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The operation of the railway must be considered as an integrated system, considering the component parts of that system and the interfaces between them.

This approach is reflective of the importance of dependencies between the various systems and processes in delivering a reliable service output, identified as the performance result ‘P’ in the simplified model shown in Figure 1. It could be regarded as any lagging system performance measure, such as Public Performance Measure (PPM), delay minutes, cancellations or Passenger Lateness. The model recognises the importance of the foundations of reliable fixed assets, reliable fixed and competent people to operate the systems, whilst requiring an operating plan which is resilient to day-to-day minor perturbation and slight variability in the performance of the assets and people. If the three foundations are 100% reliable and the resilience of the plan sufficient to accommodate minor perturbations, a 100% level of output performance may result. However, it is inevitable that failures occur. The recovery layer represents the activities that deal with unplanned events to mitigate their impact on service reliability. The final part of the model represents the feedback loop for Plan-Do-Check-Act, labelled as performance and change management. It consists both of the review processes that are in place and resultant arrangements for triggering management action to improve performance over time and the arrangements for managing change whether the change is of a minor nature or of a significant alteration...

...whilst a great deal of work has been undertaken on each of the railway sub-systems, at a system level today’s railway is below its optimum level of reliability. Individually optimising each sub-system of the railway will not optimise the performance of the whole system because the sub-systems are interdependent. To make further significant improvements, a joined-up and whole-system approach to reliability is needed. A whole-system approach to the railway would encompass all the causes of unreliability that occur, both within sub-systems and arising from the interfaces between sub-systems. The system as a whole could achieve higher reliability at a lower cost than the sum of its parts. As sub-systems are individually optimised, new behaviours emerge at sub-system boundaries. These behaviours encompass both unexpected interactions between equipment, and human behaviours in the management of the system.

In parallel to the model presented in Figure 1, a complementary model is shown in Figure 2. This model presents two stages of performance loss: planned loss and execution loss. It is intended to lead to promoting thinking about performance loss in any sub-element of the system performance model, for the system as a whole or for performance losses caused by differences at interfaces between different elements of the system performance model. This split treatment of performance loss provides a framework within which to articulate the performance attribution due to gaps between the plan and the capability of elements of the system and, separately, action in which there are gaps between the plan and the quality of execution of that plan. Planned loss might otherwise be termed a “plan to fail” associated with the operating plan element of Figure 1. System Performance Model - with an example being where a train plan requires the time for an activity that physically cannot be met under the prevailing design of the equipment combined with the equipment’s operating rules. Such a gap would require closure through changing the equipment’s capability or rules under which it is operated or by adjusting the operating plan. The plan should be capable of absorbing minor anticipated perturbations, such as the boarding of a wheelchair bound passenger using a portable ramp at a busy station with a consequently extended platform dwell time. Execution loss will arise where the on-the-day execution could be supported by the equipment’s capability and the operational plan, but something else get’s in the way of that successful outcome. Typically that will arise when there is a failure of one part of the system. That may be an equipment failure that presents the delivery of the plan or the absence of people to operate the system through industrial action. The planned loss/execution loss model can also be used to think about planning at a sub-system level. For example, the capability of a service recovery process may be very high, but if the people plan does not resource that process with sufficient resource to implement it, then there will be a performance disruption when things go wrong than the recovery process anticipates. Likewise, the infrastructure capability may include a high level of resilience to failures which is anticipated in the plan (such as through the provision of diversionary routes for which crews have been trained), but if the reality is that crews have lost their knowledge due to a change in the line or processes, or that there is an execution loss when the diversionary routes are called into action, but cannot be used.

As I travel around the network and talk to people, there are a wealth of ideas in how to improve train service performance. I can also see the dedication and energy of so many people in delivering services day-to-day and in delivering improvements. But at the same time, there is a real opportunity for better understanding of how a change in one part of the system might affect another part. What makes a good team of operators is for each to understand their impact on the ability of others to do their jobs effectively, especially in an environment of a busier inter-connected railway where better accuracy in planning and delivering every aspect of the service is becoming more and more important.

Q: What difference does the Board need to make?
A: The Board will start to meet in October and soon after will identify the necessary strategic workstreams to set priorities. Our first step will be to look at a small number of key health indicators for the whole network and from there identify the priorities for attention. I can’t jump the gun on the Board’s deliberations, but I would say that regardless of any forthcoming structural changes in the rail sector, the practical issues that require to be solved with performance delivery have to be solved and must be at the center stage. Nick Donovan has agreed to keep IRO informed about the Board’s priorities and we hope to keep you abreast of this in the next issue of Bulletin.

Q: What do you see as the key challenges for rail performance in the next 18 months?
A: We have to find ways to improve the reliability of the train service. There is a clear expectation for this. At the same time the industry is in a period of significant change with over 7,000 new vehicles coming into service and the introduction of new services and capacity across the network. So a key challenge is to enable performance improvements at the same time as a high degree of change is introduced. A lot is said about “whole systems thinking” in rail – if we could get closer to that then good performance will follow.
Thameslink Programme launches Legacy Learning website

Laurence Ager
Digital Communications Manager, Thameslink Programme

The Thameslink Programme partners have launched a Learning Legacy website which brings together detailed information about good practice, lessons learned and innovations from the £7bn government sponsored project.

The website is a major learning resource which provides a permanent, freely-available source of knowledge for railway and project professionals.

This first element of the website focuses on the infrastructure elements and shared lessons that could be learned for future complex rail projects.

The website was launched at an industry briefing held at the Institution of Civil Engineers in London.

Matthew Lodge, Director of Rail Infrastructure south, at the Department for Transport, gave the keynote address and spoke about the importance of sharing knowledge from major projects, across the industry.

He added: “The TLP Learning Legacy provides a fantastic resource for current and future rail projects - as well as other projects and programmes - to tap into and learn from.”

Five senior leaders from the Programme gave a brief overview of their areas of activity. Each speaker reflected on the key challenges overcome during the construction of the infrastructure elements and shared lessons that could be learned for future complex rail projects.

