

Running hours during winter 2013/14 for plants opted-out of the Large Combustion Plant Directive (LCPD)

The Large Combustion Plant Directive (LCPD) is a European directive aimed at controlling emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxides and dust from large combustion plants. The directive imposes emissions limits on new plants (those licensed after 1st July 1987). Plants licensed before this date have three options.

- 1) Meet new emission limits which will require retrofitting of flue gas treatment equipment (i.e. opt-in).
- 2) Opt out limited life derogation – 20,000 hours of operation between 1st Jan 2008 and 31st Dec 2015.
- 3) Close before 1st Jan 2008.

Data on the running hours of plants opted-out of the LCPD can be downloaded from the following website www.bmreports.com/bsp/bes.php?prefix=LCPD.

Of the 17 coal fired power stations operating in Great Britain at the beginning of 2012, six opted out, along with the three oil fired stations. A list of these plants and a summary of their current operational status is given in table 1. The total capacity of the coal plants originally opted-out totalled 8 GW and comprised just over one-quarter of the coal capacity in Great Britain at that time. Two of the coal plants that opted-out (Tilbury and Ironbridge) have since converted to run on biomass but must still close once their hours have been run.

Table 1: Capacity and current operating status of plants opted-out of LCPD

Plant	Capacity ¹ (MW)	Current Status
Cockenzie units 1 & 2	1,152	Closed March 2013
Cockenzie units 3 & 4		
Didcot A	1,958	Closed March 2013
Ferrybridge (1&2)	980 ²	Closed April 2014
Ironbridge	940 ³	Unit 1 closed February 2014 Unit 2 open
Kingsnorth	1,940	Closed December 2012
Tilbury (7 & 8)	750	Closed August 2013
Tilbury (9 &10)		
Total (coal)	7,720	
Fawley*	1,036	Closed March 2013
Grain*	1,300	Closed December 2012
Littlebrook*	1,370	Open
Total (oil)	3,706	

* These plants are oil fired and have taken the option of limiting running hours to 10,000. Under this option plants only need to provide sample measurements of SO₂ rather than continuous measurements.

Table 2 shows the hours run during winter 2013/14 by the remaining plants which chose to opt-out of the directive (winter is defined as beginning October 2013 – end March 2014). The data are shown in chart form in chart 1. Of the plants that opted out of the LCPD only Ferrybridge (1&2), Ironbridge and Littlebrook were operational during winter 2013/14, with a capacity of 3.3 GW.

¹ Source: DUKES 2014, table 5.10, at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/electricity-chapter-5-digest-of-united-kingdom-energy-statistics-dukes

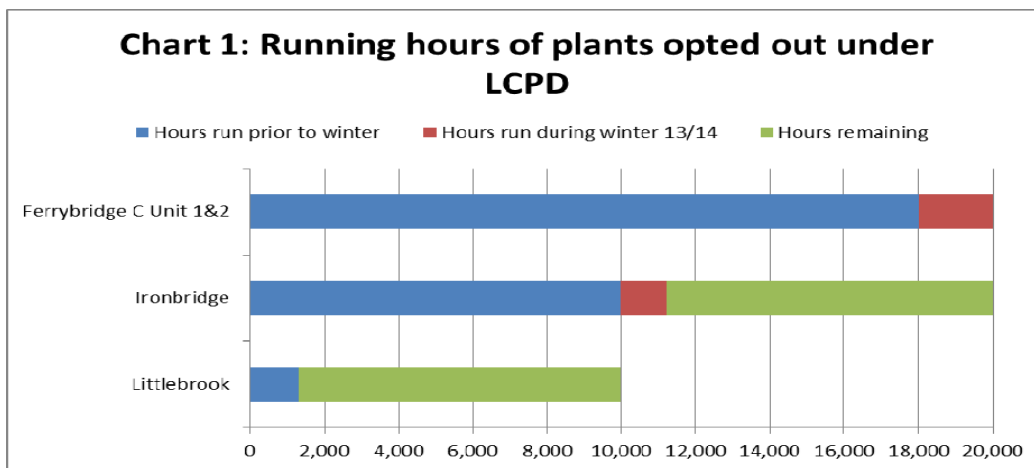
² Ferrybridge units 3 and 4 (which also have a combined capacity of 980 MW) are opted in to the LCPD and will continue to run after 2015.

³ Converted from coal to dedicated biomass in 2013 (at 900 MW), before reducing to 360 MW in April 2014 following the fire which closed unit 1 in February.

Table 2: Hours run during winter 2013/14 by plants opted-out of LCPD

Plant	Hours run during winter 12/13	Hours run during winter 13/14	Hours remaining	Hours remaining (%)
Ferrybridge (1&2)	2,292	1,987	0	0%
Ironbridge	104	1,242	8,764	44%
Total (coal)⁴	2,396	3,229	8,764	44%
Littlebrook*	13	2	8,693	87%
Total (oil)	13	2	8,693	87%

The 6 coal plants that originally opted out of the LCPD had a total of 160,000 hours available to run before the end of 2015. Table 2 shows that 8,764 hours remain at Ironbridge (5% of the original hours). The 3 oil plants had 30,000 allocated, the 8,693 remaining at Littlebrook comprises 29% of the original total. However, Fawley and Grain power stations closed after having only used 2,116 of their allocated hours.



In total the plants opted-out of the LCPD ran for 3,231 hours during winter 2013/14. This compares to 2,409 hours during the winter of 2012/13.

Ferrybridge (1&2) ran for the most hours during the winter using up its allowance of 20,000 hours leading to its closure in April 2014. Ironbridge is now the only coal fired station that opted out of the LCPD still operational, with 44% of its allowance remaining.

As oil fired power stations tend to be used infrequently, Littlebrook still has a high proportion of its hours remaining despite only having an allowance of 10,000 hours.

From 1st January 2016 the remaining large combustion plants will be subject to more stringent emissions controls outlined in the Industrial Emissions Directive (IED). Plants that chose to opt-out of this directive will be limited to 17,500 hours between 2016 and 2023.

User feedback

We welcome all feedback from users; therefore, if you have any comments or queries regarding this analysis, please contact either Kayley Vanlint or Alison Judd using the contact details below.

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⁴ Coal total includes Ironbridge, which converted from coal to biomass during 2013 and continues to be opted-out. Although biomass produces almost no CO₂ emissions, the plant will not be exempt from closure at the end of 2015 as the LCPD relates to particulate matter and sulphur dioxide/nitrogen oxide emissions.