CIRO Bulletin Reaches 50th Edition

Number five thousand was announced with a front page splash in May 2016 and it would then take until November 2021 – Issue 45 until the next major milestone of ten thousand members was achieved. Andrew Love, Head of Mail Control & Signalling at SNR Lavalin Atkins joined. This proved to be a fitting coincidence as this edition would be one of the most historic in the Institution’s history as the award of the Royal Charter was announced.

A constant feature within Bulletin, from the very earliest editions, has highlighted the work of the voluntary Area Councils. Each edition contains useful information on relevant area events and activities throughout the United Kingdom and beyond. Now numbering in the hundreds, these events have included numerous visits to depots, simulator days, ‘TOD’ visits, signing ceremonies family fun days and much more. Some of the more unique events have included a 2011 visit to the then Tata steel works in Scunthorpe arranged by the North East Council, a trip to NATS (National Air Traffic Services) Crossrail site in 2015. Also covered throughout the publication to date has been the constant separation of the Area Councils’ coverage. The launch of the first Irish Area Council was a feature in the September 2008 issue.

Academic CIRO today is now synonymous with learning and CPD within the rail industry with an established academic programme and apprenticeship provision as well as a range of short courses. This hasn’t always been the case and the Bulletin has charted the journey of CIRO’s learning and development journey perfectly. It was way back in 2005, with the simple headline “Education Programme” that the Academic programme, in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), was first announced with the then IRO Chairman Chris Leah saying “the launch of our degree and diploma courses is a milestone in the development of the institution and a significant boost for railway operators throughout.” This was followed in the December 2007 issue by an announcement about the development of an entry level certificate qualification to support the diploma and degree courses. The first graduates of these newly created courses inevitably followed shortly after and Jill Barrett MBE was featured in the March 2008 issue as the first person to graduate from GCU with an IRO Diploma in Railway Operational Management, earning a “first” for her efforts. The new IRO Academic programme would rapidly gain recognition and standing within the industry and by March 2009, Issue 18 of the Bulletin contained the headline “IRO courses attract record numbers” as an article explained “The 82-strong cohort comprises 31 students starting the Degree course, 30 the Diploma and 11 newly introduced Certificate.”. The Academic programme would be highlighted in many of the subsequent issues of the Bulletin, focusing predominantly on the many individual success stories it helped to nurture. In April 2011, John Hllman was featured in an article titled “IRO helps John (haad) (middle) east” which outlined “how John’s Degree in Railway Operational Management had directly contributed to his appointment as Rail Operations Chief Engineer for the Dubai Metro. John explained at the time: “When the degree became available, I signed up and thanks primarily to that, I was able to broaden my horizons.”

In June 2012, the front page of the Bulletin featured Matthew Lee, who is now Commercial & Customer Experience Director at Lumu, as he accepted the award for Young Professional of the Year at the 2011 Professional Operators Awards. At March, Matthew was an IRO Diploma student and went on to graduate shortly after receiving the award. Most recently, in November 2022, former Degree students Samantha Fernwick and Saleem Ali were both featured on the front page with the title ‘From Student to Graduate to Tutor’ as they had recently been approved as course tutors by GCU. As Saleem reflected at the time: “I thoroughly recommend CIRO to anyone looking to pursue qualifications alongside their employment. I learnt a great deal and I’m looking forward to applying the expertise throughout my career.”

Much more recent than the Academic programme, but no less important in terms of learning and development, is the CIRO Apprenticeships provision, launched in 2018 as seen in the May edition of that year. Two new apprenticeship programme appointments were launched following consultation with the industry as CIRO CIRO Fiona Tordoff explained within the article: “We were listening to our corporate members carefully and there was still the requirement for broad rail operations knowledge as rail companies need people to be broadly understanding of their part in the whole rail system.”

Apprenticeships Much like the Academic courses that came before, students of the apprenticeship programme have gone on to be featured as success stories in subsequent issues and in November 2022 George Browning, Train Services Manager – Southern, Electro Davies, Performance Improvement Manager – NetworkRail, and Benjamin Cowdell, Joint Project Manager – Network Rail and GRT, were all highlighted following the completion of their apprenticeships.

Technology As technology advanced, the Institution moved with the times and the Bulletin became the place to announce the launch of new IRO tech. Back in November 2005, the seventh edition was used to announce the launch of the first ever IRO website - www.railwayoperators.org.uk where members could catch up on events and announcements. This site would go on to evolve far beyond its initial purpose, eventually including a dedicated membership space, Area Council pages, learning and CPD tools and many other resources. It was the online hub for members up until 2021 when as part of transition from “IRO” to “CIRO”, it was replaced and updated by the current www.ciro.org site.

Another online evolution that closely tracked the Bulletin has been the IRO online learning offering. Launched back in 2014 as a result of feedback from corporate members and known at the time as “IRO Learn”, the platform featured in the October 2014 edition. It showcased newly designed Ops 90 learning material and the first iteration of the Professional Operators Development framework (PODF). IRO Learn would serve as the Institution’s online learning platform from 2014 until 2021 when it was replaced by www.railacademy.com which now offers a much more tailored and interactive learning experience for users. Copies of CIRO’s commemorative book “The Journey to Charter” are available from the membership department for £4.00 to cover postage. Please contact membership@railwayoperators.co.uk
Welcome to Bulletin issue 50

Welcome to the November 2022 edition of Bulletin, the 50th issue of the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators’ biannual publication.

If this is your first edition of Bulletin, welcome! This publication exists for its members and the rail industry, promoting best practice and representing the interests of railway operators at all levels. From area events to online courses, we hope you find yourself spoilt for choice by all of the ways in which we can help you develop your knowledge and expertise.

