alternative that gas energy provides,” says Edouard de Montmarin.

“The directors of the GCA subsidiaries concerned and their personnel are involved and highly motivated,” says Jérôme Minfray, conscious that the project’s success is a springboard for the largescale adoption of gas in European road transport and important for the improvement in the sector’s image that GCA is working to bring about.

**Letters of support**

Support for the project is coming from further afield than just its active members, says Edouard de Montmarin: “We’ve received more than sixty letters of support from all over Europe, from firms envisioning investing or having invested in the conversion of road transport to natural gas, in industry, distribution, transport and logistics services, from professional associations and gas and oil businesses, as well from government agencies and local and regional authorities. These demonstrations of interest show how important our goal is, and what big expectations are being expressed in the field.”





Industrial vehicle manufacturers are also in the partnership, and are announcing that there will soon be new generations of gas-driven engines that will be better performing in terms of power and operational usage.

Citations for the call for candidatures for the European CEF programme will be announced in July 2016.

### **About Axègaz:**

Founded in 2012 by professionals from the energy industries, AXÈGAZ is a simplified joint stock company with its registered offices in Levallois-Perret (in the Hauts de Seine department of Greater Paris), and is a natural gas supplier offering an innovative solution (liquefied natural gas, an energy product with a high disruption potential, delivered by lorry). Since its launch, AXÈGAZ has raised 3.7 million euros from specialist investment funds, and calls on specialists in industrial financing for investments in its infrastructures. AXÈGAZ has also received support from the French public investment bank BPI (Banque Publique d'Investissement). Working with its partners, AXÈGAZ offers custom-designed solutions to enable its customers to finally benefit from the many advantages of natural gas, both in industry and transport; it is developing a project for the construction of a network of public service stations supplying natural gas in compressed and liquefied form. AXÈGAZ's key clients are renowned transport companies such as J.PERRENOT and STAF. AXÈGAZ is a member of the Association Française du Gaz (AFG [French Gas Association]), the Association Française du Gaz Naturel Véhicule (AFGNV [French Association for Natural Gas for Vehicles]) and NGVAEurope, and is also an active contributor to interaction with the authorities about the subjects of LNG distribution regulation in France. For more information about AXÈGAZ, visit [www.axegaz.com](http://www.axegaz.com).

### **About GCA:**

Founded in 1932 and currently managed by Mrs. Delphine André, the granddaughter of the original founder, the Charles André Group (GCA) has successfully developed and diversified its historic road haulage business to meet its clients' needs, and is a **Europe-wide player in the transport and logistics realm**.

The family-run group recorded a sales turnover of one billion euros in 2015, mainly from its businesses of logistics for dangerous goods, automotive logistics and interior tank cleaning. GCA cultivates its values of dependability and professionalism through a European network of subsidiaries/affiliates servicing industrial customers.

GCA has been in the multimodal transport business since 1978, and took over the businesses of Novatrans (a former subsidiary of the SNCF group) in 2013, so as to avail its expertise in railway transport and develop a complementary offering of road transport that is more ecologically friendly yet financially sustainable.

The enterprise is working towards reducing its polluting emissions, holds the CO2 label certification, and is a signatory to the ADEME charter.

For more information, visit [www.charlesandre.com](http://www.charlesandre.com)