



BULLETIN 52

THE BI-ANNUAL FOR MEMBERS OF THE CHARTERED INSTITUTION OF RAILWAY OPERATORS

November 2023



Tyne and Wear Rolling Stock Maintenance Depot

Different Continents, Same Challenges.

In our feature article, Stephen Allday writes about the similarity of challenges and opportunities in Australia and the UK, despite being “half a planet away”.

I felt both fortunate and honoured to be afforded the opportunity to go along with a number of other CIRRO colleagues and visit the Nexus facilities and see first-hand their operations with respect to the Tyne & Wear Metro.

In many respects it felt like ‘coming home’, as the first phase of Tyne and Wear Metro system completed in 1984, the year I moved to Newcastle Upon Tyne and decided that the Northeast of England was to be my chosen place to live.

The Tyne and Wear Metro serves a total of 60 stations across its network, with two lines covering 77.5 km and is the largest light rail (metro) system outside of London.

As part of the visit we were invited to look at their state of the art training facilities located in South Shields, which houses their newly acquired train simulator, used for driver training and familiarisation on the new fleet of rollingstock being manufactured, supplied and maintained by Stadler. The training facility also contains a physical replica track layout, which houses examples of all signalling, train control & civil systems that are in operation throughout the Metro network and is used to enable engineering training and competence retention. Also included in the facility is a train stabling arrangement, classrooms that facilitate all other forms of necessary training to take place and a large conference room. It is clear

Stephen Allday
Executive Director at ARCS,
CEng, FIET, FIRSE, FPWI,
FCIRO, MICRI



Train Simulator, South Shields Training Facility

that Nexus have invested a significant amount of time and commitment to its employee’s continuing professional development and training, providing a facility that ranks up there with what I’ve previously witnessed from other world class operators.

As part of the visit, we were also provided with a tour of the Tyne & Wear Metro Network Control Centre, located in South Gosforth which houses their train control, traction power control and customer services facilities. This was then followed by a visit to their new rolling stock maintenance depot, which at the time housed the first three sets of the new fleet of trains, that have been supplied by Stadler and were in the process of being subjected to trial performance tests over the network.



Sydney Metro Depot

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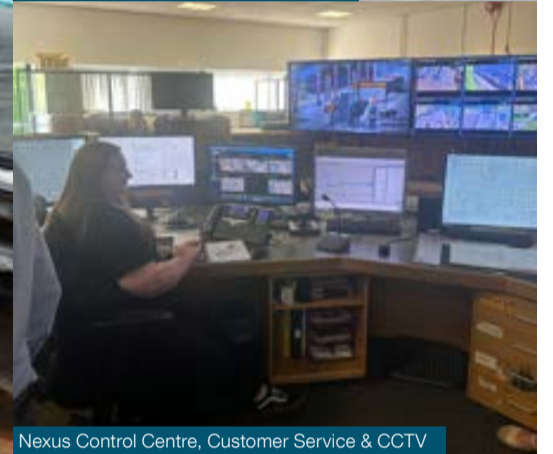
2 Features



Sydney metro, Chatsworth Station



New Stadler Train in Maintenance Depot



Nexus Control Centre, Customer Service & CCTV



Sydney Metro, Operational Control Centre



Control Centre - Electrical Control

On completion of what was an extremely interesting and informative visit, I couldn't help reflecting on the number of synergies and challenges that Tyne & Wear Metro face, to those that are equally being witnessed and having to be managed on other networks in Australia, such as Sydney Metro, Melbourne Metro (including their Suburban Rail Loop Project), Sydney Trains and also Cross River Rail in Brisbane, with the latter two, having both technical and operational similarities.

Tyne and Wear Metro, having been made operational from 1984, is now approaching the time where assets are reaching their 'whole of life' period, and thus is witnessing a significant level of commitment towards infrastructure and systems renewals.

This need for renewal equally applies to the signalling, train control and other rail systems. As is the case for all passenger carrying rail networks in Australia, the need for renewal isn't driven purely to address 'equipment obsolescence', there is a more growing and urgent importance to improve system/rail network capacity, and at the same time consider the need to provision for future interoperability needs (which for Tyne & Wear Metro relates to its interfacing operator, Network Rail). This same challenge is being faced by Australian rail operators, an example being Cross River Rail, a new 'greenfield underground alignment', which ties into the existing network on either side. Due to the need to provide platform screen

doors in the tunnel stations, it posed a challenge with respect to the technology to be adopted for train control purposes, and how to meet Queensland Rail's future operational aspirations, particularly that of 'interoperability'. A similar challenge faces the 'Australian Rail Track Corporation' (ARTC) and their subsidiary company Inland Rail, who are tasked with delivering a mix of upgrading brownfield works over a length of some 1,087 kilometres and adding sections of new greenfield track totalling an additional 628 kilometres. Were this to be a closed network, it would not be difficult, however along sections of the route there is a mix of passenger and freight trains, and moreover, there is the need to enable trains to enter and leave multiple operators' railways. Noting the various interfacing operator's choice of train control systems, it again proves a challenge to ensure interoperability is achieved along the whole alignment.

Looking at other similarities, one challenge that faces rail operators in Australia, is their need to provision for open access to all members of the general public. I was interested to see that this challenge is being addressed on Tyne and Wear Metro by their new fleet of rollingstock, making public transport accessible for the disabled. Open access to all is a legislative requirement in Australia, under the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (DSAPT) Act.

The new fleet of Stadler trains come equipped

with an extending step which actively detects the edge of the platform, efficiently and effectively presenting a consistent and compliant gap to customers, thus ensuring safe access and egress to all users. Similarly, Sydney Metro were also faced with the same access/egress challenge, however this was addressed in a different manner.

On the Northwest Section, which was the initial phase of Sydney Metro, this was easily resolved (as it was in the main a 'greenfield build') through the provision of 'fixed gap fillers attached to the edge of the platform (frangible rubber fingers). Equally, where there was a small conversion to an existing brownfield section within the Northwest, the solution was the same, as the platforms were straight, and hence made the addition of fixed fillers simple. Whilst the Northwest was in its final stages of completion, an extension was approved, thus adding the City & Southwest Sections. Initially it was hoped that the DSAPT requirements could be addressed in the same manner. Unfortunately, this was not the case on the Southwest Section, which is the conversion of a 100 years+ existing railway. Heritage and other planning requirements meant that the existing stations with their 'curved platforms (virtually all the stations) had to be retained. There was no ability to do any changes to the rollingstock, and hence the Nexus solution was not feasible). The problem was solved however, through the introduction of "mechanical gap fillers and obstacle detectors", integrated

with platform screen doors, thus bringing the platform to the train and managing the safety and access/egress issues.

Both solutions (Nexus's and Sydney Metro's) will equally address the open access/egress requirements, and importantly together they offer to the industry two options; one where existing rolling stock is required to be retained, the other where fleet replacement is planned.

I was fortunate to spend time talking with Nexus MD Martin Kearney and I cannot help but admire what he and his team have achieved since he took up the position in 2020, and equally the vision Martin has for the future of Tyne and Wear Metro.

Concluding, though a half a planet apart, the challenges facing the differing railway legislations and their need to evolve are very similar, so too are their learnings and experiences. As an industry, the value of knowledge share cannot be overstated, and to that end (as a less than partisan observer), I would encourage identifying ways in which greater collaboration can be achieved (operators and suppliers), on a global level. In doing this, as an industry we'll become more efficient, and more importantly we will drive out cost.

As a final word, having enjoyed the tour of Tyne & Wear Metro, which was arranged through CIRO, they are certainly playing their part in encouraging the necessary sharing of experience, knowledge and lessons to be learned – thank you.

Welcome

Welcome to the November 2023 edition of Bulletin as we bring to a close a busy year of achievements, growth and development for the Institution.

If this is your first edition of Bulletin, welcome! This Institution 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 the ways in which we can help you develop your knowledge and expertise.

