

# UK offshore supply chain best practices

With the UK's latest Contracts for Difference allocation round unlocking a new wave of offshore wind activity, supply chain coordination is becoming increasingly critical. In this discussion, Innes Cameron, Director at Clarksons Port Services, and Nicolaj Splidt Jakobsen, Head of Offshore at Dan-Bunkering, share how project stakeholders are mobilizing to support the UK pipeline.



**PES: The UK's Contracts for Difference (CfD) Allocation Round 7 (AR7) has just delivered a significant set of awards. How are you seeing this accelerate supply chain activity, not only in infrastructure, but also in related services such as marine logistics and fuel supply?**

**Innes Cameron:** The effect of AR7 has been noticeable. The awards brought clarity to several pending projects and once that happened, developers began firming up their operational plans.

What we're seeing now is a steady increase in requests and deeper technical discussions for suitable ports and berths, crane availability, vessel availability and laydown

allocations; essentially, the early building blocks of the project execution phase. As several campaigns are moving forward at similar times, the level of coordination planning has increased. Port calls, equipment transfers, vessel movements and fuel supply all need to be synchronised to avoid unnecessary delays and costs.

This is where our cooperation with Dan-Bunkering becomes particularly valuable. When we align port timelines and bunkering requirements at an early stage, it reduces uncertainty and ensures vessels move through their schedule without friction, supporting clients in managing risk and cost exposure.

**Nicolaj Splidt Jakobsen:** Geopolitical tension in the Middle East reinforces the need for this integrated planning. Even when the UK is not directly exposed, shifts in global shipping flows or refinery output can influence availability and timing. Clients are better off looking to build predictability into the parts of the supply chain they can control. Vessel operations and fuel supply are a key part of that.

**PES: From your vantage point in fuel markets and logistics, are there emerging capabilities in the UK, in terms of people, facilities and partnerships, that you think will make a meaningful difference to project delivery and operations?**

**IC:** Yes and the progress is tangible. UK ports engaged in offshore wind have built stronger offshore competencies. Teams now understand not just cargo operations, but the technical rhythm of vessel loading or discharging WTG components, heavy-lift requirements and installation support. Infrastructure has also improved. Customs processes move faster; quayside planning is more structured, safety routines are stronger and bunkering setups are better integrated with operational needs when planned. But one of the most important developments is the collaborative approach across the supply chain.

Ports, vessel owners and suppliers are engaging with each other earlier than before. Our joint approach with Dan-Bunkering is a good example of that shift. Instead of treating port tasks and fuel tasks as separate workstreams, we align them into one integrated plan. This gives project owners a realistic schedule, not just an optimistic one and reduces operational and economic risk at the execution stage.

**NSJ:** We also provide access to in-house legal, regulatory and commercial advisory functions that support clients beyond day-to-day port operations. Similarly, benefits arise through collaboration with our sister companies. Our group offers extensive market intelligence, compliance expertise and global fuel-flow insight. When these strengths are combined, the support given to project developers is significantly more resilient than fuel or port services alone.

**PES:** With AR7 bringing more projects closer to final investment decisions, how early are developers and operators starting to ask about fuel strategy, not only for traditional liquid fuels but also for alternatives that may be affected by emissions regulation such as the UK Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS)?

**NSJ:** Fuel strategy is now becoming part of the initial project discussions rather than being a late operational consideration. Developers and vessel owners are recognising that fuel impacts schedule resilience, vessel routing and commercial risk. By engaging

