

# 'GOING GREEN'

## COMMITMENT TO SUSTAINABLE BATTERY MANUFACTURING

An interview with Peter Coplestone, Director of Operations, Lincad



Peter Coplestone

Lincad is a battery manufacturer that takes its responsibility towards sustainability as seriously as it does its leading position in bespoke battery technology and development. Lincad has always been a company with green aspirations. However, during the pandemic the company decided to take a fresh look at how it can work to nurture its employees, value the communities it works with and take responsibility for its impact on the wider environment.

In this interview, Peter talks about the ways in which Lincad has used the COVID-19 pandemic to kickstart brand new ways of working sustainably and how it is possible to trade profitably whilst still demonstrating strong corporate and social responsibility.

### Q. How has the global pandemic impacted upon Lincad's sustainability programme?

A. The past 18 months or so have certainly brought many challenges to us as a company, as it has done for businesses and organisations the world over. As a classified 'critical supplier' to the defence sector, we were able to remain fully operational; however, the change of pace and priorities caused by COVID-19 certainly helped us all to reassess how we do things and how we need to place sustainability at the heart of everything we do.

It meant we could look beyond our normal day-to-day tasks and use the period of enforced change to make some long-lasting changes to how we approach sustainable working and integrate a greener way of working into everything we do from the batteries we manufacture, the packaging they come in and even the way we power and operate our facilities.

### Q. How eco-friendly are Lincad's energy sources for powering its UK facilities?

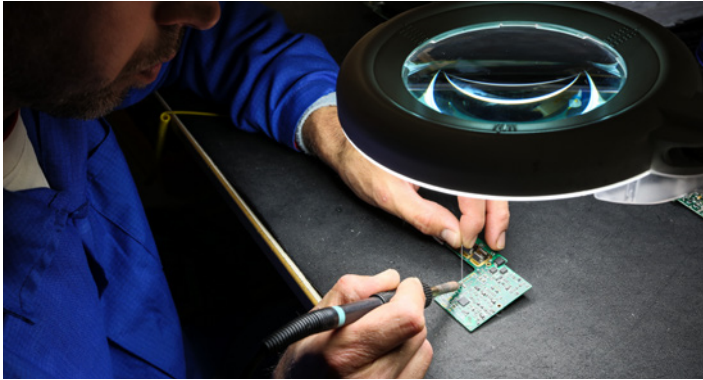
A. We have taken several key steps to reducing our power usage and source a greener, more sustainable source of energy. In Summer 2019 we doubled the capacity of our HQ and production facilities in Ash Vale, Surrey. Whilst extending our floorspace we replaced the original gas heating system for a heat recovery ventilation system. This can heat our whole shop floor production area on just 2kW. Solar panels were installed on the roof in 2016 to help us in our journey to becoming a more eco-friendly business.



### Q. What adaptations have been made to help Lincad become more eco-friendly?

A. We have been working to bring a greener way of operating inside our facilities, especially in our production labs and factories where we use a lot of energy during the battery manufacturing process. During the pandemic, we introduced various systems to help us use less energy, reduce wastage and make the best use of the resources we had. We replaced all our lighting with greener LED lighting throughout our factory, which uses less energy than standard lighting systems.

Over recent years, we have also improved our working methods to ensure that we source what we need ethically



and responsibly and to recycle as much as we possibly can. The UK government is very keen to see businesses like ours taking positive steps in this area and we are already starting to see real results in areas such as energy usage, recycling targets, and waste reduction.

**Q. How does Lincad ensure its sustainable working ethos remains present throughout all its operations?**

**A.** It is key to ensure that we can trade profitably while still adhering to the national and international laws, regulations and best practice guidelines around the responsible packaging and transportation of our battery products. Not only does this desire come from within Lincad, it is also becoming more and more important to our customers that they remain part of an ethical, sustainable supply chain.

We have been working hard to ensure that we do not use excess packaging for our products, and that anything we do use is as recyclable and sustainable as possible

while still fully protecting the products inside. As with the components, we strive to reduce our carbon footprint and help us meet our commitment to environmentally-friendly working methods and a net-zero workplace.

**Q. How do you ensure international transportation of Lincad's batteries is safe and sustainable?**

**A.** We manufacture electrical equipment and often need to transport it to hostile environments where conditions can be dangerous and our batteries are needed urgently. We take our regulatory obligations extremely serious to prevent incidents occurring that could have a serious impact on the wider environment, as well as to ensure that our products can pass the safety standards and be approved for delivery so the transport and fuel used to transfer them to their final destination is not wasted.

Lincad is also duty-bound to follow UK export control regulations with regards to supplying our battery products for military use. We undertake due diligence on prospective customers and we always work within regulations from RoHS (restriction of hazardous substances), REACH (registration, evaluation, authorisation and restriction of chemicals) and WEEE (waste electrical and electronic equipment).

**Q. How do you ensure your manufacturing processes are as environmentally friendly as possible?**

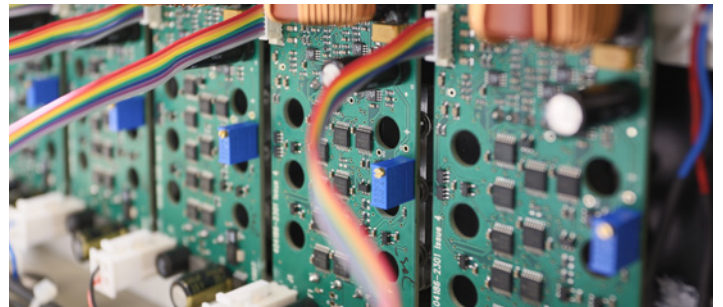
**A.** We are in the process of obtaining our ISO14001 certification to provide assurance to company management and employees and external stakeholders that the environmental impact of our activities is being measured and improved.





The ISO 14001 standard lays out the requirements for an effective environmental management system, providing a framework for us to follow. It focuses on a number of key areas, including climate change, sustainability, air pollution, water usage and sewage management.

Gaining this certification will not only help us to gain a competitive advantage, but also help us ensure our manufacturing processes are managed and monitored holistically. It will help us develop and maintain ways of working that reduce the amount of waste produced and make the most effective use of the resources available to us.



**Q. How is Lincad's sustainability programme aligned with the sustainable development goals of the Integrated Review?**

**A.** Sustainability has long been a large part of the defence sector and will carry on being key to its growing focus on climate change. Climate change is affecting how our armed forces protect and defend us, as well as playing a large part in how humanitarian aid and disaster relief is tackled.

2021 has seen the UK Government issue its most comprehensive Integrated Review since the Cold War. It sets out the defence sector's main threats and challenges, including climate change and working towards a stated goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Lincad is a key supplier to the defence sector, so we are obliged to react to and keep pace with the findings of this review. As military capabilities evolve, so too must the technology behind them and we're keen to see how we can achieve that.

To that end, we are working towards producing cleaner, more efficient solutions for defence applications requiring batteries and charger technology. There's plenty for us to do. The 'green agenda' is becoming more and more prominent in the defence arena. New types of military vehicles, fuels, energy storage and tactical equipment are being trialled all the time, which require new ways of thinking around the charging, use and storage of batteries and power packs. This is where our engineers and researchers can excel at Lincad, and we are excited to see what innovations will be rolled out next. ●