Our Learning and Development team have been busy driving applications for the Certificate, Diploma and Degree programmes, with very strong numbers of applications across the board once again. A series of academic open evenings was launched this year in support of this, with Tutors, current and former students, plus our learning and development team on hand to offer insight and advice to prospective students. Behind the scenes, the learning and development team have been busy laying the groundwork for a new post graduate qualification, which is expected to be launched for the 2024 academic year.

CIRO membership has undergone a major overhaul during the year, with the



development of a brand-new online membership portal, which was officially launched to members in August. The new portal replaces a system which had been in use for over a decade and brings with it a raft of exciting new modern features. Crucially, the new portal will drastically streamline the membership experience, with simple straightforward upgrade, renewal, and payment processes as well as an easy-to-use mentoring platform, allowing members to find a perfectly matched mentor within the industry.



The 2023 Rail Ops Conference was a huge success, with record numbers of attendees and a high-profile line up of expert rail industry leaders, delivering insightful and thought-provoking presentations. Planning for the 2024 Rail Ops Conference is already underway and we have big plans to improve on this year's further still. Look out for updates in CIRO comms in the new year for details.

The CIRO Awarding Organisation was launched in July with the introduction of Network Rail's three new CIRO Endorsed Learning Programmes.

The Level 2 (Certificate) in System Operator Timetable Development, Level 3 (Certificate)

in System Operator Strategic Timetable Development and Level 4 (Diploma) in System Operator Strategic Timetable Development and Production.



Fiona Tordoff, CIRO CEO, Chris Rowley, Network Rail Capacity Planning Director



Head of Training & Development at Network Rail, Carolyn O'Sullivan described the development process: *"By collaborating closely and harnessing our collective expertise, Network Rail and CIRO have created something which will enhance the training experience of our Operational planners, and ultimately raise the standards for our organisation and wider industry."*

2024 promises to be an exciting year of new developments for the Institution as the new Awarding Organisation continues to develop its offering, the launch of a new post graduate qualification, further development in our membership offering, and much more. We're excited to bring all of this to the industry soon.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the development of the railway operations profession.

The CIRO Stafford Team

Golden Whistle Awards – Nominations Open!

Nominations are now being accepted for the Golden Whistle Awards 2024.

CIRO are delighted to be collecting nominations on behalf of the Golden Whistle Awards for the Outstanding Operator/Operating Team category.



The CIRO Southeast Area Council organise the judging of this category and are looking for outstanding individuals and teams who go above and beyond expectation. If you know a person or team who have excelled in 2023 then you can nominate them by completing the nomination form. Access the form by scanning the QR code; by visiting the CIRO website ciro.org; or typing the following link into your browser: <https://forms.office.com/e/4zKrA3P5RD>

Remember to give details of why the nominee has excelled and gone above and beyond to give them the best chance. Please complete the nomination form by 5 January 2024.

The Golden Whistle Awards will take place on 8th March at the Marriott Grosvenor Square, London, with host Dick Fearn and keynote speaker Ellie Burrows.

For further information about the event and tickets, please visit the Modern Railways website:

<https://www.modernrailways.com/events/golden-whistle-awards-4th-friday-club>

Congratulations to last year's winners and good luck to those nominated in 2024.



Stay up to date with everything CIRO...

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



@ciro_uk



Chartered Institution of Railway Operators



For detailed information on upcoming area events visit: www.ciro.org/whats-on

Rail Ops 2023 - The Best Yet

The annual Rail Ops Conference was held on 6th June, with record numbers of attendees visiting to watch presentations from our expert speaker line up of rail industry leaders.

As always, the event was free to all in the rail industry, offering a valuable CPD resource, aligned to our Professional Operators Development (POD) framework. Credit for the event once again goes to our wonderful corporate members, who's support enables us to provide not only the Rail Ops Conference, but much of our free learning resources for the industry.

Our speakers covered a variety of current topics and tackled some of the most complex issues facing the rail industry today:



Ellie Burrows FCIRO
Regional Managing Director
Network Rail
Continuous Improvement in
Operations



Maggie Simpson OBE
Director General
Rail Freight Group
Growing Rail Freight and How
Railway Operations Can Help



Howard Smith FCIRO
Director
Elizabeth Line
Making the Elizabeth Line
Operational



Toufic Machnoug
Director, Industry
Partnership for Digital
Railway - Network Rail
The Digital Signalling
masterplan: East Coast and
Beyond



Claire Mann
Managing Director
South Western Railway
Defining Culture to Deliver for
Customers



Rachel Heath FIRO
Head of Operations Delivery,
Wales & Borders
Network Rail
Career Advice to my Younger
Self



Rufus Boyd
Programme Director,
Passenger & Freight
Services
- GBR Transition Team
Creating Great British
Railways



Chris Curtis
Director
Industry PMO & Network
Performance - Network Rail
Current Performance Trends
- & What We Are All Going to
do About it



Tom Joyner ACIRO
Managing Director
CrossCountry Trains
The National Train Operator
and Making Devolution Work



Jim Meade FCIRO
Chief Executive Officer
Irish Rail
Creating the ability for a
"Decade of Delivery" - Iarnrod
Eireann Irish Rail

Feedback from attendees was positive, with many highlighting the value of the knowledge gained from the speaker line up, and the different perspectives gained from networking with like-minded professionals across the sector. Planning for Rail Ops 2024 is well underway, and we're excited to announce some new developments for Rail Ops 2024 in the new year. Make sure to stay up to date with any announcements, via www.ciro.org, our social media channels, and other membership communications.

What do Rail Ops Conference attendees say about the event?

"I cannot understate the importance of the knowledge I acquired listening to experts and colleagues on a variety of topics, challenges, and potential solutions in the railway industry. I would encourage managers and employees across all levels within my company and the wider railway industry to attend future events to expand and share their own knowledge of the industry to improve the railway. Looking forward to today's sessions."

"What a great event Rail-Ops has been! Well done and thank you to CIRO and all the presenters for putting together a varied and interesting conference agenda showcasing the many and varied aspects of railway operations."

"An excellent conference. Really enjoyed dipping in and out between work jobs. As the videos are around for 6 months that's also useful for CPD in your own time."



Young Rail Tours

CIRO are delighted to be supporting Young Rail Tours.

Young Rail Tours (YRT) was founded in May 2019 on the belief of the importance in creating opportunities for young professionals within the rail industry to build experiences, develop new skills and create global networks, in order to best prepare them for their careers within rail.

Within the UK rail industry, domestic and European railway study tours, catered towards young professionals, have proven extremely popular and are often oversubscribed. However, more ambitious international study programmes are typically marketed towards more senior professionals and are often prohibitively costly and time consuming, making them unattractive to young professionals and their employers. In order to overcome this barrier to the development of young rail professionals, through cross-industry collaboration, YRT delivers a mix of domestic, European and international railway study tours, made affordable, accessible and inspirational for young professionals working within the UK rail industry.

CIRO support helps to make the tours more affordable.

Delegates, including some CIRO members, have recently travelled to Switzerland, and



city tours this year took place in London and Wales.

YRTs are now working on their 2024 strategy. France and Poland are contenders for the next international trip and further city tours are being looked into for the UK.

The tours are very popular and often oversubscribed, but as CIRO is a supporter, some spaces are allocated for first refusal to CIRO members, so remember to say you are a CIRO member on your expression of interest form when applying for future tours!

CIRO will send out news of any tours as and when information becomes available. So do keep a look out if you, or someone you know are interested in getting involved with Young Rail Tours.



The YRTs' Switzerland delegation in the Alstom depot and outside of Stadler.

Your CIRO Members' Portal

Your new CIRO Members' Portal was launched in August to make your membership experience easier. You can now access the CIRO member resources as well as your membership account details all in one place. Navigate to the CIRO Members' Portal from CIRO's main website www.ciro.org or directly at www.ciromembers.org

We are delighted to have received positive feedback from members.

