Annual Report 2021
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**Note**
The front cover of the report features an animated time-line of CIRO’s history to date, by Emma Joustra, a local artist.
Do you see anybody you know?
Chair’s Statement

I have been a board member since September 2017 and Chair for many of them and have seen the Institution grow in membership, professional standing and financial security throughout.

During this period, we were notified that we were to receive a Royal Charter from Her Majesty the Queen which underlined the importance of our work and the value of our professional membership.

I have entered my final year as Chair and I will be replaced by Ellie Burrows, current Vice Chair – you can read “Welcoming the Future” comments on page nine of this report. I have been continuously impressed by and grateful for the time and dedication given to CIRO by its’ wider expert community; such as the Area Council members, the tutors from our academic programme and the board members I have served with.

A special thanks goes to our corporate members who serve an essential function for CIRO, both in the creation of our products and services, but also financially. We do not access any central funding and exist on what we can attract and earn ourselves. The corporate member fees have enabled us to add significant value to the membership experience and added considerably to our product development activities too - as shown on page 3 of this report.

Whilst the pandemic disrupted many of the traditional methods of membership and learner engagement, it actually favoured the digital methods we had recently invested in. This contributed to one of the best financial results CIRO has enjoyed.

As I sign off, I reflect that an exciting future is in store, planned for in direct contact with our stakeholders, supported by a strong balance sheet and with existing and new products and services on offer. I know the company is in good hands and wish my colleagues and the whole membership every future success.

Howard Smith, CIRO Chair
**Charter Award**

On the 26th May 2021, the Privy Council recommended and Her Majesty was pleased to agree, the IRO’s Draft Charter should be approved and it was instructed a Warrant be prepared for Her Majesty’s Royal Signature.

We were not to receive it until 1st October, when we would officially become the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators. The award of the Institution’s Charter recognises the collective efforts of our founders, our volunteer Board and Council members, our corporate members, our tutors and staff and, in particular our 10,000 plus members, to enhance and sustain professionalism in railway operations.

CIRO staff see the finance of the business as being the property of its members and so we rarely contract work outside of our multi-skilled core team so as to keep keep our costs as low as possible: for example, we did all our own legal work to attain the Royal Charter saving tens of thousands of pounds in the process.
Thank you to our Corporate Members

It is thanks to the continued support of our corporate members that CIRO are able to constantly develop new products and services which add real value to our membership. For example, over ten people a year are offered scholarships to take their place on our academic programmes.
Activities of the Year

While the economy began its recovery, CIRO did a great deal of work to regain financial security, which we are pleased to have achieved. We focused on ensuring our membership understood their benefits in advance of our Royal Charter being awarded.

We took possession of some new office accommodation with class and lecture rooms in Stafford. We consulted widely with our stakeholders, learners and members to build an ambitious five year plan and continued our investment in technologies to increase access to the Institutions’ assets. We also reorganised to build our capability to scale-up on delivery.
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<th>Statistic</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>10148</td>
<td>CIRO members at the end of September 2021, up from 9274 last year.</td>
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<td>94%</td>
<td>Of event attendees reviewing as ‘excellent’ or ‘good’.</td>
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<td>129%</td>
<td>Increase in the membership of Australia &amp; New Zealand (ANZ) area.</td>
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<td>225</td>
<td>Apprentices trained, qualified and placed into the industry in 2019-2020.</td>
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<tr>
<td>381</td>
<td>Driver apprentices passed out of EPA this year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>116</td>
<td>Students graduating from our academic programme in 2021.</td>
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<td>382</td>
<td>Hours of online teaching delivered before returning to face-to-face.</td>
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Financial Results

We have been busy changing the structure of our business to include additional services the industry had asked for. Besides growth across all of our existing business units, we now also have a fully functioning assessment business which contributes additional income. Overall, the final year of the Institution before its Royal Charter was granted was its most successful ever.

2020-2021

Income £3,055,358
Overheads £2,543,714
Surplus £511,644
Looking Forward

IRO and its successor organisation CIRO exist to add value to the rail sector rather than make profit from it and we were pleased that our large scale stakeholder survey showed that we are in a good position to increase the difference we can make and the value we can add:

The stakeholder survey also directly contributed to the build of our next strategic plan which the CIRO Board of Governors signed off at the end of the financial period being reported here. It can be seen in detail overleaf –

The stakeholder survey was sent out to over 230 industry leaders in around sixty rail organisations and related companies. The response rate was high with an 88% return containing great insight to inform our strategy and frank assessment of how we were doing. We value it all.
Chartered Institution of Railway Operators

VISION
To champion the professional development of those working in railway organisations enabling the whole railway system to succeed.