A turbulent year for the rail industry has seen the Institution consolidate its services and offerings to our members while working in the background on some exciting projects which we hope to be able announce in the not too distant future. During the year we have been able to expand our academic proposition once again with the launch of a new course in Australia in partnership with Monash University. Our Apprenticeship team have also been successful in once again providing places for Network Rail, including sixty new starters at Levels 5 and 6 as part of the ongoing Eastern Route project.

Membership ticked over another significant milestone in September as we reached the 11,000-member mark for the first time in our history. Meanwhile, our corporate membership has continued to flourish as we proudly welcomed West Somerset Railway, Keolis Amey Metrolink and Arup. The second Rail Ops conference was once again a great success with some excellent talks from various rail experts delivering valuable learning to over 850 online attendees.

As we look ahead to 2023, we hope to be able to share some exciting news with the industry in the form of some new academic services and new membership platforms. We hope that the work we have done during this unpredictable year puts us in a position to further increase our overall contribution to the industry going forward. Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the development of railway operations.

The CIRO Stafford Team

‘Ticketless Travel - Winning the game’

Jason Wade,
Head of Retail Operations, Northern

The pandemic has changed the way our customers travel, but it hasn’t changed the way Northern is transforming its approach to retail operations.

We have developed an operating model that is delivering consistent improvement and ensures our business and the wider industry remains sustainable and fit for future growth.

The operation of the UK’s railways covers a wide range of disciplines and without commercial success, the more traditional elements of operations would simply not be viable.

‘Does it really matter if I don’t buy a ticket before I get on the train?’

‘Yes, it most certainly does!’

This is all too often the approach of some customers, who are happy to pay for their journey - but expect the train operator in question to approach them and sell them a ticket.

What some customers are not aware of is that it is their legal obligation under railway bylaws and the National Rail Conditions of Travel to buy a ticket before boarding a train if facilities exist at the station to do so. (Which is itself a rather generous arrangement given the percentage of rail users with a smart phone and therefore the ability to also buy a ticket online or via one of the many industry apps.)

Here at Northern, we have been working hard to educate our customers about the benefits of buying before they board and to also tackle areas of intentional ticketless travel.

Our driving force is digital, which has grown significantly from only 18% in 2018 to around 60% today. It is the retail channel of choice for our customers and supports our aim to make retailing as frictionless as possible for customers.

This is at a time when the industry needs to capture as much ticket revenue as possible. At Northern, we have adopted a data and insight led retail operations model that brings targeted approaches to retailing and revenue protection. The aim of this is to reduce the subsidy level we require and allow further investment in the railways of the north. (Against a backdrop of a largely open network, shared with multiple operators and with stations calling every six minutes on average.)

This model is transforming what we do in an already changing retail landscape, where customers are choosing digital for the convenience and simplicity it provides, with ticket office, cash and on-train sales falling quickly.

In 2020, I restructured the team at Northern to focus, on the end-to-end model of ‘is our shop open for business’ with effective revenue protection activity to support this. Furthermore, we take cases through to prosecution for those individuals who choose not to keep their side of the bargain and buy a ticket.

Our people are one of the most important elements of this model and we improved our knowledge of their performance and introduced an incentive for our on-train staff which also had a positive impact on customer satisfaction scores.

So, is our shop open?

We have made more products available digitally, but we aren’t quite finished with that journey as yet. There are one or two products still waiting to be made available in a digital format.

We have enhanced our ticket vending machines (TVMs) which are located at the vast majority of our stations to allow customers to buy nearly all ticket types that would be available at a ticket office.

We are also about to launch a video assistance option, which will transform our unstaffed stations by providing customers with a video link to a colleague in our Customer Experience Centre, who can even take control of the TVM to assist the customer if they wish.

We are even developing an avatar to field the most popular questions from customers, which may not even be ticket related.

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Northern’s
We have worked hard on culture change amongst our customers, so that they are aware of the need to buy a ticket before boarding.

Our innovative communication campaign has different messages tailored from business-wide to station specific and has a messaging transition from highlighting all the great ways to buy a ticket through to the harsh reality of risking a fine.

Making effective use of the media to help our customer education has seen some strong support, with headlines such as ‘Northern clamps down on Doncaster Dodgers’ really grabbing attention.

We have made sure our gatelines are operating at the times we require and we have also made huge improvements in reducing incorrectly rejected tickets, so our gateline colleagues can ‘trust the technology’ if it rejects a ticket.

We operate within the national penalty fares scheme - and this is a powerful way of educating customers of the need to buy a ticket before boarding. Indeed, I am a strong advocate of thinking national in the way we work, whilst delivering local.

For those customers who receive their third penalty fare, it’s a trip straight to court, as their warnings have clearly not been heeded.

Our data and insight-led approach allows targeted enforcement activity via a ‘boots on the ground’ approach at locations where we are seeing fare evasion take place.

However, one of the challenges that digital ticketing brings with it is new and innovative ways for customers to avoid paying their fare. In January 2020, I introduced a digital fraud team who focus on aspects such as Smartcard and refund fraud, ‘Delay Repay’ fraud and unusual purchasing patterns. After all, unlike a physical ticket, digital ticketing leaves a trail of breadcrumbs, making historical case building a powerful evidence tool.

Back on-board, we have increased our validation of digital tickets on handheld devices from 10% in September 2020 to 70% today, which increases further when gatelines are included.

The role of our on-train colleagues has evolved, from sales-led to validating-led, with on-train sales now down to only 5% of all sales.