"The new Portal looks great, have managed to find my way around it which is also great!"

"Having my membership benefits in one place is really helpful".

Benefits Spotlight

CIRO Collaborate

CIRO Collaborate is a brand-new feature for members to connect with one another.

You can use this forum to connect with other members with similar interests, share best practice, ask for opinions, or simply express your own. Take a look and comment on subjects posed by other members or start a new conversation.



Interested in volunteering on our forum?

We're looking for members who would like to be moderators on our brand-new forum. You would help to establish CIRO Collaborate as the go to place for members to share ideas and develop connections. Alongside our membership team, you can help to keep CIRO Collaborate a positive and enriching experience for everyone. To get involved, contact the membership team at membership@railwayoperators.co.uk.



POD

Completing your POD self-assessment just got easier. Understand the full impact of your role by continuing your professional development. Using the Professional Operators Development (POD) framework, you can get a holistic view of the industry across all specialisms.

Complete your POD self-assessment to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement.

You can record your self-assessments and see your progress overtime. You can also download the record and take this along with you to appraisals to demonstrate your improvement. There have already been over 250 POD self-assessments undertaken by members since the launch of the new portal. There is also a CPD log for you to record your development activities.

If you haven't already, take a look.

CIRO TV and resources

Catch up on recent Area Events and talks from industry leaders or delve into the archive of past events in CIRO TV. All of the content is tagged with POD sections, so if you are looking to develop in a certain area, you can search the archive by POD section. You can also access the complementary industry e-subscription and CIRO's Bulletin from the portal.



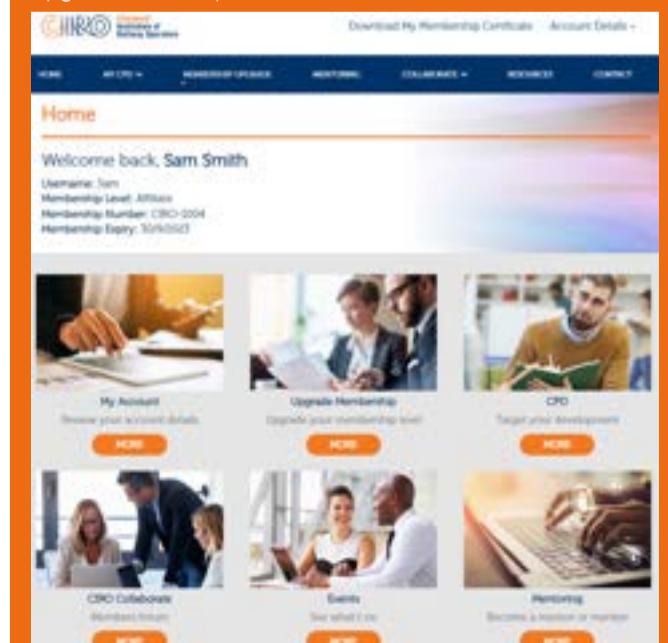
Managing your membership

Along with keeping your details up to date, you can also manage your upgrade from the portal.

Edit your details

Reset Password

Edit Details



Upgrading

Gain recognition from your peers and employers for your experience in the profession. By upgrading your membership to Associate, Member or Fellow level you are demonstrating your professionalism and dedication to the industry.

Being familiar with POD is essential to upgrading your membership as the upgrade criteria are based around the POD framework.

The POD self-assessment is not designed to be part of your application, however, by completing this first, you can identify strengths to talk about in your application as well as gaps that you need to develop to meet the criteria.

The upgrade process has been simplified through the new portal and there are guidance notes to hand to help you with your application. But should you need any further support or guidance please get in touch with the membership team at membership@railwayoperators.co.uk – we're here to help.



Interested in upgrading your CIRO membership

If you are interested in upgrading your CIRO membership, or would like any further information on the process, requirements or timescales for upgrading, visit www.ciro.org/upgrade-your-membership/ or contact our team at membership@railwayoperators.co.uk



In Their Own Words – What Membership Upgrade Means to these CIRO Members

We caught up with two current CIRO members, with vastly different backgrounds and experiences of the rail industry who have recently upgraded their memberships, to find out about their motivations for doing so, as well as their future aspirations. James Veitch and Alex Lu generously gave us their time in the hope that they might encourage others to take the next step in their careers through their CIRO membership.

Forwarding a career in rail with an upgraded membership

James Veitch has upgraded from Associate to Member while starting a new job as Driver Manager at London Euston-based Avanti West Coast.



membership upgrade experience, he reflects on his knowledge of the industry and how working in the rail industries of Scotland, England and the US has helped keep him up to speed with industry patterns. "I wanted to become a Member of CIRO to, partly, stay in touch with the UK rail industry in a hands-on way. There were many exciting things happening in the UK, like the electrification of the Edinburgh-Glasgow route and the many suburban lines that have re-opened in Scotland. In fact, I remember the latter as a proposed scheme from my Railtrack days.

During the upgrade process, Alex notes that there weren't any notable challenges he faced or hoops to jump through. Not because the process isn't thorough, but because of CIRO's assistance and digital-first hub for reference and advice.

"The help I got from Fiona Banks and Carolyn Hughes during my upgrade process was fantastic," Alex says. "There's a time difference with being based in New York, not only did they provide relevant information to questions but replied to my email enquiries the same workday."

"It was perfect for me with the time difference, when the events and seminars were taking place, it was around midday here. I turned my break into a learning lunch."

Upgrading at this time seemed like an obvious choice for Alex who said that while he didn't necessarily need letters or an accreditation to feel valued in the industry, it would be nice to get a little recognition.

"I am something of a traditionalist and don't generally like or need letters after my name, but I asked myself: 'if I wanted to belong to a professional organisation, which one would best represent my approach towards my trade/craft?'"

That's where CIRO's four membership levels and access to continued professional development resources come into their own. CIRO's resources are a multifaceted hub of potential for rail professionals.

Now, though, it's time for Alex to inspire the next generation of CIRO members to move up the membership ranking ladder. He reflects on the process with pride and recommends the upgrade.

"If you have appropriate and sufficient experience, upgrading is the right thing to do. It shows solidarity with others in our craft of railway operators, it indicates a commitment to our community standards, and it is a signal to others of who we are and what we stand for."

"If you are new to the craft and are at a relatively junior level, the process of upgrading will help you with two aspects. In understanding the vastly different knowledge areas required of railway systems operators from safety to finance and regulatory compliance to customer care. It can help you acquire the skills needed to analyse requirements, improve yourself to the point of being confident in those demands, and pitch yourself as a viable candidate exceeding expectations."

CIRO memberships is an ideal way to demonstrate your professionalism throughout your career. Find out more information on our website, by joining one of our upgrade drop-ins on Teams or by contacting the membership: membership@railwayoperators.co.uk.



Starting out as a Trainee Driver in 2003, James joined the Southeastern Highspeed project in 2009 before taking a role as Driver Instructor in 2013. Following success in this role, James moved up to Highspeed Driver Manager in 2017 before taking this new role as Driver Manager for Avanti.

"The reason I wanted to upgrade my membership was for affirmation and confirmation of my knowledge and experience. I was especially interested in the international aspect of my learning which I do have a bit of experience from working on the French systems."

In terms of the next steps for James, he is now looking at the long-term goals of a CIRO membership. He explains: "I have experience in training and knowledge sharing when working as a Driver Instructor, I think in the future, the mentoring side will be something I explore. I am hoping that my instructor roots will help me with this, and I can offer guidance for whoever needs it."

Expanding on the assessment aspect of the membership upgrade, James says: "While I think the experience assessment can be time-consuming, the help of CIRO's experts, with hints and tips, set me on a path to complete the assessments as simply as possible."

