



RWE helps UK CCGT power station to increase commercial viability

CASE STUDY

Facing increased competition, the owners of a UK power station sought increased operational efficiency. RWE Power International analysed how plant efficiency could be improved and identified, in 'top level' detail, options for improvement. Findings were presented at Board-level only two months later, allowing the customer to concentrate on further evaluation of the more viable options.



The need for our expertise

In November 2008, the owners of a CCGT power station asked RWE Power International to carry out a high level study at the station.

Aware that the current operating regime would change in the future, the owners recognised that subsequent operational requirements would expose them to more competition and a potential decline in operating hours and revenue.

Improving plant efficiency would increase operational viability in a more competitive environment. Conscious that expert advice rather than internal analysis was required, the owners sought our advice to improve the heat rate of the existing plant.

Putting our expertise into action

Operating RWE's UK generation portfolio, which includes power stations of similar type, age and technology as the customer's plant, means we were familiar with the same market pressures.

RWE had supported this customer on projects in the past and in this case, an information gathering visit established the owner's exact requirements. Short timescales meant we were restricted to a high level investigation of the options available, incorporating potential constraints and an estimation of implementation costs and timescales.

Following the initial site visit and evaluation meeting, our team identified most of the technical challenges presented by the project, typically:

- Existing gas fuel supply limits
- Existing cooling water extraction and temperature rise limits
- Current electrical power export connection limit

Less defined challenges relating to planning and consent were also recognised; another area where experience gained through our own new build and major refurbishment projects enabled us to offer relevant advice.

The difference we made

A study report, detailing the findings of our investigation, was presented to the customer in January 2009, on schedule and in time for an internal review and Board presentation. Our report played a crucial role in excluding non-viable options and avoiding wasting time by evaluating them further. By providing suitable information for first-pass financial evaluation of the remaining options, the customer can concentrate on investigating viable investment options in the future.

Speaking of RWE's involvement, a customer representative commented, "When we identified the need to increase commercial viability, it became clear that we would need some form of external support. The knowledge and expertise demonstrated by RWE Power International in assessing the options available to us was impressive and in a very short space of time, we found ourselves in a position to consider a range of recommendations, all beneficial to the plant's future operation."

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