We mustn’t forget, most customers are honest and do buy a ticket before travel and the last thing we want to do is criminalise our customers.

However, we do have to take action against those who think the rules don’t apply to them and we have an industry leading prosecutions team who own this final part of our model.

An average month will see around 1,000 cases heard in court, with an almost 100% successful conviction rate.

So, has this digital focus and data and insight operating model worked? To measure this, we carry out continuous ticketless travel surveys. Three years ago, we were at 10% and now we’re down to 5%, which I think is a great achievement and something the team and I are rightly proud of. The continuous surveys provide yet more data on our emerging hotspots and allow us to tackle them quickly.

But we won’t stop there. We have ambitious plans to:

• strengthen our digital ticketing options for customers and grow the channel share to 80%
• introduce ‘Pay As You Go’ travel
• ramp up our digital validation
• utilise machine learning for data analysis
• make our ticket vending machines even easier to use, and
• enhance our desktop based revenue protection using our rich data sources.

There will remain a need for that visible frontline presence, deployed efficiently and in a targeted way, but the increased use of digital ticketing allows us to identify areas of concern using a desktop approach.

We are winning the game, but the game is to be continued.
Welcome to the Board
Oliver Bratton and Claire Mann

CIRO are delighted to welcome two new members to the Board of Trustees. Oliver Bratton and Claire Mann both bring a wealth of industry experience and insight to the Institution, and we’re delighted to have them on board.

Elise Burrows as the next Chair of CIRO

Ellie Burrows has over 20 years’ experience in the UK’s rail industry in a variety of roles, including train services director at Southeastern and more recently route director for Anglia in Network Rail.

Having worked on busy commuter railways in Southeastern and more recently running Anglia route moving 4,200 services daily and delivering some of the best on time performances in the county, Ellie has been responsible for operation of high performing services in different sectors including metro, long distances, and freight. She oversaw significant improvements in safety and punctuality and helped to deliver the award-winning Tramlink programme and more recently supporting the roll out of the Elizabeth Line into the East.

On taking the CIRO Chair position, Ellie commented: “It has been a pleasure to be part of the IRO/CIRO board over the years and I am very pleased to be taking up the role of Chair at this important time in the rail sector. I would like to thank Howard for all his hard work in getting CIRO to the position it is in now and look forward to leading our new strategy which puts membership at its heart.”

“I am excited to be taking over as Chair during such a critical time in the rail industry’s recovery and when capability across the industry is so critical to the industry’s success. 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 wide-scale industry consultation reflects the new business unit and 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.”

Thank You, Howard Smith

During the 20th September 2022 Board meeting, Howard Smith stepped down as CIRO Chair of Governors, having been a board member since 2017 and Chair for many of these meetings. As he reflected on his tenure with the board members he has worked alongside, he returned to the improved financial standing of the Institution and the recent award of the Royal Charter as high points of that period.

The Board thanked Howard as he stepped back to continue his support of CIRO for the remainder of his term as a Governor. In a planned ascension, Ellie Burrows, Route Director – Network Rail, who had previously been Vice-Chair, immediately took the reins.

We are pleased to announce Ellie Burrows as the next Chair of CIRO

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What our attendees said about Rail Ops 2022

“I couldn’t join all of the CIRO/IRO/Chariot Institution of Railway Operators tickets2022 but the agenda I did listen to were fascinating. It’s expanded my knowledge in areas of the business and railway that I didn’t have much knowledge in and that is definitely fundamental to enhancing the experience for our Customer Journey.”

Paul Scott
Train Driver Instructor at Southeastern Railway

Rail Ops 2023

We are currently in the process of planning our next Rail Ops Conference, which will be bigger and better once again and is provisionally scheduled for June 2023. Look out for more information about conference dates, speakers and how to register in the new year. In the meantime, if you have any queries about Rail Ops 2023 or would like to contribute, please contact marketing@railwayoperators.co.uk.
The CIRO annual report covering the period October 2020 – September 2021 was published and covered the key achievements of the Institution during the period.

CIRO Key Activities for the Year

- We did a great deal of work to regain financial security, which we are pleased to have achieved.
- We focused on ensuring our members 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 continue our investment in technologies to increase access to the Institution’s assets.
- We reorganised to build our capability to scale-up on delivery.

Stakeholder Survey

During the period, a stakeholder survey was sent out to 230 industry leaders in around sixty rail 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 are performing. The results of this survey directly informed the strategic business plan which was signed off by the CIRO Board of Governors at the end of the financial period being reported. You can find this business plan, and the complete annual report at www.ciro.org/about/annual-general-meeting/.

Chairs Statement

Finally, Howard Smith, Chair of the CIRO Board of Governors took the opportunity to thank all those who have contributed to CIRO’s continued success and to wish all involved the best for the future as he handed over the Chair to Ellie Burrows.

“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 it will be replaced by Ellie Burrows, our new Vice Chair. 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, and 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 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.”

Level-up

CIRO takes a closer look at why our members are upgrading their membership.

Jose Del Prado, CIRO Member encourages colleagues to “just go for it!” and upgrade their membership.

Jose Del Prado, originally from Argentina began his rail career as a Customer Service Assistant for the London Underground in 2006. From here, Jose was granted several promotions throughout his 15-year career and is now employed as Operations Risk Control Manager for the Elizabeth Line, Rail for London Infrastructure Limited (RfLI). In his role, Jose manages the development and implementation of all rail risk control measurements to enable the safe operations of the Elizabeth Line, prior to its opening in the first half of 2022. Jose’s professional education and certifications are an impressive testimony of his commitment to personal and professional development. Jose is due to complete his CISA Certified Information System Auditor qualification and master’s degree in cyber security in the summer of 2022.