James recommends keeping a knowledge log, something he describes as containing a large list of skills with details of and how to use each. CIRO offers a range of events and resources designed to help members in their application process, as well as the educational courses.

Summarising the membership upgrade, James said: "It was nice to affirm my knowledge through the improved membership level and having the opportunity to get the recognition from my peers that the knowledge is there. I am looking forward to learning more about the business change element to help aid my growth to Fellow."

Affirming UK rail knowledge from across the pond

New York-based Alex Lu has recently upgraded to CIRO "Member" level proving transferable knowledge between international rail industries.

As Alex Lu sits down on an early morning virtual call with us to discuss his recent



Congratulations to Our Latest Membership Upgrades

Congratulations to all the members who successfully upgraded their CIRO membership level in the past 12 months.

Upgrading Membership further enhances your professional affiliation and recognition and signifies to the industry that your value your career progression, demonstrating your commitment to professional growth and adherence to rail industry standards.

By being a member of CIRO, you can contribute to the advancement of the railway operations industry. Your involvement in the organisation's activities can help shape the future of the railway sector.

Fellow

Steve Allday
Shahnawaz Ansari
Andrew Castledine
John Coates
Georgia Ehrmann
Paul Ellis
Peter Farnham
Richard Fisher
Richard Horobin
Kevin Jones
Richard Morrow
Gregory Morse
Gavin Panter
Huw Phillips
David Sexton
Claire Volding
Matthew Workman
Kenneth Yarham
Michael York

Member

Robert Alexander
Mohannad Al-Helo
Saleem Ali
Ibironke Anthony
Ricky Barsby
Yogeeta Bhundhoo
Daniel Bray
Philip Burke
Alan Byrne
Bronwyn Clarke
Samuel Cowlard
Graham Craig
Jenna Dickson
Anthony Ellis
Diarmuid Fisher
Jennifer Foster
Maureen Gallagher
Joanna Galloway
Odhran Gilmartin
Louise Harber
Philip Hunt
Daniel Hutchison
Oluwaleke Idowu

Clive Jackson
Tony James
Bryan Keetch
James Kerr-Knight
Graham Levins
Christine Lewsley
Gunnar Lindahl
George Mackintosh
Declan Maguire
Niall McCarthy
Andrew Moffat
Adan Mohamed
Abhijit Nagle
Asim Nasim
Neil Palfreman
Nishad Pandit
Mohsin Patel
James Perry
Richard Redfern
Benjamin Rudkin
William Ryan
Lee Sheehy
Laurence Stirton
Terry Sullivan
Matthew Swancott
Ian Tomes
John Torode
Lee Tuttle
Denis Tyurenkov
Yao Wen Hsu
Joe Wilson

Associate

Mohammed Shaharyar Abbasi
Yuki Archibald
Rebekah Ashton
Zach Bailey
Shane Baker
Calvin Bell
Alison Bodie
Ben Boston Castle
Nathan Brandon-Bravo
Hal Bransby

Jak Brennan
Darren Brown
Cameron Brown
Ryan Browne
James Carney
David Charles
Gabrielle Colwell
David Corr
Marc Costello
Gareth Danby
Matthew Dawe
Mel de Villiers
Claire Delalande
Isana Derici
Michael Dunn
Muhammad Durrani
Ben Dyson
David Earley
Gareth Evans
Joseph Furber
Sean Gathercole
David Glennon
Oliver Grant
Michael Groves
Abda Hanif
Rob Hardie
Shane Hewitt
Bronwyn Hodgson
Mohamed Shafraz Iqbal
Janice Jeffries
Chris Jones
Joseph Keller
Jody Kingsley
Jamie Knight
Tomas Krizius
Thomas Lay
Tom Madgwick
Scott Manley
Charlotte Marsland
Adrian Marston
James McDowell
Gary McNicholas
Kirsty Mitchell

Lucy Morton
Heather Morton
Natasha Mpofo
Andrew Mullan
Adrian Murphy
William O'Shaughnessy
Edward Okusanya
Tolu Omisore
Leigh Parslow
Arif Patel
Terry Pateman
Rachel Paterson
Archie Payne
Zuber Peerally
Richard Pengelly
Carrie Pengelly
Steven Peplow
Michael Plant
David Poore
Luke Putland
Mark Rawlings
Maro Sakkpere
Nathan Saunders
Nicole Seaman
Vernon Segaram
Alan Shawcross
Tim Short
Samuel Smith
Jamie Sutherland
Alan Thompson
Raymond Tuite
Scott Turner
Thomas Waghorn
Charlie Walker
Dan Watson
Dan Westwood
Mark Wood
Alan Woods
Reece Wright
Daniel Wright

The four levels Affiliate, Associate, Member, Fellow

These levels are designed as career milestones, so there is a level to suit you at any stage in your career. However you do not need to step from one level to another to reach your desired membership level, so choose the right fit for you.

Interested in upgrading your CIRO membership

If you are interested in upgrading your CIRO membership, or would like any further information on the process, requirements or timescales for upgrading, visit www.ciro.org/upgrade-your-membership/ or contact our team at membership@railwayoperators.co.uk



Area Council Events Roundup



Doncaster Azuma Depot

Since the last edition of Bulletin went to print the CIRO Area Councils have continued to host a superb events programme across the regions, with a wide variety of visits and in-person talks taking place. Where possible the in-person talks and presentations are being hosted as hybrid events, allowing members worldwide to attend, and where these are recorded, we are able to add them to the CIRO TV back catalogue, enabling you can watch them in your own time. You may have noticed that CIRO TV has moved from the main CIRO website to the New Member's Portal, making it easier for you to access.

In addition to the more formal learning events, the North East, North West & Wales and Midlands Area Councils hosting family day events, providing opportunities for members, their family and friends to enjoy great days out together over the summer.

At the time of going to print, the Scottish and Irish Areas were developing their area's 2023/24 event programmes so do keep an eye out for these in the events page on the New Member's Portal.

Finally if you have any suggestions in relation to events that you would like to see please get in touch with your ideas by emailing cpd@railwayoperators.co.uk.

[Read about our recent area events on back page](#)

CIRO Members Survey Results

Earlier this year we asked you to complete a survey looking at some of the changes and challenges you're facing and what CIRO can do for you.

About your challenges

Many respondents thought that digital modernisation would affect them substantially over the coming years. Although most members saw this as a positive through improved efficiency, some members did see this as a negative challenge. It was suggested that there would be a requirement for upskilling.

Other issues facing members were industry finance, skills deficiency, a lack of clarity and communication about industry changes, staffing changes and customer requirement changes.

About CIRO benefits and access

The most used member benefits are webinars/CIRO TV and Area Events. The least used are third party subscriptions.

There was quite an even split between in-person and online engagement opportunities, with online having a slight preference. The most common barrier to accessing engagement with CIRO was time commitments (work and home life) as well as the location of events for those living outside of the central hub of a region. It was mentioned that the introduction of online events has been welcome. Our Area Councils are looking to offer a variety of events with hybrid being offered where possible.

When asked what else CIRO can do for members some members mentioned that they want more events; more for engagement opportunities for different levels – e.g. senior levels and support for retirees. There was also a call for CIRO to enable members to meet other like-minded members. We have subsequently launched CIRO Collaborate, which is a forum for members to connect to one another. See further details on page xxx.

We are continuously working to ensure that we are producing a service that is relevant to you, so your feedback is very welcome.

We strive to fulfil our goal that every member is offered an opportunity for meaningful engagement.

Get to know your Area Councils

CIRO have area councils up and down the UK, in Ireland and Australia & New Zealand, who are made up of members who volunteer their time and work hard to produce interesting events and talks for CIRO members. We've been talking to some of the council members to get to know a bit more about them.



Frank Sackey South East Area Council

What is your job role?

I am a Mainline Train Driver with South Western Railway.

What are your interests outside of rail?

