

**PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
FOR RAILWAY OPERATORS**

- Have you got experience of operating the railway?
- Do you want professional recognition, development and qualifications?
- The Institution of Railway Operators has been established to provide a professional structure and qualifications for people with knowledge and experience of operating the railway, at all levels.
- A new information pack is now available for anyone interested in finding out more about the Institution and its education programme. Please email, write, phone or fax to Claire Wickes at the above address if you would like a pack for yourself or colleagues.

MEMBERS' NEWS

Corporate Membership

The following employers operate a Corporate Membership scheme, by paying a one-off annual fee which covers all their employees' Affiliate or Associate membership subscriptions. (Those with full Membership will continue to pay their subscription personally, irrespective of whether they can subsequently claim it back from their employer through expenses). We are delighted to welcome Wales and Borders as the newest Corporate Member.

- Network Rail
- London Underground Ltd
- Wales and Borders
- Freightliner
- Virgin Trains
- First North Western

- First Great Eastern
- First Great Western
- Go-Ahead Group
- Transport for London
- Docklands Light Railway
- Thames Trains
- South Central
- Thameslink
- Stagecoach Rail
- London Lines
- GB Railways
- Sheffield Supertram
- WAGN
- Anglia Railways
- Island Line
- Silverlink Trains
- Hull Trains
- South West Trains
- c2c
- GB Railfreight
- EWS Railway
- Northern Ireland Railways
- Connex
- Iamród Éireann
- Corus Rail Consultancy
- ScotRail
- Central Trains

DIARY OF EVENTS

NORTH WEST AREA

WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY: Details obtainable from Clive Evans (contact details below)
WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH: North West Annual General Meeting with talk by Tom Birch on the Institution's Education Programme. For details please contact: Clive Evans on 01270 629009 or email us at: Northwest@railwayoperators.org

MIDLANDS AREA

MONDAY 26 JANUARY: Presentation by AEA Technology (Derby)

For information on all Midlands Area events, please contact Julia Stanyard on 0121 345 3099 or email us at Midlands@railwayoperators.org

SOUTH EAST AREA

MONDAY 26 JANUARY: Tom Winsor, The Rail Regulator
WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY: Kim Howells MP, Minister for Transport (Sponsored by Porterbrook)
TUESDAY 30 MARCH: Tim O'Toole, Managing Director, London Underground.

All meetings take place at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, Waterloo. Doors open at 18:00 and the talks commence at 18:30.

For details – or to contact the South East area on any subject – please email to: Southeast@railwayoperators.org

NORTH EAST AREA

TUESDAY 6 JANUARY: Ernie Godward of Scott-Wilson on Developments in High Speed Railways. The Studio, York Station.
TUESDAY 2 MARCH: Scott Handley of Wensleydale Railway on the operational aspects of the re-opening. The Studio, York Station.

North East Area meetings normally take place at 1730 for 1800, at York, and full details will be published in advance each month in this column.

For further news on the IRO in the North East email us at Northeast@railwayoperators.org

SCOTTISH AREA

TUESDAY 13 JANUARY: Chris Ballance MSP, Green transport spokesman, on 'Blunting the impact of transport on the environment.'

We are guests of the ILT at the above and certain other ILT meetings on Tuesdays at 1730 in Edinburgh City Chambers. For purposes of catering, please advise your attendance to the IoRo Scottish Organiser five days in advance.

For information on all Scottish events and matters, please contact Scottish@railwayoperators.org or phone Douglas Kerr on 0141 335 5430

SOUTH WEST AREA

We have decided to hold an event on the second Tuesday of each month. Some will be talks, to be given in Swindon, Bristol, Cardiff and Exeter, to enable as many members as possible to attend. There will also be a programme of visits, to include Westinghouse at Chippenham, Mendip Rail at Merehead, near Frome, Sudbrook, which controls the pumping and emergency operations for the Severn Tunnel, and Bus logistics in Plymouth.

We intend to have a social event at one of the heritage railways in the West of England, between Christmas and new year, as we did in 2002. Details will be sent as soon as possible.

Derek Holmes, Network Rail's Director of Operations, has recently become our Board mentor, and we look forward to working with him to develop the area's activities and effectiveness.

For information on all South West Area events, please contact Lawrie Hall on mobile 07771 827797 (internal 07 79307), or Tim Maddocks on 01392 476237 (internal 076 6237) or email us at Southwest@railwayoperators.org

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Looking forward

A new year and anniversary message from Chris Green, **Chief Executive, Virgin Trains**

It is almost three years ago that this Institution, founded especially for those of us who actually run the railways, was launched. In that relatively short period, much has been achieved – membership has passed the 1,000 mark, active branches have been set up in the main centres on the network round the country, and the ground work has been laid for a series of professional qualifications and their associated training programmes. So where do we go next, what are the important challenges for the professional railway operator?

Privatisation of the industry separated train planning and day-to-day control from the actual working of trains, stations and depots. This division has created the biggest challenge for the professional operator – finding the ways and means of making every company involved work together more effectively and safely, as well as efficiently, is the golden

opportunity for each one of us. We are already having some success in this – taking period eight performance results as an example, total delay has been reduced by well over 50 per cent when compared with last year, and the amount of lost time due to operating causes is now reduced to less than half of the total. (Three-quarters of that is due to congestion etc!)

As promising as these figures are, there is still a tremendous amount more to be done. To make any further significant improvement we all have to become, and then remain, much more professional in everything that we do. In short, we have to perform at 100 per cent all day and every day, and then actually raise the standard against which the 100 per cent is measured on a regular basis. This is the continuous professional development (CPD) process in which this Institution has such a major role to play in running the training and examination/ assessment programmes. Participating in CPD is the classic

‘win, win’ in that we all become better railway men and women while, simultaneously, supporting our Institution.

Other challenges and, hence, opportunities, include operators playing a much greater role in the specification, staging and then the delivery of projects. No matter how good the technical content of a scheme, it is a failure or, at best, a sub-optimal result if it does not improve the operability of the railway, and if it is not implemented in a way that minimises the disruption to any affected services. Operators and companies who employ them must ensure that they are involved throughout the life cycle of all projects so as to achieve those two objectives.

A very immediate challenge is the forthcoming re-organisation of Network Rail. The transition from the old to the new will be a very testing time, and it is going to stretch our professionalism in many ways – some quite readily foreseeable and others that are not so easily identified. We have all

got to work very closely together to make this a ‘non-event’ as far as the safe and punctual delivery of the daily service is concerned.

Another important task facing us is the need to continue to improve our safety performance, but in more economic and less disruptive ways than is often now the case. In a similar vein, while we must keep on improving our compliance levels, we should always be questioning what is being done and how it is being done – there usually are better ways of doing things and we have to identify these now.

As this Institution of ours grows both in strength and stature over the next year, there are many openings for us all to demonstrate just how professional the ‘craft’ of railway operator is. In particular, each one of us has the both the opportunity as well as the responsibility to play our own part in our daily work. I wish you every success in meeting the challenges of our profession, and hope that you will find the time to support this, our Institution.

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