The speakers were:
- Andy MacGregor Senior Programme Sponsor – Collaboration
- James Efford Project Director, London Bridge Station – Constructability
- Boris Ludic Senior Programme and Engineering Manager – Engineering and Innovation
- Sharon Pink Senior Health and Safety Manager – Safety
- Kirsty Young Head of Sustainability and Consents – Sustainability.

The presentations were followed by a Q and A session, before Simon Blanchflower and Sharon Willis, Head of Programme Communications, provided a guide to the Learning Legacy website.

The event was held in conjunction with the magazine New Civil Engineer, who will be publishing a special Thameslink Programme supplement, examining what has been delivered and how it will benefit passengers for generations to come.

The website can be found at: https://www.thameslinkprogramme.co.uk/learning-legacy/

Network Rail 21st Century Ops Conference

The 18th & 19th of September saw the biggest gathering of Network Rail Operators for over a decade in a conference dedicated wholly to Railway Operations.


Both days began with a programme of speakers including, on day one, Mark Langman FROI, Managing Director Wales & Western, Network Rail and on day two, Andrew Haines, Chief Executive Network Rail. These were followed by a Q&A session before the group split up to rotate between four interactive sessions throughout the day.

IRO joined with Learning Journeys, which focused on do their jobs. This looked at network strategy, policies, systems and procedures, opportunities and concerns and operating model – signalling and control.

Delegates came back together at the end of the day for a second Q&A and a round up of the day’s activities including results of a poll of 10 themes where ‘competency’ was voted as top priority on both days above other themes such as recruitment & training, ‘projects and change’ and ‘Trade Unions and frontline staff’.

Missionroom showcased new technologies in training especially, 360° interactive media, which surrounds the trainee with video, sound and image, and brings the track side environment to the office. A virtual reality system was also highlighted to absorb a trainee into a trackside environment.

The fourth area was a forum for operators to feedback on 21st Century Ops including what tools, processes and systems are needed in order for the operators to do their jobs. This looked at network strategy, policies and procedures. The speakers were: Matthew Lodge, Director of Rail Infrastructure south, at the Department for Transport, gave the keynote address and spoke about the importance of sharing knowledge from major projects, across the industry. He added: “The TLP Learning Legacy provides a fantastic resource for current and future rail projects - as well as other projects and programmes - to tap into and learn from.”

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IRO Annual Lunch

Hold the date for our 21st year celebrations

When: Friday 12th June 2020
Where: St. Pancras Renaissance Hotel, Euston Rd, Kings Cross, London NW1 2AR

This dazzling 5 star London venue will host the Institution of Railways 21st anniversary year in the industry. Full details will be released on the IRO website soon...

Tickets: £120.00 per person (inc VAT)

Lights, Camera, Action!

IRO has begun a large-scale project to create more online learning resources to support its learners. The new resources will improve access to learning for people on the Leadership and Management programmes as well as those on the IRO short course programmes ensuring that every learner can improve their understanding of the whole system, their interface with other parts of the system and help make better decisions avoiding silo thinking.

Filming began in October for the popular “Introduction to Rail” programme. This is offered as both an online and a face to face programme and is useful for anyone who wants to understand more about all the elements of rail and how the system joins up to work together. In these images you can see one of our rail subject matter experts Andrew Cardwell and our Apprenticeship Manager Tina Morris being prepared at “Reels in Motion” in Stoke on Trent. The directors cut will be released near Christmas. Further developments are in the pipeline with some potential LEP grant assistance likely to speed the project up.

If you want to know more:
contact learning@railwayoperators.co.uk

Queen’s Speech Heralds Rail Reform

On 14th October, just as we go to press, Boris Johnson, PM, delivered a package of bills which will deliver the Williams Review findings and the initial stages of HS2 among other things.

Performance, ticketing and a new industry structure with an associated commercial model were all announced as well as proposals on skills, diversity, employee engagement and the modernisation of working practices.

Of particular interest to those interested in the structure of the industry the PM expressed an ambition for reduced fragmentation, better alignment between track and train and more separation between the Government and the day to day operation of the railway. The Prime Minister had, in September announced plans to give Northern leaders more of a say on how the railway is run across the region.

The government had a commitment to issue a White paper in September and a bill straight afterwards, the government had a commitment to issue a White paper in September and a bill straight afterwards, the government had a commitment to issue a White paper in September and a bill straight afterwards, the government had a commitment to issue a White paper in September and a bill straight afterwards, the government had a commitment to issue a White paper in September and a bill straight afterwards, the government had a commitment to issue a White paper in September and a bill straight afterwards, the government had a commitment to issue a White paper in September and a bill straight afterwards.

As the parliamentary debate is dissected over the coming days and weeks we can be reassured that the industry’s call for reform has at least been heard.

Key facts from the DfT:
• In the last 25 years, demand for rail travel has grown faster in the UK than other major rail networks in Europe. The industry has achieved enormous success over the past decades, doubling passenger numbers and running more trains than any time in the railway’s history.
• However, the UK’s railway is one of the most congested in Europe, and is twice as heavily used as the networks in France and Germany. Only the very dense networks in the Netherlands and Switzerland are more heavily used.
• The Government has responded by investing even more in our railways. £47.9 billion will be spent by Network Rail on the railway between 2019 and 2024 in England and Wales. We currently invest more than any other country in our rail network with flagship schemes such as Thameslink, Crossrail and HS2.
• Passenger satisfaction has significantly improved since 1999, but in 2018 was at its lowest in 10 years. However, the UK’s satisfaction rates remain amongst the highest of the larger European nations.
• In 2018, the EU’s Eurobarometer on Europeans’ satisfaction with passenger rail services placed the UK in the top quartile along with Austria, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal and Slovakia.
• In 2018, performance (measured by the Public Performance Measure) also hit a 10-year low. In the first quarter of 2019-20, 87 per cent of trains were punctual, being less than 5 or 10 minutes late. In the same period, only 64.7 per cent of trains arrived less than one minute late, using the new On Time punctuality measure. However, performance challenges are not unique to the UK; train performance for long-distance passenger services in the UK is similar to levels seen in other rail networks in Europe, but UK regional and local services perform less well in comparison to other European countries.
Welcome to the New IRO Board Members

Mark Langman
Mark, born in London and raised in Hampshire, is a career railwayman and operator, joining the industry in 1986 as a British Rail apprentice.