"Outside of the railway I enjoy console gaming, I'm an avid drone pilot and I also play rugby".

What are you proud of achieving?

"I have an international cap for my home country, Ghana, in rugby sevens and rugby union, and was part of the squad that achieved my country's first ever World Rugby ranking."

How long have you been on the area council?

"I have been with the Area Council since March 2023 so I am relatively new. So far, I've been in a support role and taking note from some of the more experienced council members to learn what they do."

What motivated you to join the Area Council?

"I joined the Area Council because I wanted to make a difference. I came into CIRO looking for an opportunity to develop new skills and attend talks on topics I may not otherwise encounter as a driver, and I realized that it was something that I would like to help others to access and appreciate."

"What has your experience been so far?"

"My experience so far has been very insightful, it is interesting to see what goes on behind the scenes to allow events to go ahead, and by getting involved in that, I am allowing myself to build on my skills and experience as well as impart it on others."

What has been your most memorable occasion or event as part of the council?

"My most memorable event was the quiz-night in Kings Cross, as the quiz questions made for some hilarious answers from everyone throughout the evening."

What would you say to encourage people to get more involved or come along to events?

"I would say you've got nothing to lose

by attending and you might just enjoy it! From networking and meeting new people to finding topics that are actually much more interesting than they sound, there is something for everyone on the events calendar!"

Carl Phillips North West & Wales Area Council

What is your job role?

"The Rail Operations Team at Mott MacDonald.

The role involves bid work, client engagement, portfolio sign off and I'm also Professional Head of Rail Ops, which is about industry compliance and governance."

What are your interests outside of rail?

"Most of my time outside of work is family time and I do like a good trek through some mountains or hills (Peak district, is a regular haunt). I have a passion for going on cruises, so we do 2-3 cruise holidays a year. It's the best way to explore the world, try out different places and experience different cultures."

What are you proud of achieving?

"Career wise - achieving all my career goals by the time I was 40 and worked from the most junior grade to exec levels. I have had to rethink what/where I want to go with my career in latter years, as I look towards retirement! Personal - having a good home life, ability to travel the world and owning my own home."

How long have you been on the area council?

"23 years this year on the Midlands Council whilst I was still very junior in the industry, then moved to the North West & North Wales Council in 2005."

What motivated you to join the Area Council?

"Over the last 10 years, for me it's been about giving back to the industry and rail ops discipline. I've been a mentor for some years now and love passing on knowledge and especially corporate knowledge, so the next generation learn how to continuously improve on managing risk, improve performance, better customer experiences and reduce OpEx cost."

What has your experience been?

"I've done all positions on council. 2 years ago, I stood down from core roles and stayed on to support mentor. I'm now covering Secretary (2nd time) to support the council as people retire. I have thoroughly enjoyed helping people along the learning journey and of course I've been learning as well, as it's all about continuous learning for everyone."

"We do need the next generation railway people on area councils and I always encourage this."

What has been your most memorable occasion or event as part of the council?

"Becoming Chair, following in the footsteps

of a great railwayman and former mentor, Clive Evans. In addition, we have had some interesting events of which the trip to Amsterdam and ProRail/NS visit was a highlight for me."

What would you say encourage people to get more involved or come along to events?

"It's a friendly social atmosphere, there is a lot you get out of the learning (whether a visit or lecture). On top of this there is the excellent networking opportunities. I do also encourage our younger and newer railway generation to come along, its one of few places you learn about "track and train" in one environment, as we are not TOC/FOC/NR bias. Its about whole railway system learning, there is a lot of knowledge and experience with the attendees at each event."

Welcome New Council Members

We would like to welcome our new members to the councils and also offer our sincere thanks to those who have stepped down in the last year for their time and dedication.

A big welcome to **Brian Lynch** and **Frank Sackey** who have joined the South East, **Richard Henderson** who joined the North East, and **Jak Brennen**; **Tim Godber**; **Chris Anderson** who joined the North West & Wales Councils in the past 12 months.

The following three Area Councillors decided to stand down from the North

West & Wales Area Council, at their recent Area AGM

David Armstrong

Has had a long and distinguished career, in both the bus and rail industries, and served on the Area Council for over 15 years.

Mike Campbell

He has served on the Area Council, for 4 years, with responsibility for Social Media matters, his re-location to Swansea with Chrysalis Rail has made it very difficult for him to continue in his role.

Mark Protheroe

An experienced railwayman, served on the Area Council for 5 years, currently working for Network Rail.

"All 3 of these individuals made a telling contribution to the activities and effectiveness of the Area Council with their knowledge, experience, and occasional good humour. They were pivotal in arranging many of our events, and are great examples for younger railway professionals to follow. North West & Wales Area Council wishes to record its gratitude and appreciation of their service".

8 Learning & Development



CIRO Academic Course Launch 2023

The Institution was delighted to have welcomed our latest intake of academic students at our annual course launch event for Certificate, Diploma and Degree on Saturday 7th October. Held at the Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) London campus, both GCU and CIRO teams were thrilled to have welcomed 55 new students in person, and a further 43 who joined online.

Histro Vitano

Degree, Arriva Rail London
"I feel this is the best time of my life to start the Degree as I have 15 years' experience in the railway, across various roles within the system. I'm looking forward to all aspects of the programme, but I'm hoping to find something that triggers a specific interest for me, which will guide my next career step."



Ieuan Farnham

Diploma, GWR
"I completed the Certificate course back in 2014 and decided to take a break from studying. Then I saw the Diploma advertised and decided the time was right to come back. I've just started a new role and really think this will help take my career forward again. I would say to anybody considering it to just go for it. The certificate really expanded my knowledge and I'm expecting the same of the Diploma."



Robyn Law

Certificate, ScotRail
"I would recommend that anybody considering an academic course should go for it, you're never too old to learn. The GCU tutors have eased us in incredibly well. They've supported us throughout with lots of information, whether online or in person, everything has been readily available."



Djibril Ndjai

Degree, Arriva Rail London
"I'm hoping the Degree will help improve my working practice within my current role, as well as gaining more of a strategic view in terms of my day-to-day work and how that fits within my company's strategic plan and our position within the rail system."



Zahid Hussain

Degree, HS2
"I got to a point where I thought 'If I don't do it now, I won't ever do it.' So I explored the opportunity of a scholarship and was able to get it. A career is such a short window of opportunity, and very rarely do all the stars align for you to do it, like this."



Lloyd Matthew Parkes

Degree, DLR
"I'm hoping that formalising my knowledge through a qualification, specifically in operations, I will have better tools to use to perform better in my current role and to ultimately progress further in my career."



Jenny Nansuga

Certificate, GWR
"I'm looking forward to the Customer and Stakeholder Delivery in Rail module. I'm always interested in how the whole rail system works and fits together. I don't think people necessarily understand the complexities of how everything integrates in the industry, that is where I'd really like to improve my understanding."



Lisa Hunter

Degree, Chiltern Railways
"I've been in the railway for 18 years and done a lot of different roles in that time. Now I just want to take back a bit of time to myself and gain some more theoretical development, as opposed to hands on development."



Academic Programme

Our academic programme has been carefully designed to promote a whole system approach throughout the learning journey, ensuring that students gain a more holistic understanding. In this way, graduates of our academic programme are best equipped to not only navigate the changing landscape of rail, but to thrive and succeed in it, enabling them to have the positive impact on the industry that is needed as we move forward.

If you are interested in furthering your career through a Certificate, Diploma or Degree qualification with CIRO, we'd be delighted to hear from you. You can contact our Learning and Development team at learning@railwayoperators.co.uk.

Alternatively, you're welcome to join us at one of our Academic Open Evening events, where you'll get the chance to talk to the team, tutors and past and present students of the programme.

For more information on these open evenings, visit the events page of our website, contact our team, or see the adjacent article for dates.



Academic Open Evenings

The CIRO Learning and Development team launched a series of online academic open evenings aimed at those who have an interest in our academic programme but may be unsure of which level is right for them.

