



Department for Energy Security & Net Zero

Department for Energy Security &
Net Zero
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London
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www.gov.uk

Ken Cronin
Chief Executive Officer
UK and Ireland Fuel Distributors Association Ltd
Birmingham
B35 9EP

9th March 2026

The Consumer Market for Heating Oil

Dear Ken,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with the Minister for Energy on Friday and again this morning.

Further to the meeting, we want to write to you in light of the significant increases in heating oil prices seen across the UK following the escalation of the conflict in the Middle East. These sharp rises have caused concern among households and businesses, particularly in rural communities that rely heavily on heating oil and are therefore most exposed to rapid price movements.

We recognise the work you are doing in difficult market conditions to deliver fuel and appreciate the constructive engagement demonstrated by industry representatives in recent days.

However we want to make clear that the Government will take all action necessary to protect households. We want to strongly remind you of your commitments under the UK and Ireland Fuel Distributors Association (UKIFDA) Customer Charter and Code of Practice and that the industry remains fully subject to consumer protection and competition law, overseen by the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA).

The Minister for Energy has today spoken to the CMA who will now gather evidence on the situation in the market and look at whether consumers are being treated fairly. We will be talking to them again in the coming days and they have the power to launch an investigation into anything relating to unfair contract terms, misleading consumer practices or anti-competitive behaviour.

Where there is evidence that consumers are being treated unfairly, we will act accordingly and ensure that the appropriate regulatory bodies are engaged.

To be clear, our firm expectation is that pricing remains fair, transparent and fully justifiable, reflecting genuine market conditions. Customers should be provided with clear, timely and clear explanations for any price changes, including where prices are confirmed shortly before delivery. It is also essential that vulnerable households continue to receive appropriate support and prioritisation as set out under the Cold Weather Priority Scheme.

We ask that you continue to keep officials informed of emerging risks, supply constraints or notable changes in customer behaviour.

Once again, please thank your members for their engagement and all they are doing to distribute fuel at this challenging time.

I would be grateful if you would share this letter across your industry.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Miliband', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

RT HON ED MILIBAND MP
Secretary of State for Energy Security & Net Zero

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Shanks', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

MICHAEL SHANKS MP
Minister of State for Energy