

NATIONAL SKILLS ACADEMY for RAILWAY ENGINEERING

Department for
Transport



Railway Industry Association

Network Rail

 Transport for London

ATOC
ASSOCIATION OF TRAIN OPERATING COMPANIES

R F G
Rail Freight Group

GoSkills
Moving skills forward



Lloyds Register
Educational Trust




Northwest
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

The railway industry has to address its future engineering skills needs if it is to continue to thrive. This information sheet explains the work that is under way to develop a national skills academy.



Railway Engineering Skills for the Future

The railway industry has a strong case for a National Skills Academy. Faced with the need for up-skilling the current workforce and the need to recruit more highly-skilled people, the industry must strengthen its engineering capability if it is to achieve the effective delivery of its major programmes of maintenance, renewal and enhancement of both infrastructure and rolling stock. Much is already being done by companies individually, but there is a critical need for industry-wide co-ordination and direction. Leading railway industry organisations have come together to promote the **National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering (NSARE)** which will fulfil that strategic role, ensuring that the strengthening is achieved to the timescale and extent required.

The initiative has the strong support of the Department for Transport and in particular, the Secretary of State, Andrew Adonis.

Our Vision

The capability and efficiency of the railway industry will be enhanced by bringing together the development of railway engineering skills under a single umbrella. NSARE will develop and implement a unified railway engineering skills strategy for the industry. It will co-ordinate and develop the training capability and capacity of the public and private sector training providers, to meet the needs of the employers and the requirements and aspirations of their employees. It has the overwhelming support of the industry.

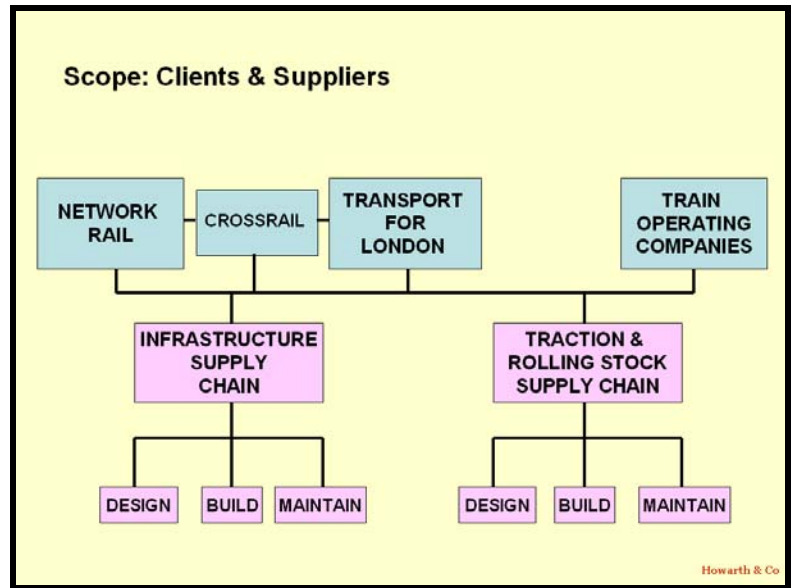
Furthermore, investment in NSARE will contribute significantly to mitigating the skills risks inherent in implementing the huge investment programme over the coming years, and in which both Government and industry have major interests.

"I very much support the initiative taken by the Railway Industry Association with its partners in developing proposals for a National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering. The steps that the railway industry has taken to develop a Business Plan will undoubtedly put it in a position to make a strong bid for start-up funds."

Andrew Adonis, Secretary of State for Transport

The Need for NSARE

Network Rail, Transport for London and Train Operating Companies have excellent apprenticeship schemes, together with workforce training programmes, graduate sponsorship and management development programmes. However surveys carried out by the Railway Industry Association continue to report skills shortages – in particular in signalling & telecommunications, electrification, traction & rolling stock, and consultancy. The recently announced electrification programme is likely to aggravate the situation, since the last major programme was completed 20 years ago and the electrification skills base is believed to have been substantially eroded since then.



NSARE research has identified a substantial requirement for up-skilling of the workforce across much of the industry to meet the challenges of new technology being introduced and the need to improve efficiency.

There is currently no standard assessment of competency of individuals across the various disciplines within the industry, nor accreditation of training providers, trainers or assessors. National Occupational Standards are currently being updated and need to be rolled out across the industry to underpin 'portable' qualifications, which will be recognised by all the employers. The railway-specific education / training / development capability provided by public-sector FE colleges and universities is sparse and, while private-sector training capacity is not an issue, accreditation is.

'Project Brunel' (see below) has identified the need to increase the number of professional engineers by 30% over the next few years if the industry's objectives are to be achieved. Despite the investment that is continuing to take place in trains, stations and other visible aspects of the railway, the image of the industry is often seen as unattractive by school-leavers and graduates choosing a career.

These are industry-wide problems that must be addressed on an industry-wide basis.

Project Brunel

During 2007/8 a detailed research study was undertaken entitled "Project Brunel - A study into the supply and demand of professional engineering, technical and planning (ETP) skills within the Road, Rail and Transport Planning sectors of the UK Transportation Industry". Significant professional skills shortages are predicted; the report provides data which specifically identify skills shortages (numbers of personnel) within the railway engineering sub-sector.

