

Survey shows trucking companies, fuel distributors eager to embrace hydrogen fuel cell technology

Survey results clearly demonstrate the potential for the rapid growth of zero-emission hydrogen fuel cell technology in the trucking industry

CANTON, OHIO, UNITED STATES, July 31, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A recent survey conducted by the Ohio Fuel Cell Collaborative (OFCC), the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA), and the Renewable Hydrogen Fuel Cell Collaborative (RHFCC) found that both trucking companies and fuel distributors are willing and eager to embrace the zero-emissions technology, OFCC Executive Director Pat Valente announced today. "We are extremely pleased and excited by the results of the survey because they clearly demonstrate the potential for rapid growth in the deployment of this innovative power source," he said.

According to the study, 58% of the trucking company executives who responded are considering acquiring hydrogen fuel cell-powered (HFCE) vehicles within the next seven years. In addition, 75% of the fuel distributors surveyed said they have plans in place to build-out hydrogen fueling infrastructure and all said they are willing to collaborate with public transit agencies to provide refueling service.

Kirt Conrad, CEO of the Stark Area Regional Transit Authority (SARTA) which operates one of the largest fleets of HFCE buses in the world, said the survey paints a clear picture of the challenges the HFCE industry must overcome in order to gain a significant foothold in the commercial trucking market. Chief among them: the lack of a widespread, easily accessible refueling network which was cited by 87% of respondents as the primary reason transportation companies are delaying the purchase of HFCE vehicles.

"Fortunately, the HFCE industry and zero-emission advocates are already working hard to remove that roadblock to progress," Mr. Conrad noted. "And that's critically important because, to paraphrase 'Field of Dreams' the survey says if we build it the trucking industry will come—and come soon."

"We've already formed a dynamic public/private partnership with Love's Travel Stops, Trillium, the Ohio Turnpike Commission, Clean Fuels Ohio, Clean Fuels Michigan, CALSTART, Cleveland State University, the OFCC, to seek grants that will fund the development of an alternative fuel transportation corridor that will run across Michigan and Ohio," Mr. Conrad said.

“And we’ve also worked with Calstart, OSU, CSU, the RHFCC and the Midwest Hydrogen Center of Excellence (MHCoE) to create a ‘Hydrogen Roadmap’ for the Midwest that could result in the construction of 250 refueling stations and the creation of 65,000 jobs,” he continued. “The survey confirms we’re on the road to success.”

In addition to the refueling issue, truckers also cited acquisition and maintenance costs as well as uncertainty about range as reasons they were reluctant to make the transition to HFCEP vehicles. Mr. Conrad said one visit to SARTA would ease those concerns. “Our real-world experience operating HFCEP buses on the highways and streets of Stark County in every weather condition imaginable proves that hydrogen is the best alternative fuel available today,” he said.

“We’ve accumulated hundreds of thousands of miles worth of data that show our buses deliver much greater range than battery electric buses, and are both more reliable and affordable to operate,” he continued. “Critically, refueling only takes minutes for each bus, instead of hours. I’ll be happy to share the information we’ve gathered with anyone who is considering adding alternative fuel vehicles to their fleet.”

Andrew Thomas, Director of the RHFCC, said the survey results will enhance the prospects for attracting government grants and private funding that will fuel the development and initial deployment of HFCEP technology. “Funders want to know that their dollars will produce tangible results,” he said. “The study demonstrates that there is a market for HFCEPs that will create thousands of jobs, significantly reduce emissions, and diminish our nation’s reliance on foreign oil. We believe that makes investing public and private dollars in this industry a very attractive proposition.”

[To review the survey click here. https://www.fuelcellcorridor.com/](https://www.fuelcellcorridor.com/) or <http://www.midwesthydrogen.org/>

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