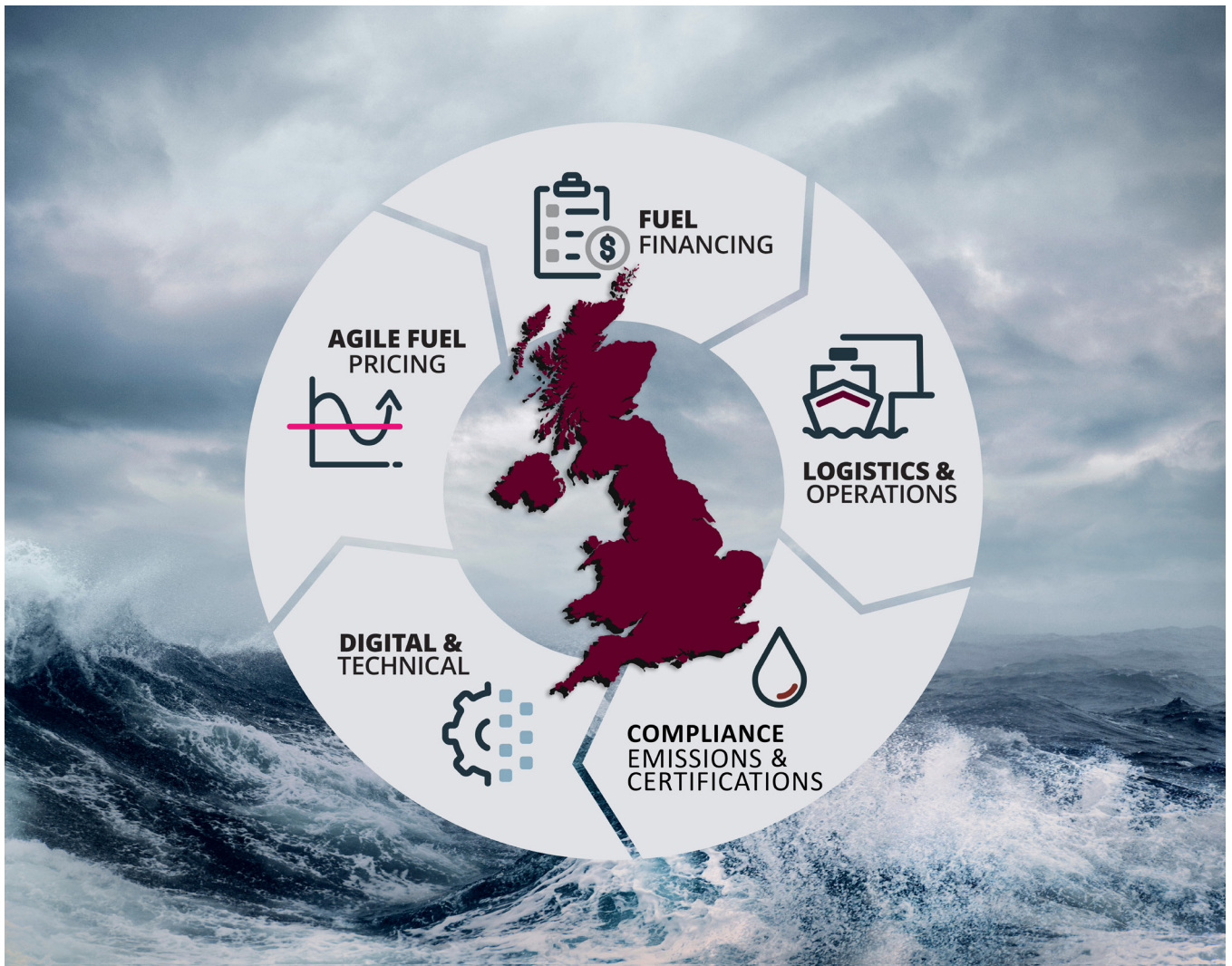
early, developers can model multiple scenarios, identify vulnerable points and establish contingency. In this geopolitical environment, this sort of risk management effort is critical.

This is where cooperation with Clarksons strengthens the planning process. When clients are evaluating ports or designing their loading operation, we jointly assess fuel infrastructure, delivery constraints, congestion patterns and compliance implications.

As we have global insight into market flows, regulatory trends and alternative fuel pathways, we can offer developers a strategy that is both operationally sound and aligned with compliance and sustainability goals.

**PES:** How have those conversations evolved compared with even just a couple of years ago?

**NSJ:** They have become broader and more technically informed. Clients want visibility on, for example, emissions strategies, cost



implications under UK and EU ETS, supply chain resilience and the operational impact of fuel choices. The conversation has expanded from simple pricing to risk, contingency and strategy.

**IC:** And on the port side, developers now expect a connected view. Vessel movements, port readiness, bunkering windows and weather risks are treated as interdependent elements.

**PES:** **The UK and EU ETS is becoming a part of the commercial calculus for certain fuels. How should developers be thinking about emissions compliance as they line up contracts, particularly in a fast-moving supply environment?**

**NSJ:** Although offshore vessels are not yet included in UK or EU ETS, developers should factor the 2027 scope expansion into their project planning. Vessel choice, routing behaviour and fuel consumption will all drive future emissions exposure, and decisions made during early planning today will influence compliance costs later in the project.

The most effective approach is to view ETS as part of the vessel and fuel strategy rather than a standalone requirement. We have strong insight into evolving ETS rules and fuel-type implications, and when combined with Clarksons' knowledge of UK regulations, vessel performance and port operations, we can help clients build a compliance-ready plan well before ETS becomes mandatory for offshore vessels.

**PES:** **Do you find there's an increasing appetite from clients to build this into procurement from an early stage and what does that look like in practice?**

**NSJ:** Yes, very clearly. Emissions forecasting, fuel-type comparisons and biofuel availability are now standard requirements when considering the right fuel strategy. Procurement teams need assurance that the vessel owners, port operators and fuel suppliers are aligned early so that compliance obligations are met without operational disruption.