Gaining extensive experience from various London and South East roles in control rooms, operations management, performance management and strategic development before being promoted to Wales to become the area general manager in 2005. In 2010, he became interim Western Route Director before being appointed as Wales Route Managing Director (MRD) in June 2011. In September 2015, Mark took over as route managing director, Western.

Mark was appointed Managing Director for Wales and Western when it was created in June 2019 as part of Network Rail’s Staying Putwards First programme. The creation of Wales and Western brings together more than 5,000 colleagues who operate, maintain and enhance 2,700 miles of railway. Working as one team, their focus is to provide better services for the 122 million passengers’ journeys made across Wales and Western every year.

Wales and Western continues to build on our strong partnerships working with Great Western Railways, Transport for Wales, CrossCountry, West Midlands Railway, DB Cargo and Freightliner.

Mark is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors, a Fellow and board member of the Institution of Railway Operators, a trustee director of the Network Rail Career Average Reval-ued Earnings (CARE) and Network Rail Defined Contributions (NROD) pension schemes and is the chair of the Network Rail National Operations Council.

Jim Meade
Jim Meade was appointed Chief Executive in May 2016. He had previously been Director Railway Undertaking since 2013 responsible for all passenger and freight services. Jim leads the management team in ensuring that the railway is operated and maintained in a manner that prioritises safety for passengers, employees and third parties, providing a high quality customer service to all who use the rail network; strengthening the productivity and performance gains that have been achieved in recent years to secure a sustainable financial position; and delivers rail’s contribution in support of the Government of Ireland’s policies on sustainable development.

Jim has worked in the railway sector throughout his career, beginning in 1983, initially in mechanical engineering, before moving to operations management. Jim is a Fellow of the Institution.

Western Route Welfare Conference

On the 26th June 2019, Adam Fenton and Kieron Chadwick attended the Western Route Welfare Conference in Bristol, to represent the Institution of Railway Operators.

The conference, held by Network Rail and now in its third year, was a resounding success, with significantly more attendees than the previous year showing just how seriously the rail industry considers the welfare of its staff. Delegates from a range of partners, including GWR, the Railway Mission, First Transport Solutions, British Transport Police and Resonate all contributed towards the day’s agenda and activities.

Mental health was a particular focus of the conference, with a number of individuals courageously reflecting on their own experiences, helping to reduce stigma and encourage those struggling in silence to seek much needed help. Work-life balance was also addressed, with several speakers discussing their own companies’ efforts to reduce non-crucial communications outside of working hours. A key speaker shared her experiences as an LGBTQ+ member of the railway community, a touching tribute to the increasing diversity and inclusive culture being embraced by the industry.

The conference highlighted a broad variety of knowledge and experience of the members who will undoubtedly strengthen the Institution’s membership. The Institution looks forward to welcoming new members through higher attendance learning events.

Goodbye and Thank you

We would like to thank Steve Crodell, Managing Director VolkerRail and Phil Hutton, Managing Director, Bombardier Transportation UK for their hard work and active support of the Institution as voluntary Board members. During their tenure the Institution has seen membership increase to over 8,000, the launch of several new levels of learning programmes from level 3 Apprenticeships to a Masters programme and increased engagement with members through higher attendance learning events.

Notice of the Annual General Meeting of Institution of Railway Operators

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting (AGM) for the Institution of Railway Operators will be held on Friday 24th April 2020.

Where: Wesley Hotel & Conference Venue, 6 New Street Square, London EC4A 3AQ.

The AGM pack, including agenda and voting forms, will be made available on our website at: www.railwayoperators.co.uk

Please notify IRO of your intention to attend by 24th April 2020.

See back page for details and dates of events happening in your area
Apprenticeships

Apprenticeship development - L4 launch & pilot group progress

Tina Morris
IRO

Network Rail and IRO have jointly designed a new graduate training scheme for the Network Rail General Management Graduate scheme.

Delivery of the scheme started in September 2019 with 55 graduate trainees coming from a range of universities and courses. The graduates started their new training jobs with various levels of industry experience from those new to rail, through to some people with several years of relevant work experience. They are on the graduate programme for 12 months during which time they complete a series of placements and learning experiences to give them rail first-hand experience of how the railway is run as a business. Network Rail explain that they will have opportunities to learn about key stakeholder relationships and learn about the challenges involved in creating great customer service.

The programme’s first teaching week was held in Birmingham and the graduates had a full week of workshops and activities delivered by a host of IRO and Network Rail’s associate rail industry experts, coaches and management trainers. The graduate scheme integrates the level 4 Passenger Transport Operations Manager apprenticeship with several modules from the Certificate in Railway Operations Management. The graduates will spend the next three months on placements around Network Rail and join us again in January for the next teaching week. Whilst on placements the graduates will be collecting evidence to show how their work skills and behaviours are developing to make use of the new and refreshed knowledge they gain in the teaching weeks.

IRO are now supporting and developing over 100 rail employers on 3 different apprenticeship programmes covering the following Standards:

- Level 3 Team Leader/Supervisor apprenticeship
- Level 4 Passenger Transport Operations Manager apprenticeship
- Level 5 Operations/Departmental Manager apprenticeship

IRO are working with employers across rail and have many apprenticeship groups with mixed organisations represented. We are finding that this is a great way of engendering cross industry fertilisation of ideas and best practice. Another benefit is that it is supporting learners in developing an industry wide network of colleagues.

The way apprenticeships are designed are that 20% of the apprentice’s work time is spent developing new skills and behaviours and collecting evidence to show that Line Manager and employer what they can now do that they couldn’t do before. IRO supplement the workplace learning with taught workshops, assignment tasks, access to online learning and workplace behaviour development.

