

Introducing BWEA's new Head of Grid & Technical Affairs

In November 2006, Graeme Cooper joined BWEA, from a background in the cellular telecoms industry, where he spent 10 years working on all aspects of network rollout and project managing. This ranged from network planning, land acquisition, engineering design, local authority planning, site build, integration and commissioning, upgrading and grid connections. For the last two and a half years he worked at NGW (the wireless arm of National Grid) in the role of National Power Group Manager, where he was responsible for all grid connections to mobile phone base stations and the utilisation of NG Pylons in remote locations for telecoms use.

Graeme's view is that a lot of his experience is directly transferable to the wind energy business and that indeed, wind now is where telecoms was 10-12 years ago, and having overseen much of that development, he can bring useful ideas and experience to help further the wind and marine renewables sector.

In Graeme's first few weeks he has hit the ground running and has met with key players and already responded on behalf of BWEA to the Beaulieu-Denny public enquiry and the open letter on Regional Power Zones and Innovative Funding Initiative. Graeme will be focusing on several key issues over the coming months, picking up on the excellent work of Richard Ford, who left in July. He will begin with a review and refocus to ensure that BWEA does the best it can for its members, and top of that list will be revitalising the Grid Group. Also on the agenda will be:

- lobbying government to provide more tools for the industry to help deliver on the promises that government has made on carbon reduction

- tackling the onshore grid queue to improve the speed to market for onshore grid connections
- offshore connections and regulation including responding to the latest round of consultations
- working to ensure the right result on transmission capacity with a particular focus on the Beaulieu-Denny link, as this is absolutely key to a number of projects.

The UK wind industry is a world leader in standard setting and regulation of Health and Safety, and Graeme will continue BWEA's excellent track record in this area, encouraging the sharing of lessons learnt and a coordinated approach, showing the rest of the world how it should be done.

Graeme was attracted to working in the wind, wave and tidal sector, as he sees the benefit to the country and the planet in expanding this technology and breaking down barriers that slow the expansion. Having been part of the telecoms industry during the rapid growth, innovation and deployment stages, which he says was "one heck of a ride", that industry is now maturing and the drive for network growth and improvement has gone, leaving Graeme with all his knowledge and enthusiasm and needing a new direction in which to focus it.

In addition, becoming a father has made Graeme reflect on what sort of a world he is bringing his children into. This has led to him being far more concerned about the environment and the impact that we all have on it.

"The wind, wave and tidal industry needs a strong voice to represent it and to lead the way for long term, sustainable development. BWEA is a fantastic organisation that is not afraid to stand up and be counted, particularly when it comes to overcoming the hurdles in expanding the use of these technologies. I look forward to playing my part in the renewables revolution." □



Contact Graeme Cooper on 020 7689 1938 / graeme@bwea.com. □

BWEA Grid Key Achievements 2006

- **Launch of the Wind Turbine Safety Rules**
- **BWEA's second H&S seminar**
- **Lobbying DTI to improve reporting of wind farm production in the 2006 Digest of UK Energy Statistics**
- **Dealing with the implications for Wales from TAN8.**
- **Being central to the debates on offshore transmission and transmission access, including membership of OTEG, ARODG and TADG**
- **Consultation responses including:**
 - Consultation on Innovation Funding Initiative and Registered Power Zone Scheme for Distribution Network Operators
 - Written representation to the Beaulieu-Denny inquiry
 - Access Reform in Electricity Transmission
 - Managing Access to the GB Transmission System
 - Working on response on Licensing Offshore Transmission for DTI/OFGEM