

## The Annual Lunch in pictures



All photos: Lesley Chalmers

Golden Whistle Awards – see page 2. Mathew Lee triumphs – see page 4.

# Golden Whistle Awards 2012

'Get involved. Be the person who took the decision to improve something in your area.' This was the advice that Dick Fearn, Chief Executive of Irish Rail, had for operators developing their careers when he gave the keynote speech at this year's Golden Whistle Awards. Follow this advice and one day you could collect a Golden Whistle.

Now in their third year and held in conjunction with Modern Railways magazine's Fourth Friday Club the awards recognise excellence in railway operations and congratulate those who have done an excellent job.

Before the awards were presented, Mr Fearn delivered a speech to the 275 attendees that was well balanced between seriousness and humour. He emphasised the importance of good operations to delivering a good service. He gave the example of how in 2009 a train driver and a signaller acted calmly and swiftly to prevent anyone from being injured when Malahide Viaduct to the north of Dublin collapsed, before humorously explaining the importance of having local understanding of your customers' needs.



*The Golden Whistle Awards are a joint event between the IRO and Modern Railways magazine's Fourth Friday Club.*

The first awards to be presented were those for Operational Performance over the past year. London Overground showed their calibre by taking both the awards for right time arrivals: the Golden Whistle for best performance and the Silver Whistle for the most improved performance.

Colas demonstrated the work they have been doing to improve their performance by picking up the Silver Whistles for most improved Freight Performance Measure (FPM) and most improved operator (TOC or FOC) for self-caused delay minutes (which were normalised against mileage to ensure fairness).



**Jonathan Leithead**  
South East Area Council

*Guests enjoyed a three-course meal before the awards were presented.*



*The Golden and Silver Whistles ready to be handed out.*

Freightliner Intermodal scooped the Golden Whistle for best FPM, while CrossCountry received the Golden Whistle for the operator with the fewest self-caused delay minutes.

There were performance awards for Network Rail based on the number of delay minutes the company had caused to operators (normalised against total route mileage). The Golden Whistle for the best performance went to Kent Route, with East Midlands Route receiving the Silver Whistle for the most improved performance.

Safety is paramount to the industry and must underline everything we do so there were awards for TOCs with good safety records, as determined by RSSB. The Golden Whistle for Operational Safety – Train Driving was presented to East Coast before First Capital Connect were awarded the Golden Whistle for Operational Safety – Passenger Management.

Next there were awards for TOCs who had done well against their sector average in the managing disruption part of the National Passenger Survey. London Overground picked up their third award of the day with the Silver Whistle for the TOC that had most improved in the past year while Virgin Trains collected the Golden Whistle for being the best at managing disruption.

There was again a Golden Whistle for the Outstanding Individual Operator of the past year. After all the nominations were reduced to a shortlist of four people, the award went to Darren Ward, Head of Operations Strategy & Innovation at East Midlands Trains. Darren has led a number of initiatives for EMT including a lot of work on level crossing safety that led to Network Rail changing their national policy and

ORR inviting him to personally train a number of their inspectors on this subject. He was nominated by Mark Steward, EMT's Safety & Operations Director, who said, 'Darren's appetite for thoroughness and completion of the task and through detailed staff engagement gets buy in at all levels. Darren is the 'glue' that binds us and the 'engine' that drives these initiatives from concept to completion.'

Finally there was a special Golden Whistle for Croydon Tramlink. The riots last summer heavily affected their network but staff rallied round to protect the trams from the rioters and restore the network quickly after the disruption. One driver even drove some of her passengers home in her car after they had become stranded before going back to help other members of staff get home. For these reasons, they were deemed worthy of special recognition.

Once again this was a very successful ceremony that highlighted some of the hard work performed by UK operators. Thanks go to Chris Howard and Glen Merryman of the South East Area Council for their part in organising the awards.



*Dick Fearn, Chief Executive of Irish Rail*

# Young Railway Professionals' Black Tie Dinner 2012

The Young Railway Professionals has grown rapidly from its foundation in 2009 to a network of more than 1,300 people.

February 2 saw the third Annual Black Tie Dinner for the Young Railway Professionals with 370 guests at the illustrious Grand Connaught Rooms, Covent Garden.

Keynote speaker Mark Hopwood, Managing Director of First Great Western, spoke to the guests about the importance of investing in young people's futures in rail, giving them an opportunity to show their true potential and he shared his own journey throughout his railway career so far.

Sponsorship was provided by Mott MacDonald, Bombardier, The Institution of Engineering and Technology and the National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering.

Eighteen different organisations were represented through corporate tables and many more on an individual basis, bringing together professionals from a diverse range of occupations across the industry.

Supported by generous donations of raffle prizes, the event also raised much needed funds for the organisation's partner charity, Railway Children. In total the event raised £2,117 for Railway Children.

Coming up in 2012, the Young Railway Professionals also hope to build on their Railway Ambassador programme, which seeks to develop links with schools, colleges and universities to promote the railways as a great career choice.

The Young Railway Professionals will continue to grow in 2012 and to fulfill its objectives, which are to promote railway institution and other industry events, to inspire young people within the railways

and those who seek a career in rail and to bring together professionals from across the industry to make lasting connections for the future.

For more information about the Young Railway Professionals readers can go to [www.youngrailwayprofessionals.org](http://www.youngrailwayprofessionals.org), follow @youngrailpro on twitter, and find us on LinkedIn or Facebook.



**Louise Gale**  
IRO Young  
Operators



*YRP dinner view of the Great Hall at the illustrious Grand Connaught Rooms as seen from the balcony.*

## Robin Gisby addresses IRO Young Operators

IRO Young Operators was launched on 8 May with an inaugural address from Robin Gisby, entitled 'Network Rail's role in the future of UK Rail.'

The IRO has become one of the most active and dynamic railway institutions over the last few years, especially with the growth of our younger members. In some areas almost 30% of our membership is under 35.

In offering feedback last summer Younger Members highlighted an opportunity for us to do more to support their career within railway operations.

To complement the work of the Young Railway Professionals (YRP), who offer networking and communication for young people across the wider rail industry, a further series of events and activities specific to operations will be

provided by IRO Young Operators to assist their career development.

IRO Young Operators are planning two events per year where members will be able to attend. It will not only offer a prime networking opportunity but also help develop their industry knowledge by having a high-profile speaker to talk about a key subject of the day.

We are going into a new chapter of railway life where relationships and collaboration will be the critical catalyst to operating our railway more efficiently.