The apprentices have regular review and coaching sessions to check progress and coach them forward to embed the learning firmly in the workplace. Line Managers get an induction and training so that they fully understand the apprenticeship programme and are set up to support the apprentice’s workplace development.

Interest in becoming an Independent End-Point Assessor?

If so, please speak to your Line Manager and/or your organisation’s Learning and Development Manager. If your employer has an agreement in place with IRO (and with the permission of your manager) you will be able to apply for this role. Successful completion of our Registration and Approval Process will enable you to attend IRO Assessor School and carry out End-Point Assessment as part of your current employment.

For more information, please contact Keiron Chadwick (Resource Planner) on 03333 440 523 (ext. 203) or e-mail info@railwayoperators.co.uk.

Follow us on LinkedIn and Twitter to join our growing online community of rail industry professionals. Find out about upcoming events, industry news and more.
The online course offers a series of interactive learning exercises. Packed with useful information, each of the twelve POCD modules take an average of 90 minutes to complete. Each one comprises a quick quiz, test and then a series of further in-depth exercises.

The questions are designed to aid student learning. Explanations are given with the answers where appropriate. Once completed, learners can print off a certificate and include their learning in MyPOCD.

Contents:
Emergency and Incident Management: Response to an emergency, incident management structure and investigations.
Performance Management:
- Quantifying the cost of delays, responsibilities, taking action to optimise performance and analysing data.

Delivering Passenger & Freight Services:
- Operational requirements for passenger and freight trains and operating a passenger station.
- Managing Safety:
  - Hazards and risk control, assessing safety in rail operations.
- Delivering Customer Service:
  - Customer priorities in passenger and freight, the costs of poor customer service, culture, managing customer service during a station rebuild.
- Operational Planning and Timetabling:
  - Timetable processes, timetables, headways, engineering access, exploitation of capacity, pathing constraints.
- Train movement and Control Systems:
  - The basics of setting a signal route, train spacing, track circuit operation, failSafe, the introduction and levels of the European Train Control System (ETCS)
- Rolling Stock and Fleet Management:
  - Reliability, maintenance schedules, defects, depot location, activities, planning.
- Railway Engineering, Maintenance & Renewal Management:
  - Consequences of infrastructure problems, monitoring track performance, possessions, on-track machines, infrastructure/fairground interfaces, features and advantages of electrification.
- People and Change:
  - Recruitment, safety-critical staff, medicals, employee relations, welfare, people issues when planning a major project.
- Railway Organisations Business Context:
  - Stakeholders, organisational structure, access and franchising in the UK, hierarchy of ownership and operation, UK station regulatory and contracts regime, station maintenance, revenue allocation.
- Financial and Investment Planning:
  - Budgets, sources of funding, fixed and variable costs, infrastructure enhancements. Guide to Investment Projects (GIPPS) risks, controlling costs.

Want to take part in the course?
This price for the course is £180 (inc. VAT) and is open to Members and Non-Members. The course can be purchased online on the IRO Learn website (www.irolearn.co.uk). Please note that if you are not already registered on the IRO Learn website you will first need to register to access and purchase the course.

Operators’ Handbook Online Course
The Operators Handbook Online Course is an interactive course that reflects the POD (Professional Operators Development) framework in that it contains 12 sections of learning complimenting the knowledge and competencies spanning the entire professional context of railway operators.

The online course offers a series of interactive learning exercises. Packed with useful information, each of the twelve POCD modules take an average of 90 minutes to complete. Each one comprises a quick quiz, test and then a series of further in-depth exercises.

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On the 5th and 12th October, the Institution was thrilled to once again join forces with our academic partner Glasgow Caledonian University to welcome our new cohort of students on to our academic programme in Railway Operations Management. The 2019 launches took place at GCU’s London Campus and at Connelly Station, Dublin. The event presented the students with the opportunity to meet tutors, fellow students and various GCU and IRO staff. The tutorials for the first modules on each level of the programme also took place, marking the official start to studies. We would like to offer a big welcome to all our new students, welcome to the academic programme!

Olubusola Olaitan
Degree, Transport for London
“I want to know more. I think completing the Diploma first will help me a lot.”

Farooq Ahmed
Degree, TFL
“I wanted to know more about the industry that I work in. This was the course that seemed ideal and unique. I’m looking forward to learning more about how railways as systems are structured.”

Mary Browne
Diploma, South Western Railway
“I want to learn more about other aspects of the railway that I don’t already know about. I’m particularly looking forward to the customer service module, as I have worked in that area before.”

Nazir Ali
Degree, TFL
“It will help me develop myself more both in my current employment and further afield. We have been welcomed by staff from both the IRO and GCU, its refreshing to hear the support from both organisations and it fills me with confidence.”

Bill Kettlewell
Degree, Loram
“I already have a good understanding of Railway Operations, but there are some aspects that I could do with a clearer understanding of. I’m hoping for career progression of the back of this course and I’m excited to get started.”

Andre Bromfield
Degree, West Midlands Combined Authority
“I thought it would be beneficial to have a qualification to back up my job role. It’s about preserving knowledge and success planning.”

Ruth Busby
Certificate, GWR
“I’m new to the railway industry in a leadership position and I want to make sure that I know what I’m talking about and challenge my colleagues to make sure we are doing the right things with the right understanding behind me.”

Rhiannon Evans
Diploma, South Western Railway Company (SAR)
“I have only been in the railway for a year, so I want to learn more about other parts of the industry and develop myself.”

Simon Moran
Degree, Saudi Rail - Saudi Railway Company (SAR)
“I would like something that can demonstrate how far I’ve come in my career. I was really pleased that my experience really supported my ability to come onto the Degree course.”

Follow us on LinkedIn and Twitter to join our growing online community of rail industry professionals. Find out about upcoming events, industry news and more.

@IRO_UK
Search ‘Institution of Railway Operators’
Great Cockcrow Learning Day:

This annual event was held on Wednesday the 9th October 2019 at Great Cockcrow Railway in Chertsey in Surrey.

