



## Press Release

### **New natural gas refuelling station in Ribnitz-Damgarten**

#### **VNG-Erdgastankstellen GmbH and Aral AG open 25<sup>th</sup> natural gas refuelling station in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania**

**Ribnitz-Damgarten/Leipzig, October 22, 2009.** Drivers in Ribnitz-Damgarten have already been able to refuel their vehicles with an alternative automotive fuel, namely natural gas, for the past three weeks – and from today, the new refuelling station is officially open for business. Together with Jürgen Borbe, Mayor of Ribnitz-Damgarten, Maik Hendler, Managing Director of VNG-Erdgastankstellen GmbH (VNG-T, a company in the VNG Group), inaugurated the new natural gas refuelling station near the B 105 federal highway. The partner of the 25<sup>th</sup> natural gas refuelling station in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is Aral AG. “The new station in Ribnitz-Damgarten improves the offering for refuelling with natural gas in the Fischland–Darß–Zingst holiday region,” Maik Hendler explained. “Proximity to the federal highway was also an important factor for choosing this location. We can serve local customers as well as commuters and holiday makers.” In his words of welcome, Matthias Horn, director of the business development department in the North Pomeranian district, underscored the significance for the region. Soccer stars Bradley Carnell and Uwe Ehlers of F.C. Hansa Rostock were the first to fill up at the station. VNG-Verbundnetz Gas AG has been supporting amateur and professional sports, including the Rostock soccer club, for many years.

#### **VNG-T committed to sustainable investment**

VNG-T has invested a total of 4.2 million euros since 2008 in building 16 new natural gas refuelling stations in eastern Germany with a view to reinforcing this network. Of this sum, 300,000 euros has been expended on the Ribnitz-Damgarten station alone. Other stations to have already opened include Birkenwerder (Brandenburg), Dresden (Saxony), Leuna (Saxony-Anhalt), Bautzen (Saxony) and Halle (Saxony-Anhalt). “A poor refuelling station infrastructure is one criticism that is often levelled at natural gas. However, there are in fact about 850 natural gas refuelling stations already in operation, putting Germany right at the top in Europe – anyone who already drives a CNG vehicle knows the infrastructure is pretty comprehensive,” Maik Hendler pointed out. “VNG-T is continuing to systematically invest in expanding the refuelling station network, closing the last few gaps – such as this particular one between Rostock and Stralsund.”



### **Proven partnership**

While VNG-T is investing in natural gas refuelling technology and the product itself, Aral is contributing its brand and its modern refuelling facilities. "Aral and its parent company BP wish to support the natural gas industry in its efforts to expand the refuelling station infrastructure for natural gas vehicles in Germany and are making their own filling station sites available for these investments by gas companies," Ulf Borkmann, regional director of Aral AG, explained. "Ribnitz-Damgarten is the 169<sup>th</sup> natural gas refuelling station under the Aral brand and is operated by leaseholder Enrico Brauner and his team. A further 24 are scheduled for 2010."

### **Background**

#### **Prepared for the future – cost and environmental benefits with natural gas**

Natural gas used as an automotive fuel is measured in kilos and costs 0.95 euros per kilo in Ribnitz-Damgarten. Given the low mineral oil tax and the higher energy content, the present price level is roughly 50 percent cheaper than petrol and over 30 percent cheaper than diesel and LPG. One kilogram of natural gas contains as much energy as 1.5 litres of premium petrol or 1.3 litres of diesel. Price-wise, this converts into 0.63 euros per litre of premium petrol and 0.73 euros per litre of diesel.

Apart from the price benefits, natural gas is also the most environmentally friendly automotive fuel. It does not emit any soot particles and therefore represents an attractive option in dealing with fine dust. Compared with petrol, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are lowered by 25 percent, while carbon monoxide emissions are cut by 75 percent, nitrogen oxide emissions by 60 percent and hydrogen emissions by 40 percent. As a result, natural gas already complies with tomorrow's exhaust emission standards.