

Q&A: Driver Trett UK

TOM COMERFORD – REGIONAL MANAGING DIRECTOR, DRIVER TRETT UK AND DIALES QUANTUM EXPERT DISCUSSES THE UK TEAM AND HIS ASPIRATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE BUSINESS.

What does the current UK business look like?

As Driver Group celebrates its fortieth birthday, the Driver Trett business in the UK is currently comprised of 117 staff located across seven regional offices in Glasgow, Teesside, Haslingden, Liverpool, Coventry, Bristol, and London. Each office provides a suite of services including planning and programming, delay analysis, commercial and contract management, quantity surveying, dispute resolution support services, and expert services.

Our clients operate in a variety of sectors including building, infrastructure, energy, oil and gas, marine, process, and transportation. We have been privileged to work with many of them for many years, on some of their most interesting and challenging projects.

Our joined-up approach means our team assist clients on commissions, not only across the UK but also in other parts of the world, either as a standalone service or as part of an integrated team. In addition to our growing languages capability in the UK, being part of a global business means we can also call upon over 30 different languages, local knowledge, and the cultural awareness of our colleagues in our twenty-seven offices across Europe, the Middle East, Asia Pacific, and Canada.

Have there been any significant changes in recent years?

We have seen notable growth in our Glasgow office and the strengthening of our teams in Coventry, Bristol, and London. Around the country, but particularly at our Teesside office, we work closely with the Driver Project Services business in the specialist areas of process and industrial engineering, oil and gas, and offshore structures.

It is nearly six years since Diales was formed to provide independent expert



Tom Comerford, Regional Managing Director

services. In 2014, the initial delay and quantum expertise was supplemented with architectural and building services. Those skill sets have now expanded further into civil and structural engineering, mechanical and electrical engineering, chemical process engineering, project management, and energy from waste. Our technical teams are involved in numerous projects across the UK and also in the Middle East and Australia.

What other capabilities does the team have?

We provide the complete spectrum of programming and delay analysis, including programme preparation at all levels, validation, updating, progress reporting, and recovery. Our Diales delay analysts regularly use leading software and their expertise to interrogate substantial and complex programmes to understand the reasons of change. Utilising an appropriate technique to suit the circumstances, they provide robust analysis on a prospective or retrospective basis across a range of project sizes and dispute values.

Using their considerable industry

knowledge and experience, our commercial and quantum teams have been involved in some leading disputes. Our independent experts have given evidence in reported Technology and Construction Court (TCC) cases and in major arbitrations.

In addition to providing our breakfast seminars, plus regular contributions at industry conferences and lawyer hosted seminars, we continue to provide specialist training to client's personnel. Topics include commercial awareness and change management and this year we will also be rolling out training on the latest NEC4 and FIDIC suites of contract.

What shape would you like the UK business to take in future years?

Our aim is to maintain the high-quality of reports, services, and assistance that we provide to clients and tribunals. The changing nature and volume of records in disputes, the methods by which they are communicated, combined with the evolution of data analytics, electronic data management, e-discovery and visualisation are just some the challenges that we will continue to address as we move forward.

We currently have around twenty-five Diales experts based in the UK and are looking to grow these, both internally from within our Diales development group and externally by attracting key experts with our existing capabilities, and those with new skill sets.

We will continue to work with our clients on their traditional projects, but also to provide support to new projects that will shape our future infrastructure such as HS2, nuclear-new-build projects, and highways schemes to name but a small few. Further afield, we look forward to continued collaboration with our colleagues around the world and supporting our clients with their global projects. ■