17 students attended and were able to gain an understanding of the principles and physicality of the moving railway. The students were split into groups with a hands-on approach and completed various activities these include: Single Line Working, Crowd Management, Incident Management, Signal Box Visit, Walking tour, Ride on the miniature railway.

“The day itself was very enjoyable, and it was really good to meet up with some fellow students, Tutors and volunteers. I was very interested to listen to John, Colin and Richard talking of their years of experience working for the railway. The activities we took part in were very enjoyable and informative while also providing our group with the opportunity to discuss and share with each other some of our experiences working within our respective rail networks. I also particularly enjoyed the Single Line Working with Pilotman and the visits to the signal cabins, as a former driver I could relate very well to these activities. Overall it was a very enjoyable and informative day at Great Cockcrow. It is such an impressive miniature railway, set in a lovely part of the countryside, and is brilliantly operated by the volunteers who work there. It also has to be said that it has a lovely little tea room (always important in a well run railway station!)

I had the pleasure of meeting some really nice people on the day and I am very glad to have taken part in the event.

Thank you for inviting me”

Damien Hyland – Great Cockcrow

Scottish Union Learning

As part of our 2019 cohort of students, the Institution is delighted to welcome a cohort of 15 certificate students who will be engaging in a Glasgow based delivery of the first level of our academic programme.

This group of students have previously completed a 10-credit module with our academic partner, Glasgow Caledonian University, in preparation for their studies on the Certificate programme with us. The students will study two GCU delivered modules, which will include a work-based project and an introduction to Personal and Professional Development, as well as four IRO delivered modules. The rail content will focus on Background to Railway Operations, Management Skills on the Railway, Basic Railway Operations and Communication, Customer service and the Railway. As with our main cohort of students, all our tutorials will be delivered by industry professionals who have a passion for the subject.

Through blended learning, these students will be challenged to gain new knowledge, adding value to their job roles and facilitating personal development.

The Certificate level of our academic programme is a great starting point to gain an understanding of the wider industry and how their role fits within it. The programme launched for these students on the 19th October at GCU’s Glasgow Campus with the PPD module. We are happy to welcome this cohort of students and support them through their academic journey with us.

IRO delivering academic courses to Saudi Railway Company

The railway sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been one of the focus transportation modes since its creation in 1951 and became a key enabler for driving economic development by providing a competitive transportation mode for the mining industry.

Railways still play a prominent role in supporting the progress of the nation and diversifying sources of income.

The Saudi Railway Company (SAR) was founded in 2006 by the Public Investments Fund, in order to implement a railway project linking the northern region with both the eastern and central regions of the Kingdom. SAR’s mission is to develop and operate the 2,750-km North-South Railway network, which includes freight and passenger services using international best practices of performance and safety.

To build and develop the skills required SAR now has fourteen students enrolled on the IRO academic courses. On the Railway Operations Management programme, 5 certificate students are now completing their final project module, 3 students are entering their second year on the BSc level with another 5 colleagues enrolled in October this year. The 13th member of the team is studying on the Applied Professional Practice MBA Degree Apprenticeship (Railway Operations) which started in January this year.

Follow us on LinkedIn and Twitter to join our growing online community of rail industry professionals. Find out about upcoming events, industry news and more.
We were thrilled to welcome our first cohort of students on the MBA programme back in January and are now excited to confirm that the application process has been opened for our next intake of students, who are scheduled to start this January. Early application is recommended for this popular programme.

The MBA is structured into eight, taught 15 credit modules plus a 60 credit MBA project. The programme is delivered over 6 trimesters, with two modules each trimester, with the final two trimesters being dedicated to the MBA Project.

The course works to upskill experienced people in senior positions. Applicants need to demonstrate that they have an adequate work experience background and current environment that sees them involved in Railway Operations on a daily basis. The work experience requirement is typically fulfilled when applicants are in permanent fulltime employment in managerial/professional strategic leadership positions in the private, public or third sector for at least two years.

The Institution was pleased to satisfy the high demand for an MBA programme and this offering runs through the Apprenticeship standard system which allows those residing in England to claim their fees back through the apprentice levy. The delivery format for this programme consists of a week’s classroom-based teaching at the start of each trimester, followed by 10 weeks of work-based, distance learning facilitated through the University’s learning platform, GCU Learn.

As well as complementing the Certificate, Diploma and Degree level programmes, the courses will also be offered as standalone content for operators who wish to learn about a particular topic or group of topics. This exciting project is in the first stages of development, but the aim will be to have over 100 stand-alone e-learning presentations covering all levels that can be pick'n'mixed to tailor to individual needs.

As with any profession of this kind, things change and with the aid of several Ops professionals, IRO has been reviewing the POD CPD tool to keep it relevant and contemporary.

The self-assessment criteria have been reviewed and amended with additional elements added. The suggested activities on how to reduce skill and knowledge gaps have also had some new class added, including reference to Risk Management Maturity Model for Performance (RM3P), which has been developed with support of the National Task force to provide an assurance process for the Industry Performance Management System, defining what good looks like, assessing current capability, helping identify where improvement is needed, and measuring progress.

The revised POD is soon to be completed and will be made available to all railway operators and can either be used as a standalone self-assessment tool or to complement current systems already in use from employers etc. The tool will also highlight ways in which IRO members can use their membership to aid CPD activities.

The Professional Operators’ Development Framework is the professional map for railway operators and captures what successful and effective operators know and deliver across every aspect and specialism of the profession including Managing Delivery, Ops Planning & Timetabling, Rolling Stock & Fleet Management and People & Change.

Alongside the scheduled 5-yearly review of the academic courses, IRO will be developing a large body of new e-Learning content to supplement student resources. Our industry expert tutors will be developing the subject matter specifically for e-learning with topics from subject areas including Basic Railway Operations, Communication and Customer Services, Train Planning, Safety Law, Railway Economics, Emergency Management and many more.

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For further information:
For further information, or if you would like to discuss an application, please contact the IRO Learning and Development team on progress@railwayoperators.co.uk.