IRO Young Operators will help do that by generating opportunities to learn and build relationships with others in our industry. Do take this opportunity to your advantage!

Robin Gisby's inaugural address 'Network Rail's role in the future of UK

Rail' was held at a new venue, the Lansdowne Club Mayfair, London W1J 5JD

The House of Lords will be the setting for the second Young Operators event when Lord Berkeley hosts us on 24 October. This will take the form of a presentation and open-floor debate on Rail Freight and the work of parliament in supporting freight operators. Booking for this event opened 8 May. Booking will be essential owing to the security of the venue.

To help the IRO Young Operators meet the needs of our younger members we are looking for more people to be involved in the running of it. If you are interested in helping out please contact Louise Gale on [youngoperators@railwayoperators.org](mailto:youngoperators@railwayoperators.org).



**Louise Gale**  
IRO Young  
Operators

# Matthew Lee triumphs

This year's winner of the Young Professional of the Year at the 2011 Rail Business Awards, sponsored by the IRO, is Matthew Lee of First Great Western. He was presented with the award at the London Hilton on Park Lane in February.

The purpose of the Young Professional award is to celebrate the most outstanding young manager working within the contemporary railway industry in any department. All entries for this award had to be put forward by employers, so even to be nominated was a real pat on the back for all the nominees from across the country.

Matthew was chosen as the winner from a long list of contenders because he combines significant achievement and solid competence with infectious enthusiasm and team spirit.

Until recently Matthew was working as Station Manager at Oxford and is now Train Service Delivery Manager for FGW at Swindon, working in Western House near the railway station. As

well as holding down these demanding day jobs, Matthew enrolled on the IRO's Degree Course in 2009 and will graduate this summer.

Mark Hopwood, Managing Director of First Great Western said "Matt has made a very positive impression on our business. He has enormous enthusiasm and capability and did a very good job overseeing preparations at Reading for Christmas 2010. I am impressed that he also takes time to involve himself in industry activities such as the Institution of Railway Operators. I am sure Matt Lee will be a name we hear more about in the rail industry in future."

IRO Chief Executive Fiona Tordoff, who presented the award said "Matthew's nomination paper from FGW was outstanding and they are extremely lucky to have such a fantastic young leader working for them. We salute his achievements so far and will watch his developing career with great interest."

Matthew Lee said "I was honoured to be short-listed for the award and be associated

with the other nominees. When my name was called out I was over the moon. It's been a really busy year, coming off the back of the Reading project, running Oxford for a year and finishing my IRO degree. I am really pleased that the hard work of me and my team has been recognised. I'm looking forward to what the next year will bring."



# Matthew Lee scoops prize for bicycle transport study

Congratulations to Matthew Lee from First Great Western, who has won a prize donated by Serco for the best degree project from recently completed work-based projects for students studying from cohort 7 on the IRO academic programme.

Matthew's report was selected from 16 entries as the best in class for his investigation into the operational performance implications of First Great Western's bicycle provision.

The report critically analysed the operational

and performance impacts of bicycle conveyance on First Great Western's (FGW) train service plan and evaluated FGW's bicycle provision strategy at stations and onboard trains.

The report identified issues and trends that need to be considered and addressed going forward, as well as setting out a number of recommendations regarding a proposed performance improvement strategy, in respect of cycle management across FGW.

As part of the process the report included analysis of:

- Bicycle Provision – Review of industry practice from the UK and further afield.
- Industry experts and focus groups' outputs.
- FGW performance implications of bicycle conveyance between:
  - 2008–2009
  - 2009–2010
  - 2010–2011

Matthew currently works as a Control Centre Manager for First Great Western at Swindon and has responsibility for train service delivery across the network. He has recently taken up this position; whilst completing his IRO degree and dissertation he was Station Manager at Oxford and Reading.

Matthew said: "I was over the moon at winning the prize and really pleased that the performance issues around bicycle conveyance have been identified. Off the back of my dissertation several initiatives are being implemented locally at both Oxford and Reading stations through the Right Time Railway working groups, which will all make performance improvements. The results of these will be reviewed and shared across the FGW network."

Andrew Page, HR Director at Serco, commented: "This was a keenly fought competition with students covering a wide range of subjects and topics and displaying good insight and thought for their chosen areas.

"The winning entry from Matthew Lee, reviewing the cycle provision by First Great Western, showed a high level of analysis and a good use of mixed research techniques including focus groups, ending with some solid conclusions for the business he was working with.

"Serco is delighted to have had the opportunity to sponsor this event and Jeroen Weimar (MD Transport) and myself would like to wish all the students who entered good luck for their future careers in the industry."

I was over the moon at winning the prize and pleased the performance issues have been identified.  
Matthew Lee

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## British Transport Police talk at IRO annual lunch

The lunch was held at the Hallmark hotel in Derby on 19th April. Nearly 200 people were present at the function, which proved to be a very enjoyable event for all attending.

Alan Pacey, Assistant Chief Constable (Territorial Policing and Crime) for British Transport Police, was a great guest speaker. He gave a most informative talk on the current challenges facing the British Transport Police.

Jo Kaye, who is to succeed David Franks as the Chairman of the IRO, gave a talk about the recent developments in the IRO products and services and hinted that next year's lunch would be organised on a different format with a venue to be determined in London.

For the first time a presentation was made to one of the IRO's own students who succeeded in winning the Serco best work based project prize. This was awarded to Matthew Lee (who can also be seen in this issue receiving the Young Professional of the Year Award at the 2011 Rail Business Awards). This was presented by Tricia Meade on behalf of Andrew Page from Serco.

On the day of the lunch there was a Railway Benefit Fund collection which raised £943.40.



See the annual lunch in pictures on the front cover.

# News from Centre

South Africa launch went well on March 13th 2012. Tricia Meade visited locations across South Africa addressing groups of new learners on the customised programme. 152 new members are now part of the IRO.

Tricia has been back since to talk to the Transport Freight Rail to the School of Rail in Johannesburg to address the Rail Cadets.

The Area Heads gathered in Manchester on April 16th 2012 at Malmaison. They met up late afternoon and evening with the IRO central team and considered new products and services and gave advice about how they would like the IRO Board and the Central team to work with them.

Much work has been going into the new website – to launch in Autumn 2012. In it members will find new resources such as event booking, maps and a superb way to keep your professional learning plans and records safe.

