



Electric dreams: working in nuclear helps keep staff motivated.

Embedding nuclear culture: Barry Lewis, Oliver Jones and Ian Faulkner.



Lloyd Morris gets fit for electric opportunities

Control panel specialist Lloyd Morris Electrical is targeting new nuclear opportunities in its native Wales, after driving business improvements through the Fit For Nuclear programme.

Lloyd Morris provides specialist electrical services from the design and production of a single control panel, to manufacture and installation of complete plant control system. Established in Wrexham in 1974, the firm was acquired by the CEMA Group in 2009. It currently generates over half its business in the water industry, and is sole supplier to United Utilities for larger motor control centres.

Lloyd Morris has been active in the Welsh nuclear market for decades, and has close links with Wylfa through a branch on Anglesey. The company has provided control panels to the Magnox reactors at Wylfa and Trawsfynedd, both now in decommissioning, and is targeting new

opportunities at the proposed Wylfa Newydd power station on Anglesey.

The company's managers were introduced to Fit For Nuclear (F4N) at a meet-the-buyer event run by the Welsh assembly government with Horizon Nuclear Power and Hitachi, the groups planning to build new ABWRs at Wylfa.

"We're concentrating on Wylfa, because it's on our doorstep," says operations manager Ian Faulkner. "It was suggested at one of the workshops that anyone wanting to work in nuclear should go for F4N status."

The F4N programme's funding at the time meant that full support was focused on companies based in England, but the

team were able to get the firm into a pilot scheme backed by the Welsh government.

Although the F4N assessment was primarily designed for mechanical engineering companies which could meet the nuclear industry's requirements for precision metal components, the Lloyd Morris team found that it also fitted their electrical engineering business.

"As a business, it's the same principles – there's little difference because it's very much about quality, health and safety, leadership and management," says Faulkner. "Regardless of what industry you're in, I think F4N still fits the bill."

Honest assessment

Lloyd Morris started its F4N journey in September 2015. "We completed the form honestly – what's the point of saying yes to everything, because when the assessor comes in to visit us we can't hide things," says Faulkner. "We were really honest. The assessment came back very good in quality and safety and environmental, but the business side was open to improvements. We're all very good engineers and electricians, but when it comes to strategy and leadership and management, certain training was required."

Health and safety is a core focus for any company looking to supply nuclear, notes managing director Barry Lewis. "We already have to work to a very high standard in the water industry, but going into nuclear is another level," he says.

Following a site visit by an F4N assessor, the team drew up a full action plan focusing on strategy and leadership issues.

"It covered everything – people, process and strategy," Faulkner says. "It focused us on the actual business. Rather than just doing the day-to-day of what we do, it made us step up a gear and look at the strategy of what we're doing. If we hadn't done F4N, we probably wouldn't have put a strategy together and wouldn't have attended the leadership courses. F4N has really given us something to aim at."

Lloyd Morris formed a F4N steering group and appointed Oliver Jones, commissioning manager in the firm's test department, as F4N champion with responsibility for driving shopfloor improvements and embedding nuclear culture.

Jones has led the introduction of 5S training into production, introduced regular discussion sessions, and headed projects such as working with electricians to make workshop forms easier to complete.

"It's about working with the team to see the journey we're on – if their work is more organised, then it's easier for them," Jones says. "It's all about talking to them. If you get them engaged and they feel they're making a difference to the company, that's how you get them involved."

F4N has helped make a dramatic improvement to the shopfloor, agrees Faulkner. "Everything's in its place, the guys have taken it all on board to create an efficient and tidy workshop. It's just generally improved us in manufacturing," he says.



Control centre: inside Lloyd Morris's new facility.

"It is an ongoing process now that hopefully will never stop. We've been given the tools to use by F4N and we can just carry on now on continual improvement."

Diversification and motivation

Lloyd Morris opened a new factory in 2014, close to its head office, and has developed new capabilities to meet industry requirements. A new facility for temperature heat rise testing of control panels, as demanded by stringent quality standards, is based in a mobile container so it can be taken to customer sites.

The firm is already planning additional production space and new offices, and will use the lessons learned from F4N in the design of both. "I can think about where desks are going, and ergonomics and 5S in the office," Faulkner notes.

The additional capacity and new projects for the nuclear sector will help Lloyd Morris increase turnover from around £12 million to a targeted £15-16 million in five years.

"We think we could be looking at 20 per cent nuclear quite comfortably," says Lewis. "If we can do £3 million in nuclear, that would be an achievement. If it goes to £5 million, that would enable us to reach our growth target."

Because electrical work tends to come at the end of any project, the bottom line impact of new build will be some years off. "Nuclear is something that's going to happen in the future, but we're trying to put the foundations down now," says Faulkner. "If you don't do it now, you're going to miss the boat. We're not brand new to it, but we still need to run with this and raise our profile, and F4N has done that for us."

"It's an exciting time to be part of nuclear, working in an industry that is growing."

It's diversifying our engineering, which can keep our engineering staff motivated, especially the young members."

And the benefits of F4N don't just apply to the nuclear side of the business, Lewis emphasises. "It's benefited the business not just in nuclear, but for everything else we do as well," he concludes. "It's an overall improvement."

www.lloydmorris.co.uk

F4N

Fit For Nuclear

Fit For Nuclear (F4N) is a unique service to help UK manufacturing companies get ready to bid for work in the civil nuclear supply chain.

F4N lets companies measure their operations against the standards required to supply the nuclear industry – in new build, operations and decommissioning – and take the necessary steps to close any gaps.

The current enhanced phase of the F4N programme, supported by the Regional Growth Fund, ends in June. The Nuclear AMRC is now working with government and industry partners to further develop F4N and a new generation of supplier support initiatives. Full details will be announced shortly.

namrc.co.uk/services/f4n