IRO e-Learning Development

IRO are currently developing old and new e-learning courses and content:

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Keep up to date with all the latest news from IRO

Follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn to discover more about IRO, latest news and events happening near you

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Tweet us at... www.twitter.com/IRO_UK

More details of area events are listed on the website at www.railwayoperators.co.uk/whats-on/

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Ireland’s Railway Future

Scottish Area
Ciaran McGilp

On Thursday 5th September 2019, the Irish Area Council hosted its first speaking event of 2019. The theme of the event was “Ireland’s Railway Future” which was held in Heuston Station, Dublin. There were two guest speakers in attendance, Mr Jim Mcade, Chief Executive Officer Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail and Mr Richard Knox, General Manager Rail Services, Translink.

It was a well-attended event with IRO members from across Ireland and Northern Ireland. The event began with Mr Jim Mcade speaking about the importance of public transport in society. He cited the example of Broombridge Station. Once it was a hive of anti-social behaviour but now, with its expansion as a public transport hub with an interchange between heavy rail, light rail and bus, it has become a good example of integrated public transport with the old heavy rail infrastructure along with the new light rail infrastructure of the Luas Green Line.

Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail currently has plans in dealing with current issues such as fleet capacity, anti-social behaviour and disability access. Looking ahead, the company has ambitious and forward thinking plans to grow the business in line with expected demand. Much of this revolves around the National Development Plan 2018 to 2027 as set out by the Department of Transport. This €2 Billion Euro Investment over the lifetime of the plan will enable the company to develop the electrification of the network and also invest in a major fleet acquisition to include EMU and BEMU units being introduced.

As part of the fleet expansion Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail will play its part in dealing with Climate Action. Already there has been a 31% reduction in energy use and a 42% decrease in energy use per passenger km since 2006.

In conclusion, Mr Mcade said he believes Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail was ambitious for the future and that it needed to maximise its role in meeting transport needs of society and economy. The second speaker was Mr Richard Knox, General Manager Rail Service for Translink. Mr Knox began by remarking that Iarnród Éireann Irish Rail, they too, have set themselves bold objectives for the future.

Translink have set out to be the best public transport option in Northern Ireland. For many years the company has struggled with investment however the situation has changed. In 2018 Translink carried 82 million passengers which is the equivalent of carrying the population of Northern Ireland each week. Translink has significant investment plans for the near future, among them the new Belfast Transport Hub. Research has shown that modern, vibrant and growing regions have high-quality connectivity at the centre of their sustainable growth and development. The Belfast Transport Hub is a multimillion-pound investment by the Department for Infrastructure and will be at the heart of an exciting new city neighbourhood called “Weavers Cross” with imaginative mixed-use development concepts and designs created by Arup and John McAslan Partners.

IRO Scottish Area visit DB Cargo’s Mossend Euroterminal

Scottish Area
Ciaran McGilp

The Scottish Area continues to move forward with a lively list of events. We visited DB Cargo’s Mossend Euroterminal near Glasgow back in May.

Mossend depot allows transfer from road to rail and vice versa. It’s the hub of Scotland’s road network, with its very own junction on the M8 Motorway which links Glasgow & Edinburgh.

Grace Thomson and her team were fantastic hosts, and we were treated to a presentation about the entire UK operation, how Mossend fits into this, and the wider challenges they can face when working to get trains and goods to their customers on time.

Lots of questions were asked and it was brilliant to hear “behind the scenes” and an eye-opener to some, just how complex it all is.

We followed up the presentation with a trip outside.

Hi-viz jackets (and raincoats - it was bucketing down!) on, we visited the loading pad, and with a train having just arrived, we got to witness loading and unloading taking place. The scale of the site was something to behold, and intriguing to see the skilled nature of the work, and how quickly trains were turned around. The team also allowed us to climb into the cab of the enormous container forklifts before we headed off.

The Scottish Area would like to thank DB Cargo, Grace Thomson and her colleagues for giving up their time to facilitate this visit.

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Lincoln, who is from Sandbach in Cheshire, for an exclusive test drive of the simulator used for training at Virgin’s Talent Academy - home to its Driver Training Centre.

The rookie driver took control of the Pendolino simulator, sounding the horn and along with his mum, Rebecca, played out different scenarios in the roles of the signaller and driver.

Lincoln was also gifted with some railway goodies, including a Hornby steam locomotive and a tour of Crewe station by Virgin’s Station Manager.

Speaking of his youngest recruit, Chris said: “We had a brilliant time welcoming Lincoln to our Driver Training Centre to join us as a trainee driver for the day. He showed great promise. Trains are a big part of Lincoln’s life and it was a privilege to create some memories for him and his mum with a slightly larger train set than Lincoln is used to.” Rebecca Singleton, Lincoln’s mum, said: “I would like to express the biggest thank you to Phil and Virgin Trains for putting together such a wonderful experience for Lincoln. He had such an amazing afternoon playing a trainee train driver and is really looking forward to touring Crewe station. Memories like this are extra special to our family. Duchenne means Lincoln misses out on so much already but his relationship with trains is special because even if he’s tired, he can sit and play all day long no matter how tired he is as a result of the Muscular Dystrophy.”

"I was struck by the cleanliness and tidiness of the operating floor.”

"The enthusiasm and motivation of the staff is impressive, as is the safety culture."

"I would like to express the biggest thank you to Phil and Virgin Trains for putting together such a wonderful experience for Lincoln. He had such an amazing afternoon playing a trainee train driver and is really looking forward to touring Crewe station. Memories like this are extra special to our family. Duchenne means Lincoln misses out on so much already but his relationship with trains is special because even if he’s tired, he can sit and play or design tracks. Trains have inspired his creativity, imagination and ingenuity and I’m sure they will continue to have a very special place in our home and hearts for a long time to come.”

The organising team on the Area Council arranged for us to visit the Gloucestershire and Warwickshire Steam Railway. The line runs some 14 miles from Cheltenham Race Course to Broadway.