As a result of member feedback a special membership criteria group has been meeting with a view to simplifying the upgrading process. We're nearly there with that so thanks to you all who have contributed your feedback and in particular to the stalwarts of the group who have put a lot of work in behind the scenes.

POD, the new Professional Operators Development product is also getting ready for launch. A prototype version was handed out to the 85 Track & Train graduates in April 2012. Since then more input has been solicited from light rail, freight and metro systems. Available only to members, the finished result will be worth joining for in its own right as it contains useful links to learning resources.

New course brochure and all new pricing was released a few weeks ago. The new price on Certificate is much reduced – £3,000 inclusive of VAT and is attracting lots of interest.

A tutor workshop was held in April 2012 and tried out the new facilities at the Stafford offices. The training room is suitable for small numbers.

# IRO enrolment for 2012/13 – makes qualifications affordable

Enrolment is now open for the 2012/13 academic programme, offered by the IRO in partnership with Glasgow Caledonian University. The IRO's Professional Development Programme (PDP) provides nationally recognised qualifications from Certificate through to Degree level.

Qualifications are offered as a distance learning programme so all you need is a computer and internet access. This enables you to plan your study time around your working day and home life, with 10 hours of study per week.

You'll have the opportunity to meet with your fellow students and tutors at tutorial days, held throughout the UK on Saturdays. Work is continuously assessed based on worksheets, essay answers to set questions and a work-based project and presentation.

The Certificate is aimed at anyone who went straight to work after school, and those new to the rail industry. We have clarified the entry requirements so that people can be more confident about getting on the course by writing up their work experience.



Sharon Motherwell, who works for First ScotRail as a Station Grade B, did just that. "I wasn't sure I could do it but it only took me a couple of hours to complete my write up. It was

the best couple of hours I've spent when you consider where it got me," Sharon said.

For a limited time the course fee is £3,000 (inclusive of VAT at 20%). Fiona Tordoff, CEO, said: "We are committed to increasing access to learning to railway people at all stages of their career. We do not want price to be a barrier to anyone. The Certificate is a great way to get back to learning and the IRO staff and tutors offer support throughout."

The Diploma is aimed at anyone who has a couple of A-levels or equivalent. Work experience can be taken into account too. The Degree is aimed at anyone who has stayed in education up to HND or Diploma level or equivalent.

The cost of the IRO distance learning degree is £7,080 (inclusive of VAT at 20%) which is significantly less than the Open University charge.

The Institution is now widely recognised as the organisation of choice for those seeking to develop their career within the rail sector. Membership of the IRO opens the door to a wealth of professional expertise, networking opportunities and access to a programme of courses tailored specifically to the needs of the industry.

Stewart Prentice, Driver, First Capital Connect, said: "I have worked through all the levels from Certificate to Degree. It's been rewarding, affordable and has stood me in good stead for promotion."

If you would like to know more, register your interest at [www.railwayoperators.co.uk/register](http://www.railwayoperators.co.uk/register) or call 03333 440553.



## Academic programme reaches South Africa



March 5th saw the launch of the IRO academic programme in South Africa. The programme is a collaboration between the IRO, Glasgow Caledonian University, Transnet Freight Rail and the University of Johannesburg.

152 employees of TFR have commenced the programme. Induction sessions followed by a day of tutorials took place at three TFR training campuses: Esselenpark which houses the School of Rail, Kimberley and Ermelo.

Welcoming students and guests at Esselenpark, Johannes Makhusha, Head of School of Rail said "It is a great day

which is the realisation of a dream after many years of planning."

The School of Rail trains 12,000 employees per year but was unable to offer academic qualifications, hence why a partnership was sought. Training covers six disciplines:

- Functional rail operations training
- Infrastructure and technical training
- Integrated Technology
- Safety
- Leadership
- Generic business skills

The Rail Operations Management Programme will be part of the functional rail operations training and will be offered to all levels and disciplines of staff.

The overall aim for TFR is to provide world-class learning solutions for their employees, which will assist them in growing and transforming their business.

TFR are just about to embark on an initiative involving local schools, providing university bursaries for children interested in working in the rail industry.

Other long term initiatives in the pipeline include a vision for a TFR rail corporate university.

The IRO UK academic programme has been customised by rail professionals from the University of Johannesburg for relevancy to the rail freight operations within South Africa.

All TFR learners have been given international membership to the IRO with the opportunity to have a Study Buddy from the UK.

Jubulane Gideon Mathebula, operations manager undertaking the degree, has signed up for the course to gain a wider knowledge and experience to bring back to TFR and to his team to enable a greater awareness of railway principles and ultimately to assist the business to grow.



# Members hear presentation on Japanese railways operations



Mike Hogg from the IRO Board gave an excellent presentation to the Scottish Area Group at Buchanan House on 22 February on the Japan Central Railway. Mike explained that five years ago when he was working for FirstGroup he had been fortunate to be part of a small group from TOCs who visited Japan

Inevitably the railway culture in Japan reflected the national culture...

for two weeks of intensive experience covering a broad range of railway activities. The host for Mike's visit had been the Japan Central Railway.

Japanese railways were privatised in 1987 and six geographically based railways emerged, vertically integrated, of which the Japan Central Railway was one. Mike explained that it was a huge organisation with operating revenues of more than £7bn. Whilst general rail activity – and, interestingly, subsidiary activity such as hotels – brought in significant revenue, the bulk of the railway's revenue came from the well-known Shinkansen high speed route.

Mike said that safety culture and arrangements were not dissimilar to those in Europe. In 46 years of Shinkansen operation there had been no train accident-related passenger injuries or fatalities. There was no separate concept of "performance management"

– good train service performance was "taken as read". Control, signalling centre and Electric Control Room activities were co-located. There were virtually no track infrastructure failures and there was a remarkably good miles per casualty record for the rolling stock.

Inevitably the railway culture in Japan reflected the national culture and staff appeared to be very self-disciplined and well turned out. Though numbers of women employed had been low (but were now increasing) staffing was generally high – 32 staff for example met each Shinkansen arrival. Drivers wore white gloves and used the "point and say" technique to maintain concentration. This culture and the staff numbers were reflected in the good performance of the network. Mike showed how immaculate cleanliness applied not only to the public areas but also to the track itself.

# Branch annual lecture

Sunshine in May resulted in a busy weekend for Translink NI Railways. The sun continued to shine on the Monday morning when IRO members gathered to attend the Irish Branch Annual Lecture in Belfast. Mr John Doyle, General Manager of the Victoria Line, London Underground and a highly sought-after speaker presented his highly acclaimed talk on "Managing Transportation Preparation for the Olympics and Paralympics 2012."

