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

Committed to offering various high quality opportunities for continued professional development of our 11,500+ members.

Offering specialist rail Certificate, Diploma or Degree programmes, all written by industry experts and taught by industry professionals.

CIRO offer level 3, 4 and 5 standards, incorporating the knowledge, skills and behaviours required and defined for today’s industry.

A crucial provision for the industry, servicing nearly all apprentice employers in the industry.

Raising professional standards through collaborative partnerships with industry stakeholders in the creation of specialist qualifications.

The online training hub for rail operations staff offering up-to-the-minute rail industry course content and fully-customisable, interactive programmes.
Welcome to our annual statement my first as Chair, where we reflect on the challenges and successes we have encountered in the financial year, October 2021 – 30 September 2022.

Of particular note on the first day of this financial year we officially received the Royal Charter for the Institution bringing a long-held ambition for the profession to a successful close. We also established ourselves in new Headquarters and launched a new service for the rail sector in our Awarding Organisation.

Throughout the year, we encountered obstacles that tested our resilience. industrial action began and cost increases posed additional challenges that required us to navigate through uncertain waters like every other organisation in rail. However, it is during times like these that the true character of an organisation shines through.

As a Chartered organisation, we are guided by a deep sense of purpose and responsibility, not motivated by profit but the value that we can create for the industry. We understand that our true measure of success lies in the positive impact we create, both within our industry and in the lives of those who are involved with us and the profession. We are committed to upholding the highest ethical standards and prioritising the well-being and development of our learners and we are particularly proud of the learners, who are faced with high workloads this year – stayed on track with their learning commitments and finished strong thereby enriching the rail industry with fresh perspectives, enhanced decision-making abilities, and a broader awareness of the system.

Our financial outcome may not be in line with the exponential growth we have witnessed in previous years, but it was in fact greater than our forecast and as always when considering success with CIRO, it is important to consider the broader context. When adjusted for the challenges we faced, including the significant disruptions caused by education policy changes and industrial action, our achievements take on an even greater significance.

I would like to express my gratitude to every individual and corporate, staff, board and volunteer member of our organisation for their contributions and support. Together, we have succeeded in difficult times and together, we will continue to make a profound impact on the rail industry and the lives of those we serve.

Looking ahead, we will remain focussed in our pursuit of excellence and continue to drive positive change within the rail industry. Our focus will be on fostering a culture of continuous learning and collaborating with our stakeholders closely to shape solutions to the whole industry challenges.

We are running several research and opinion surveys so please get involved to have your say and help us get it right for the industry in the years to follow.

Ellie Burrows
Regional Managing Director
Network Rail, CIRO Chair
ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE YEAR

On the 1st of October 2021, IRO officially became the Chartered Institution of Railway Operators and industry dignitaries gathered at St Pancras Renaissance Hotel, King’s Cross to celebrate. The journey to Chartership was a long one but was ultimately achieved thanks to the collective efforts of our founders, our volunteer Board and Council members, our corporate members, our tutors, and staff and, in particular our 11,000 plus members.

An informational pack was produced for our members and stakeholders which outlined the changes to the organisational structure, membership levels and powers of the Institution which accompanied the Royal Charter. The CIRO Awarding Organisation was launched under the authority of the Charter and is currently developing several specialist qualifications, in partnership with industry employers.

The Charter Award was a major milestone in the history of the Institution and just recognition for the contribution made to the betterment of the rail industry until that point. The focus of all at CIRO now is to build on this and to move forward in a way which helps guide and support our industry through a period of major transition.
CIRO’s membership reached 11,000 during this period, an increase of 1078 from the previous period and included 15 new fellows. We welcomed 3 new corporate members in the form of the newly launched Lumo, the UK’s largest light rail network – Keolis Metrolink and the historic West Somerset Railway.

We were proud to launch the largest free learning event in rail – the Rail Ops Conference and host two highly successful events during the period. A project to develop a new membership portal was launched and we are currently gearing up for the launch of this early in the next period.