Why did you decide to upgrade?

“I decided to upgrade my membership for the professional and independent recognition that would accompany the title. I felt it would also give me the opportunity to highlight the achievements of my career in the railway industry so far. The upgrading process was also a way for me to develop my career further. It gave me the knowledge of which areas I’d like to build upon and aim my CPD towards.”

CIRO Annual Report

- Key Take Aways

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at first, but if you reach out for help and advice, you’re never alone. “Always talk to someone who has been through the process before, reached out to CIRO and received support.” Martin’s passion for learning has since inspired him to take his personal development to the next level, commenting: “Now that I’ve upgraded, my goal is definitely to become a Fellow. I’m really looking forward to helping other CIRO members develop and secure their next career challenge.”

Congratulations to all of the members who have completed their upgrades in the past year!

Don’t hold yourself back from endless opportunities, be a part of our commitment at CIRO to inspire and shape the next generation of rail.

To strengthen your professional recognition by upgrading your membership, a special thanks goes to our corporate members who serve an essential function for CIRO, both in the creation of our products and services, and 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 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.”
Membership at a Glance

CIRO continues to grow as professionals want to take advantage of what membership has to offer.

Headlines:

- **11122** CIRO members worldwide
- **42** Average age of members
- **39** Countries with CIRO members
- **1296** New members in past 12 months
- **30** Events held in last 12 months
- **50** Corporate members and partners

CIRO has welcomed almost 1,300 new members in the last 12 months and membership currently consists of 11,122 individual members and over 50 corporate companies and partners.

Of the members who have told us about their qualifications, there is a fairly equal spread of levels, meaning that CIRO is inclusive of educational background. The largest proportion is members with bachelor’s degrees.

CIRO continues to grow its membership worldwide, particularly seeing a steady increase in the Australia and New Zealand population.

*All information correct as of August 2022*
Welcome to our New Corporate Members:

Keolis Amey Metrolink & West Somerset Railway

CIRO are delighted to welcome two new companies to the institution.

Keolis Amey Metrolink

Metrolink is the UK’s largest light rail network, connecting 2.8 million people across the Greater Manchester city-region on 8 lines serving 99 stops. Metrolink opened in 1992 and has expanded in each decade since, opening new lines to destinations across 7 of the 10 Greater Manchester boroughs. The newest line, to the Trafford Centre, opened in March 2020.

Keolis Amey Metrolink (KAM) is the proud operator and maintainer of the Metrolink network. We operate under a contract with Transport for Greater Manchester, which commenced in July 2017 for an initial 7-year term. KAM is responsible for the operation, maintenance and maintenance of all infrastructure, customer facilities and rolling stock.

West Somerset Railway

Our railway, a true country branch line of the old Great Western Railway is full of fascination whether you are looking for a nostalgic ride back in time through lovely countryside or to study the railway and industrial heritage which our line preserves. The historic steam locomotives, coaches and wagons, and the buildings of our ten unique stations linked by a twenty-mile scenic journey will repay hours of exploration. The surrounding countryside is as varied as it is beautiful. The gently rolling Quantock Hills and distant Exmoor, unspoilt villages and farms nestling in leafy lanes, the cliffs and coast of the Bristol Channel with views of distant South Wales, confident Church Towers, Dunster’s imposing Castle and Minehead’s seaside charm are all waiting to be discovered.

Have You Ever Wanted to Write?

CIRO are starting a new initiative to help our members become better writers. A series of free courses will be made available, leading to institution publication as well as future conference speaking opportunities. CIRO are interested in sharing your operational knowledge within the membership and beyond into academia. This opportunity will hopefully better equip those members interested in contributing to industry discussion, giving you the tools required.

Please register your interest with the Learning and Development team at learning@railwayoperators.co.uk. A no obligation webinar will be arranged shortly, with dates to be confirmed closer to.

Stay up to date with everything CIRO...

Follow us on Twitter and LinkedIn to stay up to date with all the latest news, developments and events from CIRO.

www.ciro.org

11,000th Member Joins CIRO

The Chartered Institution of Railway Operators was built upon the idea of providing professional recognition to its members and allowing them the platform to grow and succeed as rail operators. This is something that we cannot achieve without our members, and it gave us great pride to see that our membership numbers have continued to increase yet again this year.

In the summer, a webinar was hosted by Carla Purcell and Nigel Jenkins of the Australia and New Zealand (ANZ) Area Council, and its popularity saw a surge in interest in joining the Institution, and during this time, we passed the milestone of 11,000 members of CIRO.

Fiona Banks from our membership department described the event as something to be proud of: “It’s great to see events being so popular for our overseas members in Australia and New Zealand. It gives an opportunity for people from across different national companies to discuss something that is happening within their industry in real time. We hope that in doing so, members can take back what they learn and apply it to their day-to-day roles. And having our 11,000th member be generated from one of these events, is a testament to the work of the ANZ Area Council and the growing popularity of CIRO in Australia and New Zealand.”

The ANZ area has been steadily growing in number and now boasts hundreds of members, with CIRO’s 11,000th member being one of these. The area has seen an 89% growth in membership numbers compared to this time in 2021, with members now hailing from across five of Australia’s territories, as well as members living and working in New Zealand. The ANZ Area Council is spearheaded by Nigel Jenkins, who is assisted by five state leads: Rob Hennessy for Western Australia, Chris Carson for South Australia, Carla Purcell for Victoria, Huw Bridges for New South Wales, Ken Farms for Queensland and Gary Iddon for New Zealand. Together, they work to bring the CIRO to railway operators across Australia and New Zealand and helped to accomplish an important moment in our history.