Much of the party met at Birmingham New Street station for the journey by Cross Country Trains to Cheltenham where we were met by a double-decker bus to take us to the racecourse station. Day tickets were issued and we all joined the train to Broadway in specially reserved seating. The steam locomotive on duty was the Merchant Navy Class number 35006 named Peninsular and Oriental S N Co.

On arrival at Broadway after passing through glorious Cotswold countryside the party split up and went their separate ways, some going into the village of Broadway, or to the nearby National Trust Snowshill Manor, and some stayed on the train for journeys back to other stations on the line.

Later, many of us met on the last service back to Cheltenham Race Course where the bus was waiting to take us to Cheltenham station for the journey back to Birmingham. The day was enjoyed by all despite the continuous threat of rain showers which, thankfully, were few. Our thanks go to Rachel Heath, Chair of the Area Council; Gary Rainborne, Secretary; Colin Roby and Douglas McIlvan for the organisation and running of the event and to GWSR for hosting us on the day.

The event is held on or about the second Saturday of June each year. Traditionally, we visit a site of railway interest with facilities for families and children. This year was no exception.

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Visit to the Hitachi Rail Vehicle Manufacturing Facility, Newton Aycliffe

17 IRO members enjoyed a tour of the manufacturing and assembly plant in Newton Aycliffe, organised by the North East Council. We were welcomed by our expert guides Faye and Tom, who started off with a safety briefing and showed us a couple of videos, then gave us a short talk explaining what goes on at the facility. The plant in Newton Aycliffe was built to support the Intercity Express Programme and future Hitachi Rail projects. Over 100 Class 800 series trains are being built at the Newton Aycliffe site, to run on the Great Western, East Coast and TransPennine routes. The majority of the 70 Class 385 EMUs for ScotRail are also being built here. Looking to the future, Hitachi is keen on developing alternative fuel sources. Over 1000 employees now work at the site, and recruitment is based on values rather than previous experience, as relevant skills training is given. 40% of the workforce is women. This is the capacity to build 40+ vehicles per month, with 71% of parts sourced in the North East.

We were then kitted out with safety clothing and taken on a tour of the manufacturing floor, where we were given an explanation of how the production lines are set up, together with an insight into the complex logistics which go into ensuring that all the parts are available in the right place at the right time. We were also allowed to have a look inside some of the vehicles under construction.

We owe a big thank you to our hosts at Hitachi for looking after us so well, and those attending agreed that this was a most informative and enjoyable day out.

Areas

Worcestershire Parkway, A New Station

Midlands Area

Gary Rainbow & Tom Delaney

IRO Midlands Area welcomed Tom Delaney from Worcestershire County Council to explain how a green field adjacent to the railway intersection of the Birmingham and Gloucester line with the Worcester to Oxford line has been transformed into Worcestershire Parkway Railway station. The concept of building such a station near Abbotswood Junction in Worcestershire has been talked about for many decades, but finally in December 2019 the dream will become reality. Tom explained how the project was cleverly funded and will fit into the railway network for the future. An incredible amount of detail has gone into building the station ranging from; wildlife conservation, providing an electrical supply, stabilising embankments, creating a water supply for fire fighting, car parking, bus stops and environmental initiatives. This is all before we discussed any train services. These will be provided by CrossCountry and Great Western Railway, which as train operators becomes an exciting challenge to manage new passenger journeys and the potential increase in customers using the railway.

The presentation was followed by opportunity to ask a few questions and overall was very well received by everyone present. And finally, Many thanks to Tom Delaney for giving up his time to come and talk to the IRO.

Area Councils Key Learning 2019

The twice yearly Annual chair meetings are always a successful way to discuss how to continue best practice and new developments for our members. This year’s October meeting took place following the successful Course Launch in London and was attended by, Rachel Heath, Gavin Collins, Paul Snowden, Nick Edwards, Dave Mason & Chris Mackenzie. The attendees discussed key learning in the Areas for 2019 and new projects that are being developed to engage members and better their professional development. We also covered the Events that are coming up and want to continue this being as advanced as possible for our members in the specific regions.
Rail Operations Group: Specialist Operator seminar

South East Area
Alex Hellier

On 30th September IRO South East Area had a fascinating talk from Karl Watts, CEO of Rail Operations Group.

This new company was formed when some experienced railway operators spotted a gap in the market when it came to moving rolling stock around the country and decided to do something about it. With a growth rate of 91% per annum, ROG has quickly made an impact. The UK train fleet has numerous coupling and gauging challenges; moving rolling stock off its normal patch is a complex business. With innovations such as a delner coupler on a class 37 loco to haul new EMUs and locos with adjustable coupler height to cope with the myriad of new rolling stock coming on the network, ROG has brought new efficiency to the industry. With the introduction of new Ultra Low Emission Zones in cities across the UK affecting road vehicles, ROG is looking to branch out into the light freight sector. It's an exciting time ahead!

Visit to Preston Signal Box

North West & North Wales Area
Tom Cox

IRO Members recently visited Preston Power Signal Box.

Since the early 1970s, this Signal Box has controlled the Signals and Points on a 43 mile stretch of the West Coast Main Line, from Euxton Junction, in the South, to a point just to the North of Carnforth. In addition to this, it also has control over several very important routes radiating to both the East and West from the W.C.M.L., among them the routes to Blackpool, Ormskirk, Chorley, and the Calder Valley, working with ‘fringe’ boxes on these routes. On the W.C.M.L., the immediately neighbouring Carlisle PSB to the North, and Warrington PSB, to the South are both of a similar type and vintage to Preston PSB.

During our visit, using the 76 foot long Signalling Panel, the Signallers demonstrated the Entrance/Exit method of Signalling, with its associated route-setting capability, which this technology allows. There are over 300 Train Describer windows on the Panel, which display the headcodes of all trains, as they progress through the PSB’s area of responsibility, and this ‘visibility’ allows Train Regulation decisions to be made, particularly during periods when the service is disrupted. During our visit we saw examples of this.

In addition to the Signals and Points, which are controlled by Press-Buttons on the Panel, Preston PSB also controls the Level-Crossings at Hest Bank and Bolton-le Sands, from a dedicated console, which is equipped with CCTV.