**PES:** **One of the themes we're hearing across sectors is that integrated partners, those who can combine supply, regulatory insight, risk management and emission understanding, are becoming more valuable. How do you see that playing out in your client engagements?**

**IC:** We are increasingly involved from the origination and FEED (Front-End Engineering Design) stage, along with the construction and into O&M (Operations and Maintenance). Both Clarksons and Dan-Bunkering are involved early. We can support supply during



Innes Cameron

DevEx, contribute to CapEx planning before FID (Financial Investment Decision), and then continue through construction and O&M.

This reduces the likelihood of schedule conflicts and strengthens planning certainty for project owners.

**NSJ:** Integration also enables stronger contingency planning. If supply shifts, a port becomes congested, or a vessel needs to adjust routing, we can rapidly restructure the plan together.

With our global view and operational infrastructure, we can offer clients a level of coverage that extends beyond immediate port and fuel needs, including regulatory guidance, green transition support and practical compliance pathways.

**PES:** **Could you share an example of where having that integrated view materially changed the outcome for a project or programme?**

**IC:** Yes. In a recent mobilisation, a combination of port congestion and weather risk threatened to delay a vessel. Because we were already aligned with the project owner, vessel owner and Dan-Bunkering, we were able to proactively reschedule the port call, adjust the vessel's replenishment plan and rearrange port service activities within the available window.

The vessel departed as scheduled. Without this integrated approach, the delay would have been difficult to avoid and would have had significant commercial and economic implications for the project owner and vessel operator. With day rates for Jack Up vessels at USD \$300,000, this is a risk worth managing.

**PES:** If you had to offer three practical pieces of advice to wind developers as they prepare for the next phase of UK activity, especially around fuel procurement and supply chain integration, what would they be?



Nicolaj Splidt Jakobsen

**IC:** As the UK looks ahead towards a still active offshore phase, the most important step developers can take is to start coordination earlier than they might think. When port operations, vessel selection and fuel strategy are aligned from the outset, projects avoid the compounding delays that can occur when changes in one area disrupt the others. Early engagement also allows the operational plan to absorb weather shifts, port variations and global supply-chain disruptions without jeopardising installation progress.

**NSJ:** Developers should also stress test their mobilisation plan from several angles: technical sequencing, vessel availability, fuel delivery routes, ETS exposure and geopolitics. The current situation in the Middle East has shown how quickly global flows can change, even when the UK is not directly involved. Having a plan that includes contingency, alternative supply options and operational flexibility is becoming essential rather than optional.

**IC:** It pays to prioritise partnerships over transactional arrangements. Working with integrated teams that offer depth in regulatory, commercial, legal and sustainability fields gives project owners a much stronger foundation across the entire execution cycle. This is where the combined offerings of Clarksons and Dan-Bunkering add significant value, far beyond fuel and port services.

For project owners, the most effective way to access this combined value is to bring both organisations into the conversation early, ideally at concept design or pre-FID stage. This is where the largest operational and commercial gains are realised. Early involvement allows us to jointly build a unified model that covers port readiness, vessel planning, fuel strategy, compliance exposure and contingency routing.

## We are increasingly involved from the origination and FEED stage, along with the construction and into O&M.



Clients typically work through a single coordinated interface, with both teams collaborating across port operations, fuel supply, legal advisory, regulatory guidance and green transition expertise. This creates a single operational picture, resulting in greater predictability, stronger resilience and a clearer understanding of how today's decisions will influence the project's cost, compliance and performance over its full lifespan.

**PES:** What should they absolutely not overlook?

**NSJ:** Fuel and compliance should never be assumed to 'just work out.' Your supply chain

choice impacts emissions and cost, and unforeseen circumstances can reshape port calls and offshore activities quickly if it has not been planned for. When port operations and fuel strategies are aligned and supported by strong organisational capabilities on both sides, these risks become manageable and predictable.

**PES:** Thank you again for your insights. It's been valuable to unpack how AR7's momentum and the wider supply chain evolution are influencing fuel and procurement strategy. Looking ahead, are there any ways in which the UK energy

**landscape might surprise us over the next 12 to 18 months?**

**IC:** The capability of the UK offshore supply chain is rising quickly. Experience, infrastructure and planning maturity are accelerating in parallel.

**NSJ:** And global developments will continue to influence supply patterns. Projects that integrate flexibility, compliance insight and cross-stakeholder planning will navigate that environment with far fewer disruptions.

[Dan-Bunkering.com](https://www.dan-bunkering.com)

[Clarksons.com](https://www.clarksons.com)