We would like to thank every single one of our members, as we aim to go from strength to strength and achieve more milestones together as the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators moves forward.

Membership
Academic Programme Launch

The Institution was thrilled to welcome our latest intake of academic students at our course launch event on Saturday 1st October. Once again, we are delighted to be working with our academic partner, Glasgow Caledonian University. Originally due to take place in London, our annual course launch event provides each student with the opportunity to meet both CIRO and GCU staff whilst also networking with their fellow students from across the industry. However, due to the announcement of industrial action taking place on the 1st of October, CIRO were mindful of the disruption this would have on individual travel plans, and therefore the tough decision was made to move the launch online. We would like to convey our apologies to all our students for adapting to this change and embracing the online delivery.

Natasha Blake, who works for Network Rail as an Accident Investigation Manager, has gained access to the degree level of the programme and explained her motivation for applying at this time. “After spending the best part of a decade in the rail industry, across a wide variety of areas, I wanted to study for a qualification which would support me for my role in my career.” Natasha’s Network Rail colleague Nail Hutson is also joining the 2022 intake and admits that as a “fate starter to the rail industry,” the Certificate was the best starting point for him, explaining that this level of the course is appropriately structured towards those new to the rail industry, so it seemed like the perfect place to embark on the academic journey for my second career.

Our academic programme takes a whole system approach to railway learning, encouraging students to explore several areas of railway operations and investigates how these areas rely on another to make an operational system.

Rachel Paterson works for Luno as a Train Driver and is joining the Diploma programme as it seemed like a “great next step for me at this point in my railway career.” Rachel will be studying modules focused on Customer Service and Whole System Thinking amongst others, admitting that she hopes the course will achieve her professional progression within the industry, “I’m hoping to gain a greater understanding of the railway and all the different areas that contribute to the business. I’m hoping that it will be a give me a good foundation to progressing my railway career in the future.”

The tutorials for the first modules on each level of the programme also took place on the day, marking the official start to studies. We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all our new students and look forward to helping guide them through their learning journey as well as meeting them in person later this year.

Whether it be at the Certificates, Diploma or Degree level, of our academic programme, if you would like to know more about joining our next intake, please contact learning@railwayoperators.co.uk.

Transnet Knowledge Sharing

I was given a wonderful opportunity by the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators to present my Master of Business Administration (MBA) project at the Transnet Global Knowledge Sharing Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa on 6th October 2022. The event was a partnership between Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU), the University of Johannesburg. CIRO were a tenant and brought together Transnet students undertaking or having completed master’s programmes and other rail professionals to share academic business practice across a broad range of rail-related topics.

Knowledge sharing is such a vital tool that we possess as industry professionals. Find out about upcoming events, industry news and more.

Throughout the day, learners gained a comprehensive understanding of the current environment and enjoyed highly participative sessions where they were able to discuss and interact with each other. There were also regular opportunities for the learners to ask questions to affirm their understanding of the topics being covered.

One of the delegates in attendance was Tracy Evans, who works for Network Rail as an Accident & Assurance Investigator. Tracy reflected on the benefits of the programme. “The sessions were interactive and engaging. It is perfect for individuals with little or no knowledge of the railway. I strongly believe it should be something that all new starters are pointed towards, and that they will greatly benefit from.”

If you would like to register your interest to attend a future delivery of our Intro to Rail course, please contact learnserve@railwayoperators.co.uk and we will get back to you with further information.

Coming Soon - Operational Planning Masterclass

Looking to further your career and develop your expertise?

Course Contents:
- We will introduce the specific tasks of operational planning and set out to show how the timetable is fundamental to a railway business, generating revenue and influencing costs.
- The course will run Fri-Sun, mid May 2023 and specific Dates and costs will be made public in the coming weeks. In the meantime, please contact learnserve@railwayoperators.co.uk for any further information.

“The course was an eye-opener for me and I really changed the way I used to think about time tabling.”

Anannya Sethumadhavan
Serco Middle East, Planning and Performance Manager
From Certificate to Diploma to Degree!

Meet two of our academic students who, having completed both the Certificate and Diploma levels of the programme, are now progressing directly onto the Degree level.

The Institution’s academic programme in Railway Operations Management is structured across three levels consisting of a Certificate, Diploma and Degree. In collaboration with our academic partner Glasgow Caledonian University and their recognition of prior learning system, applicants are able to enter the programme at different levels depending on their previous qualifications but also their industry experiences.

Students starting at Certificate level have the unique option of progressing all the way through the programme through Diplomas and then on to Degree level over a 5-year period. Two of our current students are doing exactly this, having completed their Diploma level just one day ago and now immediately onto the Degree level. This requires a commitment over a longer period of time, with the student taking two years to complete. By joining the Diploma in 2020, both Ben and Rebekah were amongst the first students to experience the new version of the Institution’s academic programme which focusses on a whole system approach to railway operations.

Rebekah discussed the transition from Certificate to Diploma level, reflecting that; ’The Diploma level really built up a step from what I had completed, and I was so grateful I had done the Certificate level first as I knew what I was expected of. However, learning about how much more with depth within the Diploma as it runs for a longer period of time and I was only studying one module at a time, unlike with the Certificate.

Over the last two years, Ben and Rebekah have now completed the three levels of the programme and explored topics such as Quality & Efficiency, Customer & Stakeholder Delivery and Whole System Thinking. More recently, they have delivered presentations to SGR/CIRO tutors that focused on improving business practice as part of their Work Based Learning Project module.

