

IPRA'S QUALITY ASSURANCE SCHEME CONFIRMED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JOBS, ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION



After 2.5 years of working with the Irish Trade Marks Office and the Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation the IPRA is delighted to finally announce that we have just received the Certificate of Trade Mark Registration for our Registered Certification Quality Assurance trade mark covering petrol and diesel in the Irish market.

David Blevings, of the IPRA says, "We are delighted with this news. The IPRA quality assurance scheme is the only Motor Fuel QA scheme in Ireland to have received trade mark certification. The QA scheme will now be rolled out to stations across the country giving consumers the satisfaction in knowing that retailers displaying the Quality logo are part of an accredited scheme that includes initial entry and random testing to ensure fuel quality".

WE BELIEVE THAT EVEN IF WE CAN'T STOP FUEL ADULTERATION WE CAN HELP CONSUMERS MAKE INFORMED CHOICES AND SUPPORT THE LEGITIMATE MEMBERS OF OUR INDUSTRY.

Next steps for the IPRA are Consumer education and recognition of the QA brand

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The only time consumers hear about fuel quality is in a negative context - here at the IPRA we want to change that - our goal is to promote the quality of fuel to provide consumers with confidence when they make a purchase.

Customers want reassurance that the fuel they are buying and pumping into their vehicles is of a consistently high quality and meets current Irish fuel specifications.

Quality Assurance



Fuel adulteration can take different forms and in recent years, the most common form of adulteration was to remove the dye from agricultural gasoil and sell this as road diesel. This caused damage to many car engines and resulted in large scale waste being dumped at the roadside from the industrial process used. Many innocent consumers were caught out and were victims of this fuel adulteration scandal with many having to pay thousands of euros for car engine repairs. The introduction of a new marker by Revenue has reduced this problem but fuel adulteration can still be an issue with 'designer' fuels now being found in the UK and Ireland, claims David.

The aim of the QA Scheme is to prevent the sale of adulterated petrol or diesel to Irish motorists as the introduction of tampered petrol or diesel to vehicles causes engine damage. Fuel quality is a vitally important consideration for everyone; poor quality fuel is one of the main causes of faults and breakdowns for consumers and the assurance that your fuel is of a high quality and tested regularly will increase consumers confidence in purchasing from you. It is hoped that the addition of the certification trade mark will increase consumer satisfaction in this area and encourage fuel suppliers to get on board so their consumers can purchase with complete confidence.

Paul Turner, Head of Legal Metrology at the National Standards Authority of Ireland, welcomed the news and said, "NSAI is responsible for ensuring that fuel pumps dispense the correct amount of fuel when a customer fills their vehicle at a retail station. We do this through the authorised verifier's scheme. We welcome the news that the IPRA QA scheme has received trade mark verification and support any initiative that gives consumers assurance on fuel quality. Together NSAI and IPRA can provide your customers with the confidence they need."

Along with trade mark certification, the IPRA scheme has the backing and support of the Society of the Irish Motor Industry (SIMI), the Irish Small and Medium Enterprises Association (ISME), Small Firms Association (SFA) and the Irish Road Haulage Association (IRHA).

This scheme is also listed on the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission website:



If you have not already joined the scheme please contact us for more information. Membership requirements consist of both administrative and fuel checks. The administration side of the QA scheme includes specific elements of wholesaler, licensing and Revenue checks, while the fuel checks consist of both initial onsite testing and random fuel testing (carried out by an independent laboratory). All checks and testing requirements must be met in order for participants in the scheme to be able to display the Quality Assurance mark on their station [stickers, signage etc.].

If you would like to find out more or join the QA scheme please send us an email at office@ipra.ie or orla@ipra.ie

WHAT IS THE FUTURE FOR RETAIL PRICES?

The AA reported that that retail prices fell for the second consecutive month in April 2017 halting the upward trend we had seen in retail prices since OPEC and non-OPEC countries agreed to introduce production cuts back in November 2016.

However, in the last couple of months oil prices have started to fall due to increasing supplies from Middle Eastern countries and evidence that global oil demand growth is waning due to the economic slowdown in the OECD.

While there is never any certainty about future oil prices the estimate of crude oil remaining between \$40-60 a tonne looks more achievable. A big influence on the market is the ability of the US shale oil industry to increase production rapidly and this has challenged Saudi Arabia's traditional role as a swing supplier. The difficulty is that the Middle Eastern Countries need more than \$60/

tonne to make their economies (heavily dependent on oil income) work.

It is interesting to note that the recent decision by OPEC to extend their cuts and not increase them has not materialised as the latest output figures (May 17) show that OPEC production actually increased by 250,000 bpd in May to 32.22m bpd.

IPRA has the view that prices will stay at their current level in the medium term and may even reduce further over the summer months unless something unforeseen appears over the horizon!