Three of these open evenings will be held throughout the year, with the CIRO team, tutors, and current and former students on hand to offer insight and guidance to attendees. Most valuable to prospective students was the real-world experiences of students past and present, who will give valuable first-hand advice, based on their learning journeys to date.

Each open evening, we will cover the following content:

- Which level of the programme is right for me?
- What funding options are available?
- What is expected of me as a student?
- How much time am I required to give to this?
- The application process.
- Support on offer.
- Hear from our current students and graduates.
- Q&A session.

Whether you are ready to apply, or are just curious about the possibilities, come along and speak to the team.

Our 2024 dates are confirmed, and we'd love to see you there:

- Tuesday 6th February 2024 17:30-18:30
- Tuesday 30th April 2024 17:30-18:30
- Tuesday 25th June 2024 17:30-18:30
- Tuesday 6th August 2024 17:30-18:30

How To Attend

If you're interested in attending one of the sessions, simply email learning@railwayoperators.co.uk and specify your preferred date and the team will respond with access instructions to use on the evening.

You will also receive a reminder email from the team prior to the event.'

Stay up to date with everything CIRO...

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



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Chartered Institution of Railway Operators



For detailed information on upcoming area events visit: www.ciro.org/whats-on



All New Learning Brochure Out Now

The 2024 CIRO Learning Brochure is now available for anybody in the rail industry who is interested in furthering their careers through one of our many learning paths.

You will have received your copy in the mail with this Bulletin, so make sure to check it out if a new challenge is of interest to you. Further copies can be ordered by contacting learning@railwayoperators.co.uk or a digital version is available online from the Learning & Development pages of www.ciro.org. Scan the QR code below to access course brochure.



Inside the brochure you will find all the information you might need to decide on the right learning journey for you, including:

- **CIRO's Railway Operations Management academic programmes**
Which one is right for you?
- **Our Academic partner**
Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU)
- **Level 3, 4 & 5 Apprenticeships**
- **What our students say**
First hand insights and advice from current CIRO students
- **Rail Academy**
How can I best use the platform in my career development?
- **Free Learning**
What is available from CIRO and how do I access it?
- **Mentoring**
Why use a mentor and how do I find the right one?
- **CIRO Area Councils**
Events, webinars, activities and much more in your area!
- **Fees and Funding Options**
I want to learn, what are my payment options?

The new learning brochure has been designed to give you an overview of all the possible options available to you and illustrate the different routes there are to a long and successful career in rail.

Looking for Guidance

Whether you already have a preferred learning route in mind, or are looking for some additional guidance, contact the CIRO team at learning@railwayoperators.co.uk who will be happy to offer advice and support.



Welcome to the Latest Intake of Network Rail Management Graduates

In September 2023, we were delighted to welcome our latest intake of 43 Network Rail Operations Management Graduates onto the Level 4 Passenger Transport Operations Manager Apprenticeship.

A vibrant and enthusiastic first week of teaching saw overwhelmingly positive feedback from the group, who were eager to get to grips with the programme.

This new intake marks a milestone in the relationship between the Institution and Network Rail, being the fifth consecutive tender won by CIRO's apprenticeship team, with the first back in 2019. Once this cohort complete their programme in 14 months' time, around 150 Network Rail employees will have passed through the CIRO apprenticeship programme.

CIRO created a tailored solution to meet Network Rail's specific requirements including alternative CMI modules with a specific focus on project management, specialised course materials, case studies and high calibre senior industry speakers with relevant specialist knowledge. The end result is that apprentices gain a high degree of rail operations knowledge.

The apprenticeship programme offers a high energy, experiential learning approach, which includes providing exposure of learners new to rail to senior leaders across Network Rail and the broader rail industry. This ensures that the learner experience is not only practical, relevant, and enjoyable but also maximises



learner engagement both in and out of the classroom.

To support the smooth transition onto the programme we provided pre-sessions for learners and their line-managers; offering insight

into the apprenticeship learning journey and making sure that each had the information they needed to ensure a positive learning experience and maximise the benefit of the apprenticeship to the individual and Network Rail/the business.

10 Apprenticeships

Stories from the Front Line

Applying Apprenticeship Skills to the Real World.

We spent time with some of our learners, past and present, and asked them to share their experiences of being a CIRO apprentice. We took the opportunity to find out how they are applying their apprenticeship knowledge and skills to improve their own work practice and workplaces.

Ant Yandell

Duty Manager,
GTR

I hadn't undertaken any formal learning for about 15 years, so this was a challenge for me. But at the same time, it improved my report writing, presentations and briefings greatly. I

enjoyed learning as it benefited my career and my workload at the time. I managed to use knowledge and skills from the apprenticeship to kind of steer some of the work that I was doing at the time and join it all together.

I line manage a group of train service managers along with train service operations managers, based remotely up in York. I've also been supporting with the reorganisation of control systems in York. Whilst my substantive role is at Three Bridges, I've been involved in some project work on new systems as essentially a Senior Improvement Manager. It's very busy and complex, so my newly developed time management skills have proved crucial.

Jack Rumbold

Senior Network Delivery
Manager,
Network Rail

There are several things that I took from the apprenticeship programme in terms of my professional development and how I've been able to apply it to



my role. In particular, the People and Operations Management learning has proved really valuable as it has been directly applicable to my role and given me more confidence to handle challenging situations. The Finance and Management of Self elements have had a real positive impact on me in the workplace, as it has improved my confidence. At the moment, I'm responsible for a busy, constantly moving operations team so skills in managing a high performing team as well as managing yourself have been incredibly useful for me. I'm a better manager as a result of doing the apprenticeship programme.

Michael Currie

Project Operations
Interface Specialist,
Network Rail
The Level 5

Apprenticeship has developed me personally as a leader. Firstly, in a practical sense as there's so many tools, techniques, and theories that you learn as part of the Level 5, which I've been able to apply directly into my role. This has been great from a management perspective as well as my future aspirations in rail. Also, as a rail professional, I have increased my network and feel part of a cross-industry community.

Things like operational management, contingency planning and finance were the more practical side of things that I'd not done before. I also gained confidence in the 'softer' people related skills of how to influence people and put yourself across too.



Luke Purcell

Marketing Manager,
Arriva UK Trains

I would say time management has been the key takeaway from the apprenticeship for me, in terms of time blocking and actually saying "I've got this time to get this done." Similarly, the conflict resolution skills I learned, play a big part in my day-to-day role. A great example of this is in managing the large number of suppliers we have. I now have much more confidence to push back and say "Well, why is this like this?" It was a really useful reflection for me to have that confidence to be firm on "This is exactly what we want, this is exactly the outcome that we need, and this is our budget."

If somebody asked me what the apprenticeship was about and they were considering it, I would tell them to really think about doing it. It's genuinely about becoming a better manager, it's something to put time and effort into. It is hard, but it's definitely worth it because it's not just skills that you learn, but the skills that become habitual and you take them with you as you move on, which is quite profound shift. It has changed me for the better.

If you would like any information on apprenticeships with CIRO, please get in touch with our team at apprentice@railwayoperators.co.uk. Alternatively, information on our apprenticeship services can be found online at www.ciro.co.uk.



Application of Apprenticeship Learning in Rail

We surveyed over 95% of our apprentices on Level 3, 4 and 5 programmes. Over 90% of learners say they regularly applied their learning back into their workplace. Of those who said they had not, most were in the first three months of their apprenticeship making it too early to operationalise their learning. Others said they had plans to apply learning to an immediate change situation on their workplace.



APPRENTICESHIP SURVEY

Those apprentices who had applied their learning back in the workplace gave us some impressive examples. The following few examples are typical of the responses:

"I think the apprenticeship has made me think about my actions a lot more, to be self critical, and this has helped me try to identify ways to improve"

"Currently establishing a Departmental Operational Plan and rolling this out"

"Time management has improved, being able to prioritise tasks better. Also, rolled out the learning with the rest of the team"

"I am now more professional in my approach and in my day-to-day work."