When thinking back over the last years on the Diploma level, Ben expressed how useful the experience had been; “I have certainly learned valuable transferrable skills, a broader perspective on the industry at large, and feel it has really helped hone my skills as an effective rail operations professional. The course never felt onerous, and therefore I can learn to continue my studies without stalling.”

Indeed, Ben now plans to move directly onto the Degree level of the programme and explores this saying exactly the same, saying: “I am aware that 5 years of continuous study is a long time, but I also hope that on completion of the degree the opportunities that will be available to me from holding this qualification and the information I have learnt from it will be invaluable.

As they plan to embark on the Degree programme, both students can expect to take a deeper look at railway operations as a whole system, exploring topics such as Business Resilience, Delivering Business Objectives and Improving Service Delivery. Upon successful completion of the programme, both are aiming to complete the course and graduate in 2024.

The Institution receives hundreds of registers of interest each year for our academic programmes from railway professionals across the industry. Railway-Operated to our academic programmes for a sustained period of time, we were keen to learn what advice Rebekah and Ben might offer to those considering applying for the programme in the future.

Definately go for it! “Rebekah commented, “it seems daunting, but if you use your career background and have more about the railway industry as a whole and include academic study in your career then it will more than likely benefit you too. The great thing I found with the structure of the CIRO/GCU Railway Operations management programme is that you are never committing to more than two years, so you can do the level that suits you with no pressure to continue onwards.” Ben added that the programme ‘really compliments your professional accountabilities and is manageable to do alongside a demanding day job – so give it a go!’

Alongside the subject specific content, students on the programme can expect ongoing guidance from subject matter experts for the duration of the programme, as well as continuous support from CIRO’s Learning and Development team from application through to graduation. Ben felt this helped to facilitate his progression through the programme commenting that ‘Both GCU and CIRO Tutors were excellent – always happy to provide ample support. Always readily contactable by phone or email, and happy to help.’

In addition, this students are provided with key core materials for each module which form the basis of their learning through the programme. Rebekah praised this and how it has prepared her for conducting her own research during her studies, adding that; “The materials provided by CIRO and GCU are really useful and formed the basis of most of my learning. The module handbooks were the source of any information about the modules themselves, so I always knew to explore the study brief, presentation and assignment details and deadlines. The core texts and references were always my first source of research when completing a project and I would expand my own research from there.”

Ben and Rebekah both agreed that the programme also acts as a good networking tool. Rebekah said, “I have spoken to a large range of people within the industry that I would not have spoken to if it wasn’t for CIRO. These have both been people within the company I work for as well as tutors and fellow students within the industry. Networking with fellow students was something I hadn’t considered but almost everyone on the course is working within the railway industry and there is such a variation in their areas of expertise. Everyone is on the course because they have a further interest in and are therefore willing to talk to you about their role and knowledge to help with assignments and both professional and personal network.”

Ben also added; “I think I have made some great new connections with colleagues working in the industry across a plethora of blue-chip companies, employed around the globe.”

The Institution very much looks forward to supporting Ben and Rebekah through their Degree studies.

If you would like to register your interest to join the next intake of students, please contact learning@railwayoperators.co.uk.

Further information

Would you like to follow in the footsteps of Ben & Rebekah? Are you looking to challenge yourself and gain an industry specific higher education qualification? Do you have a genuine interest in the railway industry and would you like to consider a career change? Then this is the programme for you.

Further information on this course; ‘I have always enjoyed sharing knowledge in this interactive format. As a trainer you get to share your experience and learn from the students too. Australian rail has so much happening right now as they go through a rail renaissance, and I really wanted to be part of that. The opportunity to work with Monash University was a chance to work with world leading academics in the rail research sector.

Case studies and group work were used as key tools throughout the week to promote student collaboration and networking. On reflection, Ben thought this was effective. ‘Everyone came prepared to learn, contribute, and share with others. My perception was that people found it easier to talk freely and how they would apply it to their workplace. Many hadn’t realised it would be so beneficial and interactive and feedback on that was that they enjoyed it. We also were honoured to welcome several senior rail figures as guests during the teaching week.’

We look forward to delivering further international short courses in the future.

Ben Hall
Project Operations Manager
Specialist at Network Rail

Rebekah Ashton
Customer Service Assistant, London North Eastern Railway

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Monash University First Delivery of Railway Operations Management Short Course

The Institution previously reported our engagement with Monash University, who have been working in partnership with us over the last year to deliver our five-day short course in Railway Operations Management.

The first delivery of this short course ran from the 22nd to 26th November 2022, with the Institute of Railway Technology at Monash University, on their Melbourne campus. The aim of the five-day course was to provide background information on the key concepts of various elements of railway operations and included topics such as Performance Management, Signalling & Train Control and Operational Safety & Standards.

Each day offered delegates the opportunity to self-apply and reflect on their railway industry career and how they can apply this back into the workplace. CIRO carefully selected industry professionals who have a wealth of experience in Railway Operations to act as trainers throughout the teaching week. One of our trainers was Carol Devaney, who is the Founder & Managing Director of See Change International Consulting and has an extensive career in rail including major projects, upgrades, and new services. She shared with us her main motivations for wanting to deliver this course; ‘I have always enjoyed sharing knowledge in this interactive format. As a trainer you get to share your experience and learn from the students too.’

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Network Rail Operations Management Graduate Scheme

The Network Rail Operations Management graduate scheme continues to go from strength to strength.