The audience, which included IRO members from both North and South of Ireland, listened as John began by outlining his subject. John presented an overview of the London Underground before going on to highlight the impact that both the Olympic and indeed the Paralympic Games would have on the public transport provisions in London.

John's talk proved to be informative, thoroughly interesting and thought provoking. In a light-hearted approach John captivated his audience and was willing to accommodate questions from the floor as and when they arose. Details and statistics were delivered on new trains procured, signalling upgrades and station improvements. With the Olympics to the forefront further information was



Details and statistics were delivered on new trains procured, signalling upgrades and station improvements.



relayed regarding the redeployment of staff and their change of roles as London welcomes the rest of the world.

Afterwards the IRO Chief Executive, Fiona Tordoff, a bubbly and infectious personality, brought proceedings to a close with an enthusiastic update on how the Institute has grown and how it can

help members through the numerous academic routes on offer.

The Area Chair, Hilton Parr, thanked all for the encouraging turnout and wished John and London Underground well with the implementation of their comprehensive plans for the Games. The world will be watching!

# Aboard Network Rail's new measurement train

Monday 13th February 2012 saw the North East Area's trip aboard Network Rail's New Measurement Train (NMT). Members duly assembled at 09.45 hours outside WH Smith in York Station Concourse for a 10.14am departure, but unfortunately due to signalling problems in the Benton/Heaton area the NMT was delayed. In light of this the group adjourned for refreshments!

Meanwhile there was a close liaison between our Chairman, Jason Wade, the NMT On-Train Manager, John Gorman, and fellow Council member, Phil Thickett. The NMT finally departed Newcastle at around noon and arrived at York's Platform 9 at around 13.03 hours. Whence we were duly welcomed on board the NMT by John Gorman, who quickly escorted the group to the NMT's boardroom. Here he then gave the group members a safety briefing and went on to furnish us with refreshments!

John then went on to take us through a power point look at the history of the NMT (HST). We split up into two groups of five and he gave each group a whistle-stop tour of every aspect of the NMT's function including technical data. We also were introduced to the



**Phil Thickett**  
**FIRO**

*NE area New Measurement train at Kings Cross.*



Photo: Alan Oliver

On Board Team who were pleased to explain and answer any questions put to them by the group members, by the time the second group had deliberated we were on the approach to New Southgate and fastly approaching our destination of Kings Cross. On arrival we thanked John and his team for a really informative look at the NMT's function.

The train is a converted Intercity 125 full of advanced detection equipment, lasers and digital video cameras collecting data on the condition of track

down to every sleeper and track clip, rail wear, track geometry and overhead line equipment including the thickness of the contact wire from speeds of 15MPH to 125MPH. The data is sent to Network Rail Track Engineers at Derby for analysis so that any potential problems can be dealt with quickly and effectively.

A souvenir brochure was also given to each member present. Arrival at Kings Cross was two hours late at 14.52 hours thus bringing to a close a truly memorable day.

# Learning the Network Rail Operating Strategy



**Emrys**  
**Warriner**

On Wednesday 15 February, 15 members of the North East area heard a talk about the Network Rail Operating Strategy from Steven Knight.

Steven started the talk by giving a brief history of his career.

He began with a few highlights, amusing the audience by showing off an arrangement of 'train incident' photographs...

## Network Operations Strategy

The talk began by exploring how we can operate and control the rail network differently to give greater business benefit.

To set the scene a demonstration was given showing the signal box closures since 1960s. Highlights include a steady decline between 1960 and 1994 with a relatively flat reduction programme between 1994 and 2009.

Steven showed that the Network Operations Strategy of signal box reduction to 14 Rail Operating Centres (ROCs) was re-igniting the signal box reductions undertaken by British Railways – had Railtrack/Network Rail forgotten how?

The 14 ROCs are planned to be located Derby, Gillingham, Cardiff, Salfley, Edinburgh, Ashford, Didcot, Glasgow, Romford, Three Bridges, York, Manchester, Rugby and Basingstoke – the biggest one of course being located in the North East area at York.

## Traffic Management and Future Train Control

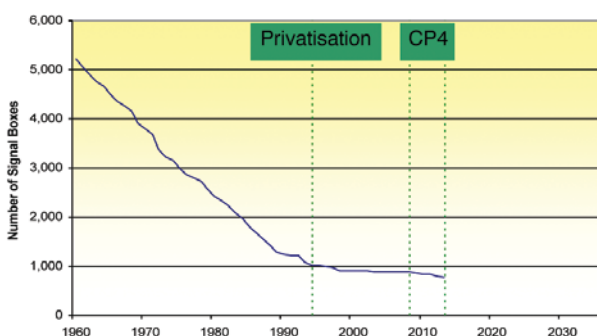
The aim of the Traffic Management System is to use proven software and processes from across the world, which Network Rail will model and prototype in new Rail Operating Centre locations

with our industry colleagues and supplier partners, the aims being:

- Highly automated
- Includes real-time planning/prediction and resolution of conflicts
- Utilises reconfigurable control areas to handle disruption
- Optimises the use of the existing infrastructure and enable more capacity without impacting performance
- Includes a single operational information system, providing real-time information to passenger and freight customers particularly during times of disruption.

The prototype is planned to be completed by December 2012

The event was closed with a number of challenging questions, all expertly and honestly answered by the guest speaker. Attendees gained an insight into the developments of the Network Rail Operating strategy, and a detailed description was given about the scope, volumes and potential savings from the investments.





# Visit to track renewals possession



The North East area visit was to a track renewals possession at Dore on 21st April. Some 220 Yards of track was being renewed over 29 hours. The group signed in, were fully briefed, issued with permits and kitted out in a complete set of personal protective equipment before making our way to the worksite.

It was an excellent site to view as the entire possession could be overseen from a road bridge where our guides Andy and Dave briefed us on what work was being carried out.

We then made our way down onto the track for a walk through the site in

order to get a 'real feel' of what was being carried out. The old track and track bed had already been excavated and they were in the process of tipping fresh ballast from a ballast train onto a weed membrane which had been laid on a thin layer of sand.

Unfortunately for this site, the "six foot" was more like 20 foot so the ballast couldn't be tipped directly onto the track bed and had to be moved into place by three road rail JCB vehicles.