"I Improved my reflection after any project work."

Aware of more root cause analysis techniques which I use to get to the bottom of problems within a process."

"My capability has improved greatly as has my self-management and understanding of the wider impact of the factors we are learning about on the business"



Stay up to date with everything CIRO...

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



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Network Rail and CIRO Partner to Launch Capacity Planning Qualifications

During July, CIRO's Awarding Organisation and Network Rail announced the launch of three new capacity planning qualifications for use in Network Rail's internal training programme. The launch followed years of intensive development and collaboration, to design qualifications which perfectly met Network Rail's needs.

The new learning programmes are awarded by CIRO and delivered by Network Rail's Capacity Planning Training and Development Team in Milton Keynes. They allow Network Rail to standardise capacity planning and offer a clear path of potential progression and developmental experience for their community of operational planners and specialists, through the following tiers:

- System Operator Timetable Development Certificate Programme at CIRO AO Level 2
- System Operator Strategic Timetable Development Certificate Programme at CIRO AO Level 3
- System Operator Strategic Timetable Development and Production Diploma Programme at CIRO AO Level 4

The development journey started back in 2019, with the appointment of Training and Development Manager (Capacity Planning) Carolyn O'Sullivan, who recognised the need for a more robust framework. Network Rail and CIRO collaborated on a third capacity planning paper to utilise the knowledge of several subject matter experts and to supplement the existing two levels. Forming the third level means that there's now a comprehensive training plan that all new entrant planners must complete.

Following a successful pilot scheme of the new paper, discussions began with CIRO, who having received a Royal Charter in 2021, can award qualifications and endorsed learning programmes, enabling it to become the only sector-specific standard setting body for rail. The opportunity plays to CIRO's strengths of utilising the quality assurance disciplines from its successful EPA service whilst offering a unique, employer led solution connecting this important workforce to professional development and recognition.

Carolyn O'Sullivan, who led the project, explained the partnership: "By collaborating closely and harnessing our collective expertise, Network Rail and CIRO have created something which will enhance the training experience of our operational planners, and ultimately raise the standards for our organisation and wider industry. Our teams have worked hard over the past few years to bring this to reality and were delighted to see the first operational planners and specialists coming through the programme".

The first certificates (level 2 and 3 certificates) were awarded during the Autumn as Network Rail Operational Planners and Specialists completed the course and competencies.

www.ciro.org

Thanks to the success of the programmes, Network Rail and CIRO are currently looking at further opportunities for collaborative training product development.

If you would like more information on the work that CIRO's Awarding Organisation are currently doing with partners from across the rail industry, please visit www.ciro.org/awarding-organisation or contact us at qualifications@railwayoperators.co.uk



Fiona Tordoff, CIRO CEO, Chris Rowley, Network Rail Capacity Planning Director

Milestone 1000th End-Point Assessment for CIRO EPAO

In August of this year, CIRO celebrated a significant milestone as we marked the completion of 1000th successful Level 3 Train Driver End Point Assessment (EPA).

Since its launch in 2018, the service has gone from strength to strength establishing itself as a vital cog on the apprenticeship machine within rail. Trusted and relied upon by many of the largest operating companies in the industry, CIRO EPAO prides itself on delivering a consistently high-quality and positive assessment experience.

What Our EPA Customers Say

As part of West Midlands Trains Driver Apprenticeship programme, CIRO support us in the delivery of the End Point Assessments. CIRO have assisted us with improving the support provided to our apprentice's during their EPA's as well as assisting with the development of additional processes when undertaking EPA's. This is with thanks to the whole team at CIRO in helping us develop these processes and additional support to learners".

Michael Walker
Learning and Development Advisor
– West Midlands Trains

What Our EPA Apprentices Say

"The CIRO EPA structure was fantastic. I received great support from the staff at CIRO from day one and both the invigilator and assessor made me feel comfortable throughout the whole assessment process."

"The EPA was well structured and designed to extract the best knowledge from me. The CIRO staff were very professional and made me feel at ease."

"Personally, I would not change anything. Greatly designed process carried out by great professionals."

Nadine Schmid and Vicky Johndrow, Joint Heads of CIRO Awarding Organisation commented:

"To achieve the 1000th EPA this year is a fantastic achievement for our team. It would be wrong for me to say there haven't been challenges in meeting the needs of the industry with unprecedented events such as COVID-19 and more recently a prolonged period of industrial action. However, our EPA offering has not only survived, but thrived, and we continue to build upon our already highly committed and dedicated team to offer high-quality EPA provision going forward – here's to the next 1000!"

"I totally echo what Nadine says, it's fantastic to see how the team has grown over the last 5 years. I feel confident that we are in the best position to continue meeting the needs of all employers who use our EPA provision and look forward to a really successful 2024".

Further information

For more information on CIRO's End-point assessment offering, visit www.ciro.org/epa or contact epa@railwayoperators.co.uk



12 Areas Events



Carlisle Signal Box

The North West and Wales Area Council recently arranged a tour of Carlisle Station, including the Avanti West Coast Regional Development Centre. The visit focused on the signal box, operations floor and gauge model railway situated in the station.

The event was attended by sixteen CIRO members who met at the newly opened Avanti West Coast Regional Development Centre for refreshments and a quick chat with the NR Local Operations Manager Chris Lammiman, the group was split in two with some heading to the signal box and the others visiting the Border Railway Society '00' gauge model railway layout upstairs at Carlisle Station, the society which was originally founded in 1965 as an enthusiasts group but became a modelling society in 1967 and has been a fixture at Carlisle Citadel station since 1969.

On arrival at the signal box Chris Lammiman gave the CIRO Members a visit of the operations floor. Chris then took some CIRO Members onto the operations floor to see the Signallers and the Shift Signaller Manager in action, whilst they were on the operations floor the other Members were shown around the 3 operational panels and were able to see the area of operation in full.

Whilst CIRO Members were on the operations floor the other members were in the En-Ex Simulator Room operating the En-Ex Panel, the members signalled trains through the area using a daytime time table and it wasn't long before there were a few trains stacked up so they had to work out what to do with them to move trains safely. The use of the Simulator allows us to show how to signal trains safely and set up failures and other operational incidents.

Avanti's New Simulators

CIRO Northwest & Wales members recently attended an event which centred on the unveiling of 3 new simulators at Avanti's Tatton House, Crewe, by retired senior railway manager, David Maidment OBE, and Chair of The Railway Children Charity. These simulators are comprised of two full cab simulators, one for the Class 390 and the other for the Class 805, and a Class 390 Classroom Console.



Hosted by Natalie Whitehouse (Head of Learning and Development), Chris Mackenzie (Operational Training Manager) and Mick Warr (Driver Assessor), the CIRO Members were able to use all 3 simulators and received a presentation on Avanti's training plans. This was followed by an interesting and informative Q/A session with the group.

Following the Q/A's, Chris Mackenzie, who is also CIRO North West & Wales Area Chair, presented David Maidment with an inscribed plaque, bearing his name, which will be mounted on the classroom door where the next generation of Avanti drivers will be trained.



Mersey Tunnels Tour

Tom Cox
North West & Wales Area Council

North West & Wales Area members recently undertook a tour of the Mersey Tunnels on their annual Family Fun Day. The tour commenced in the beautiful Art Deco Georges Dock Building on the Pier Head, and within this building are the Control Room and Ventilation Station for both Tunnels. The Queensway Tunnel was opened in 1934, and the Kingsway Tunnel followed in 1971.

The original Control Room remains largely intact, and we were able to visit this while Alison, one of our Guides, explained the history and functions of the machinery and equipment, still in situ. This Control Room is not active nowadays, as the whole operation (traffic and ventilation) is now controlled by computer from elsewhere within the building, but our party were still able to gauge the scale and historical importance of this facility.

