Welsh Cabinet Secretary for Transport Visits Comtek to See Innovation in Repair and Research

Thursday 16 October, 2025

Deeside, North Wales — 26 September 2025 — The Welsh Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Ken Skates MS, visited Comtek Network Systems (UK) Ltd to see how the company is repairing and extending the life of critical roadside and telecoms infrastructure, while also investing heavily in new research and development in collaboration with Bangor University and Sorrento Networks.

During the visit to Comtek's Deeside headquarters, Mr Skates was welcomed by Askar Sheibani, CEO of Comtek Network Systems (UK) Ltd and Chair of the Deeside Business Forum. He toured Comtek's advanced repair and refurbishment facilities, where engineers restore and reuse critical telecoms and roadside systems used across the UK's transport and communications networks.

These sustainable repair and reuse services help extend equipment lifespans, reduce electronic waste, and improve network reliability — ensuring that vital transport and telecoms infrastructure remains resilient, efficient, and cost-effective.

Partnership Driving Fibre Optic Innovation

Comtek is investing significantly in innovation through a collaboration with Bangor University and Sorrento Networks, part of the Comtek Group and the UK's only manufacturer of Dense Wavelength Division Multiplexing (DWDM) equipment.

Together, the partners are pioneering new fibre optic research that uses Distributed Fibre Optic Sensing (DFOS) to detect faults in real time along road networks. This technology can identify potential issues before they become serious, helping to improve road safety, reduce disruption, and support smarter transport systems across Wales and beyond.

Quote - Bangor University:

Professor Paul Spencer, Pro Vice Chancellor for Research at Bangor University said:

"The ability of distributed fibre optic sensing to provide real time, high precision, cost effective monitoring of key transport, communication and utility networks has significant potential benefits for Society. Within North Wales we have one of the World's leading research groups in this area and the UK's only manufacturer of the DWDM equipment that powers fibre optic data transmission. Our long-standing collaboration on research, technology transfer and commercialisation has the potential to deliver societal benefits while also contributing to economic development and high skilled job creation in North Wales"

Quote - Ken Skates MS, Welsh Cabinet Secretary for Transport:

Cabinet Secretary for Transport and North Wales Ken Skates said: "It was great to visit Comtek and see the excellent and pioneering work which is taking place here. It's good to see this innovative engineering technology here in North Wales, and its potential impact on the transport network in particular."

Innovation and Sustainability at the Core

Mr Sheibani said:

"At Comtek, we are investing significantly in research and development — both in advanced repair techniques and in new technologies that enhance the performance and reliability of critical infrastructure.

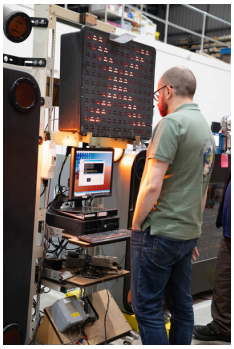
To date, we have invested over £2 million into R&D projects that benefit both public sector organisations and private network operators.

By combining innovative repair capabilities with fibre-based monitoring and diagnostic technology, we help our partners reduce environmental impact, cut electronic waste, and lower long-term costs.

This approach supports both the circular economy and the transition toward greener, smarter, and more cost-efficient networks."

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The visit highlighted the strength of North Wales as a centre for technology, research, and advanced engineering — showcasing how businesses, academia, and government can work together to deliver real benefits for the economy, the environment, and the community.

Company Contact:

Comtek Network Systems (UK) Ltd

T. 01244283054
E. press@comtek.group
W. www.comtek.co.uk

Additional Contact(s):
Phil Bartlett
phil.bartlett@comtek.co.uk
07794907171

View Online

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