CIRO deliver valuable contextualised training, engaging activities, and good quality information and resources to ensure that graduates get a great introduction and start to their career in rail. For the fourth year running CIRO were successful in our tender and, in September we welcomed the new cohort to Network Rail and their apprenticeship training. After two days of induction to Network Rail, the apprenticeship scheme began. Network Rail have chosen the level 4 Passenger Transport Operations Manager Apprenticeship to run through the graduate programme as it offers a wide view of the rail industry whilst focusing on the critical elements of safety, quality, customer service, and Management. The Apprenticeship Standard includes a wealth of competences, transferrable skills, and management behaviours development opportunities for learners. CIRO also include the Certificate of Higher Education in Railway Operations Management with our partner university Glasgow Caledonian University in the programme.

This delivers the knowledge elements of the Apprenticeship Standard and gives learners a valuable additional qualification. During the initial teaching week CIRO delivered our popular “Introduction to Rail” one-day course to provide graduates with a good grounding in rail from “steel wheel on track” to the current business model of the UK. During the week we also enjoyed a session on “Customer and Stakeholder delivery in rail” from CIRO’s newest tutor Jonathan Scott. The graduates also enjoyed meeting their CIRO teachers and coaches and forming new networks of colleagues.

Also, in September CIRO saw the 2021 Operations Management graduates in Birmingham for their final teaching week. One of the highlights was a talk from Professor Keith Grint on ‘Wicked problems and clumsy solutions’. Rail problems are often highly complex and tricky to solve in a way that doesn’t negatively impact on other areas of the interconnected rail system. Professor Grint and Dr Clare Holt offered a new way of understanding these wicked problems and how the way to solve them may be to think about them in an entirely different way.

Further information
If you would like to know more about the apprenticeship standards, please visit www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/

Network Rail Operations Management Graduate Scheme continues to go from strength to strength.

CIRO are delighted to be supporting Network Rail’s 21st Century Ops as they work towards improving the experience and knowledge of rail operators in the “end-to-end” railway operation. We are assisting this important goal by providing recognised and respected qualifications for operations people. CIRO are also working towards improving the viability of career options in rail operations through our annual Rail Ops conferences, “Roles in Rail” days (see the November 2023 issue of Bulletin) and a suite of resources available to learners on our programmes with us.

In 2019 Network Rail moved to a regional model for rail which will allow them to align training and development to focus on the specific requirements in the 5 regions. The Eastern region are working with CIRO to deliver management apprenticeships at Team Leader or Supervisor level and at Operations or Departmental Manager level across the region. This supports their requirements to generate decisive, confident, collaborative and succession-ready rail operators managers to take the industry forward. This October sees the first three cohorts start their apprenticeship training in leadership and management in London and York.

The apprenticeship groups include learners from several different rail organisations including Greater Anglia, South Western, Elizabeth Line, TfGM and Northern. Learning in mixed groups encourages learners to make connections and create networks across the rail industry. This supports the cross fertilisation of ideas and advances the CIRO vision which is “to support improvement in the quality of the railway operations workforce and help railway organisations succeed”.

If you are working for a rail organisation in the Eastern region, please get touch with your Learning and Development Talent manager to see apprenticeship training might be opportunity for you to meet your development needs. The next apprenticeship groups are planned to start in March 2023.

Network Rail Eastern Region - 60 New Apprenticeship Starters

CIRO are delighted to be supporting Network Rail’s 21st Century Ops as they work towards improving the experience and knowledge of rail operators in the “end-to-end” railway operation.
Help New Train Drivers to Succeed

CIRO are looking for experienced train drivers to become apprenticeship assessors, helping us to bring new professionals into the industry.

Why Am I Needed?
The English Apprenticeship system has a dedicated Standard for train driving. As part of this, external assessment is required to complete the learning journey. Many organisations are using the Standard and require independent assessment from qualified external assessors.

What are the Minimum Requirements of Assessors?
We are looking for assessors who have substantial, demonstrable experience in mainline train driving, they must be currently working in the industry and be occupationally competent and be in a day-to-day line management, training or a quality assurance role.

What Do I Need?
CIRO will provide all of the equipment and assessor training that you will need to perform this role. The role is currently home based although there may occasionally be a need for face to face meetings.

How Will I Be Paid?
Payment for your time will be made to your employer at a rate of £600 per day.

What is the Time Commitment?
CIRO require availability of at least four days per month, with no maximum. Hours are usually based on 08:00-15:00 Monday to Friday but can vary with notice. Attendance will be required for moderation and standardisation meetings.

Will I Receive Training?
Yes. CIRO have a comprehensive training process for assessors. There is an initial four day training period, followed by a 360 review to determine whether a candidate is to continue. Candidates who progress from this stage will begin the second phase of training, taking sessions themselves with CIRO support.

Interested?

Next Steps

1. Visit www.ciro.org/epa/assessors for the information you will need to provide to your employer in order to be released for the required number of days.

2. Complete the application form on the CIRO website including any of the required documents.

3. Our EPA team will make contact with your employer to discuss the process and timescales. Candidates will then attend an interview with us and those who are successful will begin assessor training (outlined above).

Learn more
Scan the code or visit www.ciro.org/epa/assessors to learn more or to apply to become a CIRO assessor.

epa2@railwayoperators.co.uk
**Appleby Frodingham Railway**

Members of the North East Area and their families and friends enjoyed a great day out at Appleby Frodingham Railway in Scunthorpe which operates on the British Steel steelworks site.

The family day started at the Appleby Frodingham Railway departure platform where the Steam Locomotive with 3 brake vans collected members and they were on a guided tour around the steelworks. The tour was led by the brilliant volunteers of the Appleby Frodingham Railway Preservation Society. They were also able to catch sight of operations that occur on the site, such as the Torpedo Wagons being loaded with glowing, hot molten iron from the blast furnaces and the brand-new steel rails being loaded onto the delivery train.