We then walked further along the site to see the freshly tipped ballast being levelled using a laser bulldozer which was followed shortly behind by a



Mark Glenister

remote controlled compactor.

Further up the site, someone was marking out the line of the new sleepers from pre-recorded datum points marked on the new rail at the side of the track bed.

A JCB was then lifting concrete sleepers, seven at a time, onto the compacted ballast. Unfortunately we couldn't stay to see the rail being "thimble in" and clipped down, but never the less, a very enjoyable and interesting day was had by all.

A real treat to see something like this going on.

# Ensuring everything runs smoothly

Tuesday, 13th March saw the North East Area's talk by Peter Guy, the Network Rail Operations Security and Continuity Planning Manager. The event was well attended, having a total of 12 attendees.

Peter started his talk by explaining the roles and responsibilities of himself and of Network Rail in ensuring business continuity, not only for Network Rail but for their business partners. The responsibilities included emergency planning to be prepared for eventualities, assisting the development of operational resilience to limit impact if a business

interruption occurred, and leading and maintaining business continuity processes to restore normal services as quickly as practicable

Peter explained the concept of Critical National Infrastructure and where Network Rail's assets figure in the national structure. He outlined the range of threats that were being considered, and the processes that were undertaken to meet those threats and deflect or mitigate their impact. It was clear that although terrorism was a major consideration other threats to the rail business such as the rise in metal thefts were

also on the agenda.

The concept of operational resilience was explained, and the need to ensure that business continuity was maintained and that the measures were supported at the highest level within Network Rail and the Train and Freight Operators. The continued exchange of information with Emergency Response Organisations, Security Services, and Government was also important. The ever present need to adapt to new challenges, such as for example climate change, and volcanic ash events, was explained.



David Monk-Steel  
MIRO

# The debate – train crew route knowledge



Neil  
Worthington  
MIRO

Privatisation  
has had a huge  
impact on route  
knowledge, not  
just the routes  
that need to be  
learned but the  
way in which  
they are learned.

In March, the North West and North Wales Area held an open forum debate on the topic of Train Crew Route Knowledge. Four speakers gave their views before members joined in the debate. We were pleased to welcome two members from Ireland (CIE & NIR), where route learning is still done the traditional way, uncomplicated by such factors as franchising.

The panel comprised Phil Thickett, a retired TOC Area Operations Manager; Chris McKenzie, a Driver and ASLEF Health & Safety Representative; Carl Phillips, IRO Area Secretary and an industry Route Control Manager; and Roy Chapman, IRO Events Coordinator and Rail Services Planning Officer. Contributions also came from TOC Driver Managers Neil Wigans and John Hornby.

Carl Phillips opened with a proviso that whatever was discussed was currently managed through Railway Group Standards (RIS-3702-TOM) and by UK Parliamentary legislation/EU legislation.

## The Debate

Many TOCs are reducing the number of routes their drivers need to know, in a bid to save money. Complex routes have to be refreshed at six month intervals. Most TOCs have reciprocal agreements for their drivers to travel in each other's cabs. They can also travel in special trains, such as the "bubble car" DMUs, or at the controls of a service train while under supervision, use simulators, or even watch DVDs of a route. All the drivers felt that there is no substitute for actually handling a train over the route in question.

The main area where drivers and TOCs appear to diverge is over refresher training. This has often been achieved by routing trains over a variety of little-

used diversionary routes. But TOCs are increasingly reluctant to pay for additional track mileage and station access charges, while Network Rail often finds pathing difficult.

Simulators were once seen as the way forward, but need route knowledge just as much as drivers.

These days, drivers are tested on their knowledge, with intensive questioning about the location and meaning of individual signals, bridges, etc.

Should the rail industry insist on greater route knowledge? Instances were cited of trains being stopped on the main line because of an incident ahead, unable to take a diversionary route because the driver didn't sign the road. Examples were given of trains being delayed by up to three hours.

In such circumstances, there seems to be a contradiction between the cost of more comprehensive route learning that embraces all lines through a junction or a station and the cost of disruption. The TOC can easily avoid the former, but may not be properly penalised for the latter.

The old practice from BR days of "gingerly feeling your way along" just does not happen now.

This was questioned by one member who cited the example of the low speed Doncaster Avoiding Line, which only has the junction signals at each end and no significant gradients or changes of speed. Couldn't a driver be authorised to take that route at low speed, just to get a train round problems at the station?

Industry funding arrangements exist for operators to pay for drivers to learn routes, either through big renewal jobs or seven day railway. Some agreements can require operators to keep this knowledge up to date for the rest of the franchise.

We also discussed issue of trade unions and the restrictions of agreements. It was obvious that the variations across the industry since privatisation are a complication that would seem to reduce efficiency. It was recognised that there's a need to engage with trade unions to remove some of the barriers, and that there is insufficient sharing of information and knowledge between TOCs and FOCs.

Privatisation has had a huge impact on route knowledge, not just the routes that need to be learned but the way in which they are learned.

There was not much representation of the freight sector at this meeting but it was clear freight drivers have much wider route knowledge. In part this is due to the widely varying nature of their work, especially with ballast trains. It is also down to the greater readiness of FOCs to divert their trains.

What about conductor drivers? What about using freight drivers to take over passenger trains? Sometimes this happens but the point was made that drivers need both route knowledge and traction knowledge, and both must coincide. Again it is about the "feeling" that drivers need to control a train.

Finally we touched on the topic of foreign ownership of TOCs and FOCs, and whether this had brought in fresh ideas on route knowledge. Except in the case of Eurostar, it has had little effect. Their drivers have a handy summary of route information, called a "fiche ligne". They benefit from in-cab signalling but there was some support for such a system at home, particularly for relatively simple routes.

But perhaps foreign railways are learning from our experiences in Britain.

# North West Area AGM

The North West Area recently held their AGM at the Queens Hotel, Chester. An election of council members was held, the council for 2012/2013 are:

Carl Phillips	Chairperson
Neil Worthington	Treasurer
Roy Chapman	Secretary
Tricia Meade	Events Programme Coordinator
Iain King	Post-Event Communications
Chris Nutton	Recruitment and Attendance/ YRP liaison
Dave Mason	New Members
Susan Nicholls	Student Representative
Clive Evans	Liaison with other Institutions
Tom Cox	Member without Portfolio
Vacancy	Member without Portfolio

Carl Phillips as incoming Chairman gave a quick thank you to Clive Evans and Tom Cox for their outstanding work as Chairman and treasurer respectively. Their leadership on difficult council matters have been appreciated greatly.