During this period, the apprenticeship team successfully transitioned back to face-to-face teaching following a period of rapid adaptation due to COVID-19, which saw all teaching moved online. A new whole team approach was adopted, aided by the move to a new, larger office space and the team was expanded with additional coaches and teachers.

During the period, 14 cohorts began their apprenticeship journey, and 4 new employer contracts were agreed. The team also successfully tendered for the level 4 Operations Management Graduate Scheme with Network Rail, for the fourth consecutive time.

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During the period, the Academic team were delighted to be able to return to face-to-face events for both course launch and graduation, including graduation of the South African version of our academic programme in partnership with GCU, Transnet and University of Johannesburg.

We also continued to develop our academic offering in Australia, running the first five-day short course in Railway Operations Management in Melbourne, at Monash Universities campus, which targeted management entry level to Railway Operations.

During a period of adaptation and growth for the End-point assessment team, online assessments became permanent following the COVID disposition to remain online.

This meant a switch from 2-day in person assessments prior to COVID to a single day, improving efficiency and making rosters easier to negotiate. Work was well under way during this period to become OFQUAL registered ahead of the regulatory changes due in early 2023. An industry outreach programme was also initiated in the period to expand our bank of assessors and meet increased demand. Despite challenges presented by industrial action and uncertainty around the Level 3 Train Driver standard during 2022, the End-point Assessment business has continued to grow and offer a high-quality service to the industry.

During the period, the number of course licenses for created induction programmes, structured learning plans and bespoke programmes which were acquired by TOC’s FOC’s and CIRO members reached over 500. We continued to offer the popular Introduction to Rail short course, which is now well embedded into many industry training induction programmes.

Delivery of this course was also offered in-house for the first time from CIRO HQ, operating at capacity and receiving positive feedback. Development work also continued on a series of interactive courses, named ‘Depth Modules’ that utilise subject specific content from previous versions of our academic programme.

During this year, work began on the foundations of what would become the CIRO Awarding Organisation.

Thanks to the opportunity granted to us by the award of the Royal Charter, we were able to begin seeking out partnerships with industry stakeholders in order to develop future facing rail sector specific qualifications.

We look forward to sharing our launch plans with you in our next business plan.
INCOME
£2,713,830

OVERHEADS
£2,592,770

PROFIT
£121,060

CIRO members at the end of September 2022, up from 10148 last year.

Membership events held, with total attendance of 2876 across all events.

Increase in academic programme applications over 2020-2021 period.

Of CIRO online membership events rated as ‘good’ or ‘excellent’.

Driver apprentices passed out of EPA this year.

Of former apprentices say that they have used their learning to implement a change in their workplace already.
Looking Forward

CIRO is actively working as a force for good in the rail industry both operationally and through a purposively strategic approach. With a focus on professionalisation and a purposefully inclusive approach to business planning, CIRO aims to foster growth and meet challenges effectively while keeping costs for the sector in check.

Backed by extensive research across the industry, CIRO’s expertise is well-informed and practical. This knowledge base allows us to develop innovative solutions that address both existing and emerging challenges within the rail sector.

CIRO is obviously committed to promoting professionalism within the industry and part of the way it does that is by providing training programs and skill development initiatives. Through these efforts, we aim to elevate the standards of rail operations and enhance the capabilities of professionals in the field.

Moreover, CIRO recognises the value of inclusivity and aims to involve all those supportive of rail operations, regardless of their backgrounds or expertise. By encouraging diverse perspectives and ideas, CIRO believes it can drive meaningful contributions and progress within the industry.

With our Charter we are a significant force for good in shaping the rail industry’s future and we will continue to prove this to be the case with the vision and dedication of our Fellows and Members and the hard work and backing of our Board and Area Council volunteers.

Looking forward, CIRO will be sharing its new business plan in October 2023. This plan will serve as a roadmap to further drive performance in the rail industry and we look forward to sharing it with you.

For further information or to contribute your thoughts to our business plan please contact CEO Fiona Tordoff – fiona@railwayoperators.co.uk
Thank You to our Corporate Members