During the visit, they had a tour of the railway sheds where other locomotives were situated and visited other areas of the steelworks site. Upon their return to the departure platform, members and guests had the opportunity to stand on the footplate of the train to get a real feel of what it would be like to work on the industrialised steam locomotive.

The family day at Appleby Frodingham Railway provided an informative and interesting insight to the history of the steelworks and how the railway plays an important role in its day-to-day operations. We would like to thank all the volunteers at Appleby Frodingham Railway for a delightful day out for our members and their family and friends.

**Transpennine Route Upgrade**

In May, the CIRO ventured into its first dealings with hybrid events. A group of members were in physical attendance at the LNER Talent Academy in York, whilst other members were in receipt of an invitation to join digitally to listen to the webinar.

John Reed, Industry Programme Director for Network Rail, joined us via Microsoft Teams to give a talk on the latest progress of the Transpennine Route Upgrade programme.

John explained the Transpennine railway is 70 miles of the route, a key rail artery between Manchester, Leeds and York which encompasses 25 stations. The route is being upgraded to include full electrification, additional new tracks, signalling, a larger W12 gauge for freight trains, new bridges, and upgrades at four stations as part of a planned £2.6bn upgrade of the route, with the full upgrade due to be completed in early 2030s.

John’s insight and knowledge on the TRU was gladly received by attendees and listeners and sparked a great discussion and informative question and answer session with open, decisive answers to a variety of questions asked by the attendees.

The CIRO North East Area Council wish to thank everyone who attended the event in person and online.

**North Yorkshire Moors Railway**

In the summer, North East members were treated to a visit to the picturesque heritage rail line, North Yorkshire Moors Railway. The group met mid-morning and after being welcomed to the station and socialising over refreshments, boarded the Moors Explorer Train Service to Grosmont, which was being serviced by the Ex-NER Class Q6-0-8-0. On arrival, the attendees broke for lunch and had a stroll around the station’s platforms and gardens in the glorious sunshine. A ‘behind the scenes’ tour of the Grosmont Signal Box and the Grosmont Motive Power Depot and Workshops was available to the attendees, offering a unique insight into the inner workings of the railway. After the tour, the group boarded the return service to Pickering and departed on their homeward journeys on arrival at the station.

The overview of the day was excellent and was enjoyed immensely by the North East members, with special thanks to North East Area Council Member and Treasurer, Jim Dedicoat, for organising the day.

**Severn Valley Railway**

In mid-June, the Midlands Area Council invited CIRO members to join them on a visit to the Severn Valley Railway by Jonathan Dunster, Deputy Chair of Severn Valley Holdings.

The event, which was the first family day out since 2019, was attended by over 30 people including children of all ages and took place on a beautifully sunny Saturday which made the views across the Shropshire and Worcestershire countryside even more scenic.

The group met at Kidderminster Station where morning refreshments were provided in the station’s Railway Museum. A welcome message was delivered by Rachel Haast, Council Chair for the Midlands, followed by a formal welcome to the Severn Valley Railway by Jonathan Dunster, Deputy Chair of Severn Valley Holdings Board.

The welcome speech also explained some of the challenges currently being faced by the SVR and many preserved railways, including a shortage of coal which has resulted in a reduction in the number of steam locomotives able to run each day with the remaining services being supported by heritage diesel locomotives.

A newly painted locomotive at the station was recently named Elizabeth II to commemorate the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee and members had the opportunity to see the locomotive in service in the glorious sunshine. At all stations, users were given a travel wristband for unlimited travel over the entire route to Bridgnorth and there were periodic reunions of the group during the day as members were alighting at stations and visited other areas of the steelworks site. Upon their return to the departure platform, members and guests had the opportunity to stand on the footplate of the train to get a real feel of what it would be like to work on the industrialised steam locomotive.

In August, members of the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators visited the Elizabeth Line depot in Old Oak Common, West London. This was arranged through agreement of Alstom, Rail for London, and MTR Elizabeth line, to offer visitors a unique ‘behind the scenes’ tour of the facility where the Class 354 units are maintained which operate the route.

Attendees were welcomed by David Pearce, 354 Delivery Manager, who provided an overview and history of the depot, as well as recent developments at the site. It was then down to the maintenance area, where various works were taking place led by the Alstom team, allowing an up close and personal personal experience within the ‘shed’ and Class 345s. The group were also able to see the shunting loco, allowed to haul units onto the wheel, which is used to re-profile wheelsets for the fleet.

Attendees also explained how impressive the facility was and the extensive nature of the depot and the facilities contained within.

It was a pleasure to welcome visitors and show the world class facilities at Old Oak Common to the wider industry”, said Jon Bradley, Service Delivery Development Manager and a member of the CIRO South East Area Council.

The CIRO was delighted when offered the opportunity to have members attend the Elizabeth Line depot, given the recent excitement around it, and would like to extend our warmest thanks to Alstom, Rail for London and MTR for hosting our visit.

**Elizabeth Line Depot**

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**Driver Recruitment Challenges**

The CIRO Australia and New Zealand Area Council welcomed Carla Purrall, Chief Operating Officer of Yarra Trams, for a webinar in July where she provided insights on the driver recruitment challenges faced by the company in light of recent developments.

Carla covered three key strategies that Yarra Trams implemented to overcome the challenges of driver retension, with some thought provoking insights and outcomes discussed during her webinar. Carla gave a really engaging talk and fielded various questions from the ANZ area community from organisational changes to training approaches. The ANZ Council would like to thank Carla for her time and sharing her experiences with our members.