The AGM was followed by a presentation from Iain King on the future of control traffic management.



# Fiddlers Ferry Power Station visit



The North West Area held a visit on 16th May to Fiddlers Ferry Power Station.

The visit began at the Coal Plant Control Room to watch the unloading of the 17.15 Freightliner Heavy Haul coal delivery. Visitors were also allowed to visit the Hopper Room and then continued with a tour of the power generation floor, turbine hall, boiler house and control room.

# Train Crew Resourcing – A Critical Measure

With recent media coverage about the relative efficiency and value-for-money of Britain's rail system, IRO Midlands examined how train crew resourcing in the transition from BR to the current day has seen some odd and unexpected changes which the industry needs to face-up to.

Mark Steward has a long association with this topic and in this presentation provided a "behind the scenes" look at the planning, working terms and conditions and Trade Union Agreements affecting train crew, particularly drivers. He examined the resourcing agreements in British Rail days and the complement calculations applicable then, illustrating the effect of the Drivers Restructuring Initiative (DRI) in the mid-90s on both efficiency and a rising cost base through to present day.

Mark began his talk by showing how a typical driver depot in the 1980s would have its establishment of drivers calculated. Despite warming-up the audience (with a wink!) that there was "quite a lot of maths involved", Mark showed that the principles for working out how many drivers a depot would require in British Rail days seem to come down to just three numbers – 8, 40 and 39. Rosters were always produced in eight-weekly cycles; each week always comprised 40 hours and drivers were contracted to a 39-hour week. The difference in hours per week led to what was known as "the long weekend" since drivers worked an extra 8 hours in each eight-week cycle, resulting in a ninth rest day every eight weeks.

BR had one further magic number – 4.875. This (which is the result of 39 hours ÷ 8 weeks) value, multiplied by the number of "instances" (the number of diagrams at the depot by the number of days covered) would produce the minimum number of drivers required to operate the diagrams, excluding "spares".

Spares – cover for rest days, sickness, route learning, medicals and so on would be factored in based on the "A&U" returns – records maintained at the depot showing availability and utilisation. The longer the A&U history, the more accurate the number of spare turns required, though typically this would be in the region of 35–40%.

Mark moved his audience on through Drivers Restructuring Initiative (DRI) originally intended by British Rail but subsequently delivered by individual TOCs post-privatisation.

DRI consolidated many allowances into clean salaries, largely increasing the hourly rate of pay for drivers. At the same time minimum and maximum turn-lengths changed, leading to variable average turn lengths and an increase in the number of rest days. Additionally there was no longer a requirement to balance rosters over 8-weekly cycles.

Some of these changes had subtle and some had more dramatic effects. For example, "Clean" salaries (increased to account for abolition of previous allowances) in many cases proved to be disincentives to working overtime and unsocial hours whilst the change in rest days created an 11.6% reduction in the annual number of days' availability of drivers.

Changes to the annual leave quota created unexpected reductions in efficiency with some depots seeing the leave allowance rising by eight days over the old BR allowance of 32: this was mostly the result of duty turns now being calculated in hours (and compounded by widely variable average turn lengths) whilst leave continued to be counted in days.

As Mark concluded his presentation, the audience could be forgiven for concluding that one of the things BR might just have got right was its train crew resourcing model. Compared

with today, the frugal average salary of £12.5k for a driver seems laughable yet somehow, the industry has allowed itself to implement salaries between £36k and £51k (where the RPI equivalent today to the BR value would be just £20,821!), for a four-day week with some remarkable restrictions on what can and can't be done such as double-trips in one day, mis-alignment of cab-breaks with timetable implications and driving time limits still based in some cases on BR maxima that have not been realigned with the turns lengths applicable today.

It is impossible to do justice to this topic in such a short space, and Mark Steward's erudite grasp of the subject turned a simple presentation into a veritable master-class on what to watch out for when planning your train crew resourcing. Mark concluded with three key observations:

Start over your complement – have more resource than the maths says you need. If you don't build in contingency, day-to-day factors will erode your complement to a point where recovery to acceptable levels is always a management crisis – and at the points when you are under-complement your depot works only on the basis of 'goodwill' which might evaporate in the blink of any eye.

Changes to terms and conditions cost real money and usually the indirect costs that are not properly measured and understood (for which read "managed") create the biggest effect.

If you can't measure the whole process, don't make concessions within it – the robust relationship with trades unions is very much alive and well and victories won elsewhere will be presented as challenges in your area. Effective industrial relations requires confident knowledge and sound data on both sides!

## Devolution – a Joint Perspective from Andy Cooper, MD of Cross Country Trains and Richard Kirkham, Route Commercial Manager of Network Rail LNW

On 30th April 2012 over 25 Midland Area members met to hear Andy Cooper, MD of Cross Country and Richard Kirkman, Route Commercial Manager of Network Rail LNW discuss recent NR devolution in the area. The two speakers gave unique insights into the working of the processes behind the change and the attendees confirmed the value of the event. One of them said "live talks like this are so much better for me than reading about something." Thanks to the speakers and to Network rail for hosting the event.



# Enjoying Professional Operating Skills Day

On Saturday 10th March the South East Area arranged for 15 members to visit Ashford to learn from Southeastern and Hitachi how high speed rail currently operates in the UK.

Matt Burgess of Hitachi showed the group around the class 395 depot. The fleet comprises of 29 six-carriage trains that each receive routine maintenance here once a week (rather than after a set number miles which is the norm in the UK), plus one major exam each year. Hitachi has learnt a lot from the UK as it is the first time they have been asked to build and then maintain trains.

The depot is an efficient operation where everything is done electronically; staff are issued with reinforced laptops designed to withstand the increased wear and tear that you can expect from a depot environment. Nothing is written down, to the extent that even spare parts are requested electronically and delivered on trays by an automated system.

After viewing the main depot the group visited the wheel lathe. The class 395s are currently undergoing a programme to re-profile the wheels to improve the ride quality. High speed railways are constructed differently to conventional railways which has made



it very hard for the engineers to design an optimum profile for wheels that must traverse both networks.

After lunch Richard Dean, South-eastern's Head of Train Services, explained some of the benefits that the high speed service has brought. This includes freeing up capacity on the 'Classic' network to allow extra services to places such as Sevenoaks.