THEME  
Member Value
Deepen member engagement with valuable support that helps improve the rail workforce and organisations succeed.

GOALS
- Establish a dialogue with corporate members about what they see as most valuable and act on the feedback.
- Encourage interest groups to form within CIRO membership and extend and nurture conversation to allow knowledge sharing and collaboration.
- Develop forums and events for members which offer real value and learning opportunities which benefit the industry as a whole.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
- Increased two-way communications between CIRO and corporate members.
- Stakeholder mapping.
- Increased awareness and usage of CIRO website and online resources.
- Number of registrations to contribute to the platform.
- Number of topics created and number of responses submitted.
- Number of registers.
- Results of attendee feedback mechanism.

THEME  
Rail People Development
Define and validate multiple and varied learning routes for individuals and organisations seeking to attract, train and retain a variety of talent.

GOALS
- Work with the industry to identify learning requirements with accessible and accredited qualifications where required.
- Provide an adaptive suite of Learning & Development services which result in decisive, collaborative, succession ready people at all levels from entry to senior leader.
- Improve access to learning by increasing digital and online content support using evaluations to improve products.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
- Tracked uptake from industry feedback to new product development.
- An engaged and vibrant alumni exists.
- New programmes are launched on time, to a good standard and useful from day 1.
- Strong recognition and growth of CIRO’s whole learning offer; academic, apprenticeships and online learning.
- Number of enrolments on our learning platforms.
- Tracked improvements from evaluating data.

THEME  
Professional Standards
Provide leadership in setting and maintaining professional standards in rail.

GOALS
- To forge strong links between stakeholders from different organisations; working together to learn outcomes and qualifications.
- To increase the potential outputs of membership standards panel to allow for growth in upgrade rate.
- Adopt CIRO’s EPA service to ensure highest quality of assessment and evaluation.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
- High numbers of organisations participating with our product development groups.
- Regular standardisation for membership standards panel established and targeted upgrade campaigns.
- Extends EPA service to other Apprenticehip standards in rail and gain order participation in assurance panel on the train driver standard.
- To achieve recognised recognition as an Accredited Organisation in order to bring required support to the rail sector in training and assessment.

THEME  
Force for Good
Be active in promoting industry best practice through collaboration and by forging partnerships with industry organisations.

GOALS
- Support the improving rail agenda of the countries our stakeholders serve.
- Develop relationships and collaborative member arrangements with other European Institutions and existing new qualification opportunities with Technical universities.
- Have a visible involvement and influence in industry practice, mutual improvements and problem solving.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS
- Promotions of T-Shape leaders and scalable “Connected Leaders” type programme.
- A mutually supportive working relationship with the Australian Railway Association and RSSB.
- Number of participants taking part in improvement work.
- Stakeholder feedback on satisfaction of CIRO’s actions.

BRAND VALUES
- Inclusive
- Collaborative
- Professional
- Innovative & Bold
Welcoming the Future

It has been a pleasure to be part of the IRO/CIRO board over the years and I look forward to taking over as Chair during the next 12 months at a critical time on the rail industry recovery.

CIRO aims to support members throughout their career, whether that is increasing knowledge, building their professional network, starting a new job, studying for a new qualification or looking for a new challenge.

We are a young company that has grown rapidly on its base of world class educational content and clearly defined professional standards. Our new five-year business plan, developed through widescale industry consultation reflects the new business unit structure of the CIRO team.

You will see our headline ambitions include an introduction of larger participative opportunities for members as well as the launch of a rail specific Awarding Organisation. We are dedicated to improving professional standards in rail and by doing so - supporting the rail industry to be more successful.

At CIRO we are always looking to bring more value to our members so please get in touch with us if you would like to contribute in any way.

Ellie Burrows
Deputy Chair - CIRO

82% of stakeholders replying to our survey valued CIRO’s intention to accredit standards and qualifications for the rail sector, leading to this becoming part of our five year strategy.