Moving on, we were able to visit the area where the Ventilation Machinery is housed, and our other guide, Billy, explained the workings and importance of this equipment. He enabled us to see it actually in operation and again, the scale and size of the equipment and ventilation towers was quite amazing.

Billy then took us down to the road deck, where it was possible to stand inside the tunnel, observe the traffic at close quarters, and gain a sense of how important good ventilation is in such a busy, confined area. We also visited one of the seven 'Refuges', which have been constructed in the void below the roadway. These are fairly recent additions and are each equipped to hold several hundred people, safely, and reasonably comfortably, if need be, should there be an emergency.

All too soon the Tour was over, and our Party agreed that it had been a most enjoyable visit. Much credit is due to our hosts, Alison and Billy, for their interesting, informative, and occasionally humorous description of what is a monumental example of engineering. They are excellent ambassadors for Mersey Tunnels, and Tom Cox, thanked them for their contribution to an excellent event.



NE Azuma Maintenance Depot, Doncaster

Paul Snowden
North East Area Council

11 CIRO members enjoyed a visit to Doncaster Train Maintenance Centre, located alongside the East Coast Main Line, south of Doncaster station. It is operated by Hitachi as part of their contract to maintain the Class 800 and Class 801 fleets for London North Eastern Railway, and the Class 802 fleet for TransPennine Express.

We were welcomed by our host Steve Turner, Train Maintenance Centre Manager, who, post safety briefing, informed us about how the depot has evolved since building work started in 2014 till its opening in 2017, citing its facilities and function today, together with an overview of his own role as manager.

During our tour of the control room and maintenance building, where we were able to see the extent of the depot's capabilities, which included a whole train lifted off its bogies by a series of synchronised jacks.

Our host was happy to answer the multitude of questions asked, and we were really made to feel welcome. We are most grateful for the hospitality shown to us, and the opportunity to see first-hand how a modern maintenance depot operates.



Wensleydale Railway Family Day

Paul Snowden
North East Area Council

50 CIRO members and their families enjoyed their day out on the Wensleydale Railway on 3rd June.

Meeting at Leeming Bar station for our visit, we had the freedom of the line through our own reserved MkII carriage on the service from Leeming Bar to Leyburn. We could also use a Pacer shuttle to Scruton, hopping on and off to take advantage of the many attractions on both routes.

A visit to the beautifully restored Leeming Bar station was a highlight, complete with its fully furnished station master's house, enhanced by the costumed living history interpreters, who helped us learn about rural railway life in the 1920s.

Scruton Station is an award-winning, restored building set in the early 1900s, where we enjoyed a tour with costumed living history interpreters learning about rural railway life at the turn of the 20th century.

Members enjoyed riding up and down the line taking in the atmosphere, and strolling round Leyburn, with its delightful setting in the Yorkshire Dales, and were treated to a delicious lunch on the train, hauled by a Class 37 diesel locomotive from Leeming Bar to Leyburn.

Members were also free to enjoy a choice of optional visits:

- Tours round Leeming Bar yard and loco maintenance shed;
- A visit to Bedale Gate box.

It was a very interesting day with great things to do for both adults and children. We had some excellent guides from the railway which, along with the good weather, made for a fantastic day enjoyed by all.

An Introduction to Midlands Engine Rail

Andrew Clark
Midlands Area Council

The Midlands Area Council invited members to an engaging presentation by guest speakers, Andrew Clark and Tawhida Yaacoub, Senior Rail Programme Managers at Midlands Connect. Andrew and Tawhida provided an engaging insight on Midlands Engine Rail (MER), which is a £3.5 billion programme of improvements of rail schemes across the Midlands.

The MER portfolio has always been designed to complement and build on HS2, spreading the benefits to the whole of the Midlands, adding east-west links, making new connections into the high-speed network and exploiting the capacity HS2, releases for new passenger and freight services. MER provides a significant opportunity for Midlands Connect, in conjunction with its partners, to create a transport system that is built around the railway. HS2 and MER have been planned in conjunction with each other to establish core national and regional rail connectivity.

Examples of the individual schemes within MER are Midlands Rail Hub, new direct services between Coventry, Leicester and Nottingham, and faster & ultimately more frequent services between Nottingham and Lincoln.

Andy and Tawhida talked through the business case work that has been undertaken to get these schemes into the Rail Network Enhancements Pipeline. This was hosted as a hybrid event and is available on CIROTV.



NE Leeds Station Hidden Areas

The CIRO North-East area began their summer events plan with a visit to the mysterious undercroft of Leeds Railway Station, hidden for years with only a handful of visitors the tunnels beneath the station are like stepping back in time.

The tour was facilitated by Network Rail and began with the attendees being briefed on how to stay safe throughout the evening.

Following on from this our guide, Daz, led us to a doorway out of public sight that led to a narrow spiral staircase which was our descent into the rarely visited undercroft. With passages running off in all directions we made our way to the first point of interest, a hidden car park used by staff working at the Queen's Hotel. The original stonework still had the initials of the builders who laid the foundations of the railway station.

We then made our way through a series of narrow passages that led to large rooms that had laid empty for decades, however some areas were being developed to open new opportunities beneath the existing station.

We were then led to the old subway that customers would use to access platforms prior to the redevelopment and refurbishment of the station between 1999 and 2002, through the Leeds First programme. Many of the CIRO attendees shared stories of their earlier memories using the subway, including the "unbearable" smell that would often fill the subway during summer drifting from the gents' toilets.

At the end of the event the CIRO provided light refreshments at the West Riding opposite the station where attendees could network with the wider group and share experiences from the visit.



CIRO Family Day Great Central Railway

Colin Robey, Midlands Area Council

CIRO members, family and friends arrived at Loughborough Great Central Station where we were welcomed to the Great Central Railway (GCR) by Malcolm Holmes, General Manager, and experienced railwayman, and Tom Ingall, former TV presenter, journalist, and author.

GCR was a main line from Sheffield through Nottingham and Leicester to London Marylebone, being opened to freight in 1898 and subsequently to passengers in 1899. A feature of the line was the use of "island platforms" to enable possible future expansion by adding additional lines outside the existing ones and it was also the first railway to introduce catering. GCR was closed in 1969 because of the "Beeching cuts" and June 2023 became the 50th anniversary of the first heritage train running on the line.

GCR is the only preserved double track railway in the country and provides for an eight-mile journey from Loughborough Central station to the southern terminus at Leicester North.

The four stations on the route start with Loughborough Central, which has been fully restored including the glass roof, emporium and a small museum, offering views of the signal box and engine shed at the north end of the station. The next is Quorn and Woodhouse, which has a NAAFI style refreshment room and the Butler Henderson Café, and nearby, is the Swithland viaduct which carries the line over the Swithland Reservoir. Rothley station follows which has been restored in the Edwardian style with a garden railway, and the line ends at Leicester North, where the steam-hauled service conveys a Griddle Car.

Today, the steam locomotives in service are the 9F number 92214 and the Standard class 5, number 73156, together with class 45 diesel loco, number D123, which meant that both steam and diesel fans were well catered for.

Our introduction was held in the former parcels office, where Tom pointed out the wooden slide next to the stairway down to the platform, where parcels would be conveyed down to the platform from the street level office. He asked us to look out for information on the Great Central Reunification which is the project to put together two surviving halves of the Great Central Railway, creating an eighteen-mile heritage main line, stretching across the East Midlands.

Rachel Heath, CIRO Midlands Area Council Chair, thanked the presenters, and members and their families were issued with "runabout" tickets, enabling them to travel on any trains they wished to visit the stations throughout the day.

The weather was kind, which made for an excellent day out. Our thanks are due particularly to our own Council Member Colin Robey for organising the event and to our hosts at the Great Central Railway.