Trainer Andy Youden then took members on the impressive class 395 training simulator. The absence of AWS equipment makes for a more peaceful

*The group are shown around Hitachi's Class 395 depot at Ashford.*

driving experience, but a much greater adjustment is to learn to trust the TVM 430 in cab signalling equipment instead of following lineside signals – you do not even receive an indication when you change lines. Both lines of High Speed One are fully bi-directional so it is not unusual for a 225kph class 395 to be overtaken by a 300kph Eurostar service on the adjacent line!

Our thanks go to Southeastern and Hitachi for providing this highly informative event.



**Jonathan  
Leithead  
South East  
Area Council**

# Discovering Driver Advisory Systems

**First**

## Driver Advisory System (DAS) – Active System

- History of successful use for heavy haul freight in US & Australia
- On-board equipment comprises:
  - Processor unit
  - Drivers' display
  - GPS antenna
  - Radio link
  - Power supply

TRAIN BASED COMPONENT

**Jonathan  
Leithead  
South East  
Area Council**

In January the South East Area came together with the Institution of Mechanical Engineers Railway Division (SE) to learn about how First Group is pioneering the use of Driver Advisory Systems in the UK rail industry.

Energy Efficiency Engineer Mark Parsons explained that energy accounts

for 25% of the total cost of running a train and as such is the largest directly manageable cost. Drivers have always been trained to use full power to gain and then maintain linespeed, even when this has meant running ahead of schedule, hence the scope for efficiency savings.

By looking at where the train is based on GPS data and calculating how well the train engines are performing and what time the train is due at the next station, an on-board processor advises the driver of what speed they need to arrive on time without expending more energy than is necessary. It can also advise the driver to coast to the next station as the track geography has been pre-programmed. The system can even take Temporary Speed Restrictions into account.

Mark Wardell, the Operations Project Manager, described the work that

has been done with train drivers and unions to come up with a design that drivers liked and that did not distract them from driving. One of the key safety devices is that the screen on the DAS will go blank if the train brakes more or runs slower than the system is expecting it to so that drivers can not be distracted by the device when approaching signals at danger.

It has cost a lot of time and money to implement so the speakers ended by offering advice on best practice to those implementing similar technology so that they can avoid some of the problems that First Group encountered. DAS have led to average energy savings of 11% on those trains where it is fitted and has delivered a better journey experience for passengers as they no longer have to wait outside busy stations until the scheduled time because the train is running early.

# Exploring LOROL's New Cross Gate facility

Members of the South East Area of the IRO were given the opportunity for a behind-the-scenes look at one of London's newest control centres and rolling stock depots – LOROL's New Cross Gate facility on the East London Line.

The depot and control centre were built to coincide with the opening of the East London Line in May 2010 as part of the London Overground concession. It services the entire Class 378 fleet, including the dual-voltage units used on the North and West London Lines and the Euston-Watford services and the third-rail only fleet used on the East London Line. Due to the size of the IRO group, we split into two sub-groups to visit the various parts of the site, which consists of a number of distinct areas.

The principal maintenance shed

includes facilities for a range of overhaul and maintenance activities. The shed, along with the rest of the depot, was notable for its cleanliness and smartness, which was possibly due to its relative newness. A separate building contains a state-of-the-art wheel lathe, one of the most modern in the country. Outside this building was a facility for replenishing the de-icing tanks on the Class 378 trains: this train-borne system used to de-ice the conductor rails was an innovation on LOROL's part.

We were also shown the security centre where a comprehensive system is available to monitor the whole depot and its entrances and exits. Its success is evident in the fact that there has not been a single breach of security since the depot opened!



Chris Howard

A final area was the control centre, which controls the entire LOROL operation. Again the quality of the facilities provided was evident and we were told about the ongoing improvements to better integrate information systems with those of other TOCs and of the preparations being made to cater for the imminent opening of the East London Line phase two extension from Surrey Quays to Clapham Junction.

In summary, members were very impressed with the comprehensive facilities provided at the site and the standards of cleanliness evident. IROSE would like to thank David Grey, LOROL's depot manager, for his hospitality and assistance on this visit.

# Network Rail devolution with Fiona Taylor

Fiona Taylor explained that during 2011 she had led Network Rail's devolution programme, and thus had been one of its architects. She is now the Route Managing Director for the Kent Route so can see how devolution is working in practice.

Fiona explained that plans for devolution pre-dated Sir Roy McNulty's report, though this also called for such a move.

## Objectives

The aim of the devolved routes is to:

- save money
- increase efficiency
- be more responsive to NR's customers (railway operators)
- provide a better service

As such, many of the aims of the McNulty report are encompassed in devolution.

The new structure has seen many changes:

- created new posts, such as the Route Managing Director
- makes the Routes more accountable
- gives the Routes the authority to take decisions and act more quickly
- makes the Routes more aligned with customers
- gives greater control over what happens on the Route
- created the new Wales Route



Jonathan Leithhead  
South East Area Council

Fiona also looked at the ongoing work to develop alliances between Network Rail Routes and TOCs.

The new Routes are still large organisations, with the Kent Route having 1900 employees, a £90m annual budget as well as a £600m capital expenditure budget.

Fiona gave examples of how the Routes have already given cost savings, with examples cited such as lower costs of electrification, and reducing the cost of fencing.

## Phased introduction

Devolution had a phased introduction, starting with the Wessex and Scotland Routes in May 2011, followed by all the other Routes in November 2011.

Access planning has recently moved to the Routes as part of the last stage of devolution. This will allow engineering access to be more closely tailored to the demands of the passenger and freight operators running trains in that area.

Fiona also looked at the ongoing work to develop alliances between Network Rail Routes and TOCs, which it is hoped will further reduce costs and improve services through common objectives and greater information sharing.

Questions from the floor concentrated on how devolution differs from previous regional structures and how Network Rail cost savings would be passed on to the train operators to in turn pass on to the passenger and freight customer.

IRO South East Area Chairman Chris Loder said, 'This was another fascinating presentation to the IRO on a subject which aims to produce measureable benefits to rail's end users, and will affect to varying degrees all organisations in the industry. It links in with government strategy to reduce the cost of the rail industry, assisting the aims of the McNulty report.'

## Changes?

Please tell us when you move home or change jobs – we don't want to lose touch with you! Keep us up-to-date with your email address(es) and postal address(es) at all times so you don't miss any of our communications. Thank you!



# Hands-on experience at Avon Valley Railway for third Operations Experience Day



The IRO South West Area held its third Operations Experience Day at the Avon Valley Railway on Saturday 10th March. The objective of the day is to give IRO members hands-on experience of running a railway in a controlled environment. Each year the IRO and AVR provide not just train operations experience but an insight into a specialist operating discipline. This year the theme was incident management.

