

PRESS RELEASE



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Water sector innovation will be enabled by automotive skills, predicts Ricardo

Technology and engineering skills drawn from the automotive industry have the potential to help the UK water sector in tackling the worsening impacts of climate change, while delivering a more resilient service at a lower cost, according to the global water and environmental engineering specialists at Ricardo

Ricardo believes that significant synergies exist between the technologies and skills developed by the automotive industry and those needed by the water sector to meet its most pressing current challenges. The company is actively investing in its water practice, and collaborates extensively with major water sector partners in the development of innovative approaches and technologies. Beyond this, however, Ricardo is now actively fostering collaboration between its automotive and water industry engineering teams in order to realize the potential of cross-industry sharing of technologies and ideas, for the benefit of its water sector clients.

“It is no secret that the water sector is in need of a different approach to boost engineering capacity and skills in order to drive forward the innovations required to address the very pressing challenges that it faces,” said Daressa Frodsham, the former head of engineering at United Utilities who was recently appointed as director of the Ricardo Water & Environment practice. “While at first glance it might appear a very different domain to the automotive industry, there are many opportunities. Computer-aided simulation and optimization, and advanced sensors, prognostics and control system technologies, are common to both



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industries and enable us to deploy automotive-derived skills and techniques with great benefits to the water sector. We can also leverage our strategic consulting skills focused on the challenges of operational management, which are equally applicable to the water industry.

“By harnessing these available skills and technologies, we can develop the strategic vision and innovations required to strengthen water sector resilience and sustainability, while adding fresh thinking and improving innovation and affordability. I believe that Ricardo’s skills and capabilities put it at the forefront of automotive engineering – and its ability to leverage those skills for the benefit of its water industry clients is, I believe, unique.”

The UK water sector faces a number of challenges from increased resource scarcity alongside regulative pressures to continually enhance customer service. The water services regulation authority, Ofwat, has highlighted innovation as a core pillar of good water sector governance, and there is an expectation for companies to demonstrate this during the 2019 water sector price review (PR19). However, the water industry reportedly faces a substantial skills gap in terms of engineering.

In addition to leveraging cross-sectoral skills and technology synergies, Ricardo continues to invest in the services it provides to the water industry. To this end in July 2017, Ricardo will open a new office in Bristol, UK, to house its expanded Water & Environment team.

Ricardo supports governments, water companies and infrastructure operators around the world to overcome challenges from water scarcity, pollution, flooding and drought. For more information about Ricardo’s work in water sector resilience, visit <http://ee.ricardo.com/en/water/water-resource-management>

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NOTES TO EDITORS:

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Ricardo Energy & Environment is a leading sustainability consultancy, helping clients to respond to environmental challenges and opportunities around the world. Its team of over 450 staff draws on an impressive heritage supporting governments and businesses for over 40 years. The consultancy is an operating division of Ricardo plc.

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