Throughout our visit, the Signalling staff were very helpful in outlining their duties and working practices, answering the many questions from our party. Our thanks go to all of them, and to both Signalling Manager Paul O’Shea, and Shift Supervisor Andy O’Keeffe, who were instrumental in helping to arrange this interesting and informative Event.
Neville Hill Train Maintenance Depot visit

North East Area

Paul Snowden

Neville Hill Train Maintenance Depot is used by Northern, East Midlands Railway and London North Eastern Railway for maintenance, fuelling, cleaning and stabling of trains sets and units.

11 delegates from the North East Area enjoyed a visit to see at first-hand the Northern facilities, have a behind the scenes look at operations, and find out how they ensure over 100 Northern units are running every day and get a close up view of some of the different classes of Northern units maintained there.

We were welcomed by Chris Spencer, Depot Manager (Designate), and Lee Lockwood, Maintenance Team Leader, who gave us a short safety briefing and an introduction to the working of the depot, including the control of train movements and the depot personnel protection system, and explained some of the current challenges being faced, for example capacity issues due to the introduction of new EMUs and DMUs.

Our tour of the depot began with the fuelling arrangements. All units arriving at the depot receive fuel, oil, water and where appropriate have their CET tanks emptied. The depot is environmentally friendly, with the recovered coolant recycled, and appropriate treatment of waste oil.

We then continued to the servicing shed where mileage based exams are carried out, then on to the repair shed. The newest units are equipped with component monitoring systems which transmit information regarding faults to the depot while the unit is in traffic, so that the depot can be prepared for any necessary repairs when the unit arrives.

Our tour concluded with a visit to the wheel lathe shed, where the million-pound-plus wheel lathe re-profiles wheels on the units, to avoid expensive damage to the track from wheel flats.

Paul Snowden
North East Area

Neville Hill Train Maintenance Depot is used by Northern, East Midlands Railway and London North Eastern Railway for maintenance, fuelling, cleaning and stabling of trains sets and units.

Institution of Railway Operators - Class 800 Simulator day

South West Area

A great day was had at GWR St Phillips Marsh Depot in Bristol recently. GWR Driver Academy Manager Matt Moody and South West Council member Robyn White gave 15 IRO members a taste of driving 800 Class IETs from Paddington to Reading using the new simulators.

Everyone who attended got a chance to have a go and all participants were impressed with the standard of the equipment and commitment to high quality driver training. The event was so well attended that we hope to repeat the day again at a later date.

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What’s happening in your area

Valuable opportunities for members to learn and share knowledge.

Your local IRO area runs events all year round. These are opportunities to see how others work, broaden your experience and add to your professional development.

### North West & North Wales Area:

#### Tuesday 12th November 2019
- **Event:** Occupational Psychology
- **Type:** Site visit
- **Location:** Crewe, Tatton House

#### Thursday 23rd January 2020
- **Event:** TRAM Paddocks Route Crime & Suicide Prevention
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** March 2020

### Irish Area:

Please check the IRO website [www.railwayoperators.co.uk/whats-on/](http://www.railwayoperators.co.uk/whats-on/) to find out about events happening in the Irish area.

### South West & South Wales Area:

#### Tuesday 3rd December 2019
- **Event:** IRO Christmas Quiz
- **Type:** Event
- **Location:** Queens Tap, Swindon

#### March 2020
- **Event:** A Visit to Wolverton & the Royal Train, Hosted by Nick Edwards
- **Type:** Site visit

#### April 2020
- **Event:** Managing Railway People, a talk hosted by Robin White
- **Type:** Presentation

#### June 2020
- **Event:** Train Working Practical, West Somerset Railway
- **Location:** Bristol

#### July 2020
- **Event:** Mechanical Signalling, West Somerset Railway
- **Location:** September 2020

### South East Area:

#### Monday 4th November 2019
- **Event:** East West Rail - Connecting the Varsity Cities
- **Type:** Site Visit
- **Location:** London

#### Thursday 7th November 2019
- **Event:** Railway Industry
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** Kings Heath

#### Friday 24th January 2020
- **Event:** Golden Whistle Awards
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** London

### Scottish Area:

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### North East Area:

#### Wednesday 13th November 2019
- **Event:** Strategic Planning At Network Rail: How do you accurately predict the Future?
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** LNER, York Station

#### Wednesday 20th November 2019
- **Event:** LNER Driver Simulator visit
- **Type:** Site visit
- **Location:** Newcastle

#### Wednesday 26th December 2019
- **Event:** York ROC Visit
- **Type:** Site visit
- **Location:** York

#### Wednesday 15th January 2020
- **Event:** Charting the Development of Hull trains
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** Hull

#### Wednesday 12th February 2020
- **Event:** Tracsis: How Technology Can Help Operators
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** LNER, York Station

#### Wednesday 11th March 2020
- **Event:** Challenges & Benefits of ERTMS and the Digital Railway
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** LNER, York Station

#### Wednesday 6th April 2020
- **Event:** A day in the life of a Drive Team Manager
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** LNER, York Station

#### Wednesday 6th May 2020
- **Event:** Nexus Metro Control Room & Maintenance Depot Visit
- **Location:** Newcastle (Gosforth)

### Midlands Area:

#### Tuesday 12th November 2019
- **Event:** The Challenges of Decarbonisation and ECC Report
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** Birmingham New Street

#### Wednesday 15th January 2020
- **Event:** Visit to NR & WM Trains joint Control & ECC Report
- **Type:** Site visit
- **Location:** Birmingham

#### Tuesday 12th February 2020
- **Event:** Visit to MH & VM Trains joint Control
- **Type:** Site visit
- **Location:** WMSC

#### Thursday 13th March
- **Event:** Replacemnt Logistics & Operations
- **Type:** Presentation
- **Location:** Birmingham

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**Keep up to date on all area events!**

Follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn to discover more about future Area and IRO events that are happening near you.

**Follow us on...**

- [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/)
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