



The Institution of
Railway Operators

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Reflecting on our successes



IRO Chairman Chris Leah (left) with Glasgow Caledonian University Principal Ian Johnston at Glasgow's Queen Street station.

IRO chairman Chris Leah looks back on six years of the institute

At this time of the year, it's the custom to reflect on the past as well as to consider the promise the New Year may hold.

It certainly seems nothing like six years since the founding of the institution during which, I am pleased to report, we have gone from strength to strength.

With more than 1,300 individual members and a growing list of corporate members, together with a strong balance sheet, we are beginning to gain the respect and credibility that one would naturally associate with a professional institution. But, if we are to continue that success and further improve our position, we must carry on with the hard work.

I list below just some of the highlights of a very busy year:

- The success of our degree and diploma modules with Glasgow Caledonian University accreditation. We are now embarking on the establishment of a foundation course, which will meet NVQ levels and fill a recognised gap in our educational portfolio. As might

be expected with such an ambitious programme there are some interface issues with the university. But with the help of such people as Tony Cousins, John Self and Jim Summers we are sorting them out. The university has proved to be very progressive and forward-looking;

- After quite a long gestation period, the Young Professionals Group has been launched and is regularly meeting successfully under the careful eye of the South East Area Council. It is providing an excellent focus for sharing operational experience;
- The launch of master classes at our area meetings has been a valuable link between the educational modules and the presentations and discussions at area level;
- The discussions with the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) for a scheme of reciprocal membership is progressing well and currently Glasgow Caledonian University is in discussion with CILT regarding the quality assurance process;
- As an institution, we are now working more closely with our corporate members, such as First Group, who are using our educational modules as part of their management training syllabus;
- The institution is now being

acknowledged by third parties as a creditable and reputable voice to add to their consultation list – such as the invitation to join two of the seminars organised by Chris Grayling MP (shadow secretary of state for transport) to seek views to input into rail policy;

- The promise of the establishment of an Irish Area covering both Eire and Northern Ireland with meetings being held in both Dublin and Belfast is something to really look forward to;
- A greater involvement of the board in area meetings – and indeed board meetings being held out of London in the areas themselves – such as Swindon and Doncaster;
- Another successful annual lunch with Vernon Barker as our guest, and an attendance in excess of 100;
- The opportunity to revisit our grading policy and criteria coupled with introducing a ‘fast track’ approach to membership applications;
- The numerous area visits and day events that have added both an educational and social focus to our institution;
- A continuing close link with other professional institutions; and
- The winning of the Rail Innovation Award for training and development.

Not wishing to rest on its laurels, the institution has resolved to take time out in 2007 to revisit its constitution and its purpose to review and change as necessary.

It will take into account any alteration in outside influences, the evolving railway environment, the needs of its sponsors and members and lessons learned since its launch.

The institution must always continue to address the issue of relevance and value to the industry.

But the institution is nothing without its members. A big thank you to you all for your

DIARY OF EVENTS

SCOTTISH AND IRISH AREA

Thursday 25 January: Andy Barr will come to Glasgow to speak to the Scottish section of the IRO. Barr is the network co-ordination manager for London Underground and will speak about how the LUL dealt with the events of 7 July 2005. He will speak about the day and how the operation of the tube was returned to normal.

Barr will also share the lessons LUL learned from their experiences. This will be an excellent opportunity for railway operators to learn from. The meeting will be in the Network Rail boardroom, Buchanan House, Glasgow and will start at 17.30. Please email: Jim Gillies@networkrail.co.uk or write to him at Network Rail, Buchanan House, 58 Port Dundas Road, Glasgow G4 0LQ.

MIDLANDS AREA

Monday 29 January: Safety on the Railways – a Tocs’ perspective in Birmingham at 17:45

Monday 26 February: Masterclass event – Planning and Delivering the Timetable

on the Derby to Birmingham Corridor in Derby at 17:45. To contact the Midlands Area, please contact Julia Stanyard on 0121 345 5030 or email: julia.stanyard@networkrail.co.uk

NORTH EAST AREA

North East Area meetings normally take place at 17:30 for 18:00, in York. For further news on the IRO in the north east, email: northeast@railwayoperators.org

NORTH WEST AREA

Wednesday 24 January: Richard Donaldson, senior route planner for Network Rail, will give a presentation on the Route Utilisation Strategy for north-west England. A buffet will be provided. The talk takes place at 18:00 at Rail House Manchester. Those wishing to attend please contact Clive Evans, northwest@railwayoperators.org Please confirm attendance to Clive before attending.

SOUTH EAST AREA

Monday 22 January: Chris Grayling MP, shadow secretary of state for transport, will be giving a talk. This meeting is being sponsored by Metronet Rail.

All South East Area meetings take place at the Union Jack Club, Sandell Street, near Waterloo Station. Doors open at 18:00 for 18:30 start.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

The Young Professionals will be attending Chris Grayling’s talk in January (see South East Area listing).

Our next visit will be in February TBA. As of 2007, start times for meetings will be changed from 16:30 to 17:00.

INFORMAL NETWORKING

Thursday 11 January: Following the success of the first few informal networking occasions, informal networking will now be held at the fixed venue of the Euston Flyer between Kings Cross and Euston. Please feel free to join us from 17:30 onwards. The next one will be on 1 February.

We would welcome any feedback, comments or enquiries, so please feel free to get in touch with us at info@iroyoungprofessionals.org.uk or check our website at www.iroyoungprofessionals.org.uk

enthusiasm and commitment.

I will end on a note of both optimism and caution. The institution is now well planted and has strong roots. We have a product, in our educational modules, of which the industry and we should feel proud.

I urge our corporate members to make use of this to the full and embed it in their training and development programmes.

We will continue in 2007 the drive forward to bring in the foundation course, to increase our membership and make the institution one to be proud of.

I wish you all a happy and prosperous New Year.

MEMBERS’ NEWS

The following employers operate a corporate membership scheme, by paying a one-off annual fee that covers all their employees’ affiliate or associate membership subscriptions:

Network Rail ● Eurostar UK Ltd ● First ScotRail ● First Great Western ● One ● Railnews ● Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) ● EWS Railway ● Northern Ireland Railways ● Central Trains ● Virgin West Coast ● Virgin Cross Country ● First Transpennine Express ● Southern ● Corus Rail Consultancy ● London Underground Ltd ● Docklands Light Railway ● Transport for London ● Stagecoach Rail ● South West Trains ● Sheffield Supertram ● Arriva Trains Wales ● Southeastern Railway ● Island Line ● London Lines ● Silverlink Trains ● c2c Rail ● Gatwick Express ● RWA Rail ● Midland Mainline.

Those with full membership will continue to pay their subscription personally, irrespective of whether they can subsequently claim it back. Please note that, as the IRO’s subscriptions are tax-deductible, a receipt will be issued for all payments – whether by cheque, standing order or internet payment.

If your company would like to explore the benefits of corporate membership of the institution, please contact us. We welcome applications from all industry companies, suppliers and associations – please contact Chris Daughton on 01444 248931 or admin@railwayoperators.org