The morning of the event was given over to running the Avon Valley Railway. Participants received their diagrams in advance and a safety briefing was held on arrival at the AVR. They then had the opportunity to operate the railway with two trains in operation. Roles included: driver, driver assistance (uncoupling and coupling trains), guard and Responsible Operator. Roles were rotated throughout

the morning to maximise the experience obtained – most of the attendees had not been to the railway previously.

The groups of staff arriving at Bitton station did not know exactly what was going to happen, but the arrival of ambulance/support vehicles and fire engines at lunch time hinted at the theme for the afternoon – incident management. The AVR Operations Manager, Ken Goodway, had set up an exercise with the Great Western Ambulance Service (GWAS) and Avon Fire and Rescue to test their emergency response and particularly the GWAS new Hazardous Area Response Team (HART) who have been specially trained to respond to this type of incident. The exercise was also designed to test the response of the AVR staff, assisted and observed by the IRO.

The IRO team helped set the incident up at Avon Riverside station, the location being chosen for its lack of road access. This incident simulated a train derailment on a set of points with 12 injured passengers, played by members of the Casualties Union. One person had fallen from the train and was trapped between the platform and the bogie of the leading coach, sustaining a serious injury.

When everything was ready the call was made to the Responsible Operator, who co-ordinated the incident, and the response from the emergency services initiated. The services arrived on site by train and had to contend with the problem of not having access from the platform. They started assessment of the injured using the triage process.



The IRO team assisted with emergency protection of the train, preservation of evidence and providing the rail shuttle to evacuate the injured from site and bring additional response. The Emergency Services were challenged by the location and it was particularly demanding recovering the injured passenger from underneath the train, and helping recover others from the train itself. The AVR Rail Incident Officer also found the incident demanding.

The Railway Accident Investigation Branch also attended the “incident” and explained how they would approach investigating such an event and their role in investigation. The IRO group found this particularly informative.

At the end of the incident a “hot debrief” was held between the services as well as a short discussion of lessons learned. The Emergency Services agreed that it was a positive exercise and they had worked effectively together. The IRO attendees will be feeding back their observations to the AVR.

Laura Compton, Industry Liaison manager for Network Rail in Swindon, commented after the event: “The incident was interesting to observe and was my first experience of seeing all the emergency services and operators working together. A great spin on the day. As always, it was well organised and communicated from an IRO point of view. In terms of the AVR I though everyone was brilliant – really helpful, informative and welcoming.”

The IRO South West would like to thank Ken Goodway and Paul Stanford of the AVR for organising the event and providing an excellent learning experience for all the attendees.



The groups of staff arriving at Bitton station did not know exactly what was going to happen, but the arrival of ambulance/support vehicles and fire engines at lunch time hinted at the theme for the afternoon – incident management.



Chris Prior FIRO



## AREA EVENTS

### Irish Area

For information on Irish Area events contact Hilton Parr at: [hilton.parr@railwayoperators.org](mailto:hilton.parr@railwayoperators.org)

### Scottish Area

**Wednesday 24th October:** Scottish Area AGM (16:30) Buchanan House, Glasgow followed by a presentation on the Operational Aspects of the GSM-R Project.

For further information on the IRO Scottish Area please contact Jim Douglas on 0141 354 5684 or email: [Jim.douglas@URS.com](mailto:Jim.douglas@URS.com) or email Jim Gillies at [scottish@railwayoperators.org](mailto:scottish@railwayoperators.org)

### North East Area

**Tuesday 7th August:** Visit to Tunstead Quarry. Contact: David Monk-Steel at [northeast@railwayoperators.org](mailto:northeast@railwayoperators.org)

For information on North East Area events contact David Monk-Steel at [northeast@railwayoperators.org](mailto:northeast@railwayoperators.org) or by telephone on 01751 473799 during office hours. All North East Area meetings normally take place at 17:30 for 18:00, at York.

### North West Area

All events and enquiries should be via Tricia Meade at [ironw.booking@railwayoperators.org](mailto:ironw.booking@railwayoperators.org)  
General membership enquires to Carl Phillips at: [northwest@railwayoperators.org](mailto:northwest@railwayoperators.org)

### Midlands Area

For information on Midlands Area events contact Julia Stanyard on 0121 345 3833 or email: [midlands@railwayoperators.org](mailto:midlands@railwayoperators.org). Unless otherwise indicated our events start at 17:30.

### South East Area

**Monday 17th September:** Olympics Review (17:30 for 18:00) Location: LUL HQ, 55 Broadway Contact: Glen Merryman at [se.events@railwayoperators.org](mailto:se.events@railwayoperators.org)

All South East events now take place at London Underground's HQ, 55 Broadway, St James Park, SW1, unless otherwise indicated with a 17:30 for 18:00 start.

For further information on the IRO South East Area contact Jonathan Leithead by email at [se.comms@railwayoperators.org](mailto:se.comms@railwayoperators.org)

### South West Area

**Monday 8th October:** Presentation on Great Western Main Line electrification scheme and associated signal sighting (17:00 for 17:30)  
Location: Swindon

For information on South West Area events contact Chris Prior by email: [chris.prior@firstgroup.com](mailto:chris.prior@firstgroup.com)

### Young Operators

**Wednesday 24th October:** Young Operators Freight Event (17:30 for 18:00) Lord Berkeley will host the IRO Young Operators at the House of Lords for a presentation and open-floor debate on Rail Freight and the work of parliament in supporting freight operators. For security purposes, all attendees must book by 10 October at the latest and arrive at the public entrance for security screening by 17:30.

If you would like to register your interest in IRO Young Operators events, please contact [youngoperators@railwayoperators.org](mailto:youngoperators@railwayoperators.org)

More details of area events are listed on the website at <http://www.railwayoperators.org/Events.aspx>

## COMPETITION Win a copy of London's Overground by John Glover



We are giving away a copy of John Glover's new book, *London's Overground*, to one lucky member who can answer the following two questions:

1. What is the name of the waterway which the London Overground train is crossing on the book jacket photo?
2. What is the name of the station at which this London Overground train is standing?

Please send your answer to:  
[admin@railwayoperators.co.uk](mailto:admin@railwayoperators.co.uk)  
by 15th August 2012.

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For more information please visit [www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk](http://www.railwaybenefitfund.org.uk)