In summary:

- The study found there were 55,000 ETP professional resources in post compared with a requirement in 2013 of 73,000 i.e. an increase of 33%.
- Of these, there were 13,700 requiring specific railway infrastructure, stations and traction & rolling stock engineering skills in post, against a future requirement in 2013 of 17,350 i.e. an increase of 27%.
- Unless something radical is done, taking natural wastage into account, there will be a potential shortfall of some 4,000 ETP professional resources requiring specific railway infrastructure, stations, traction & rolling stock engineering skills.
- The problem is compounded by the ageing workforce - an ETB study indicates that the average age of a chartered engineer is 55 and increasing.

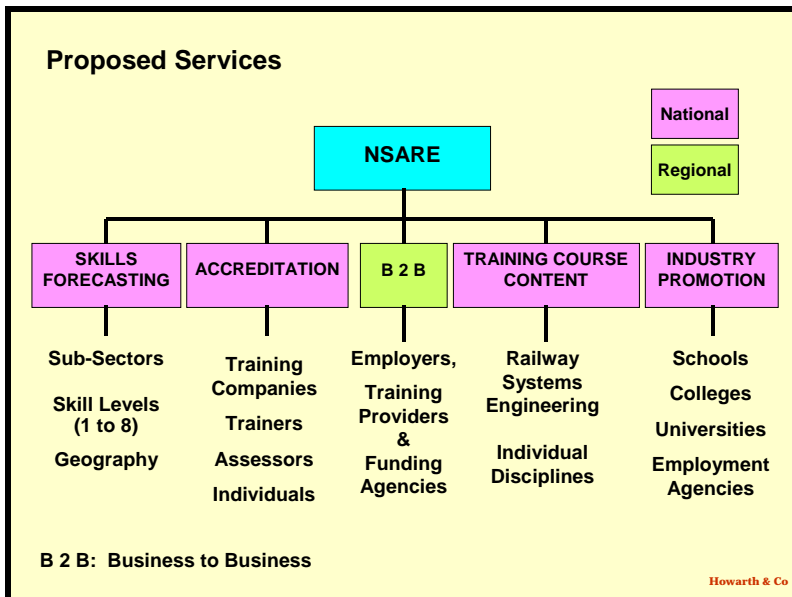
The National Skills Academy Network

The Government's mission is to create a world class workforce by delivering the skills that employers need in each sector of the economy. First launched in 2004, National Skills Academies are led by employers who work with Government and training providers to shape the training and qualifications that will help them compete in global markets. Skills academies are now operating in 13 key sectors of the economy, from Financial Services and Social Care to Construction, Nuclear and Manufacturing – and another two, IT and Power are in the business planning phase of development – all with start-up funding provided by Government through the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Launching the Government's new National Skills Strategy on 11 November, Lord Mandelson announced that a competitive Fifth Round of the NSA Programme would be held. The railway industry strongly welcomes this announcement, and in response will submit a bid for start-up funds for NSARE. With approval by March 2010, the Academy could be operational in the first quarter of 2011.

"In the current economic climate when businesses are struggling it is especially important for employers to invest in skills and training. The National Skills Academy network is led by employers and enables them to focus on developing the key skills needed in each industry to help drive it forward."

Lord Young, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills

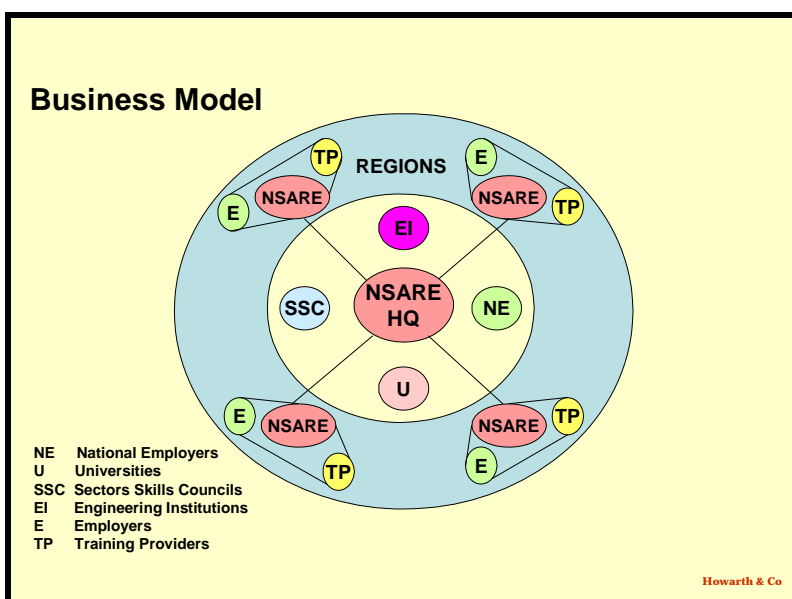


The NSARE Proposal

NSARE will be broad-based. The industry believes that it must strengthen all skill levels: from apprentices to senior management; within the national railway and the railway in London; within client organisations as well as suppliers; within both the infrastructure and rolling stock supply chains. Five key roles for NSARE have been identified:

1. **Forecasting** skills requirements by sub-sector and geographically
2. **Accreditation** of training organisations & trainers
3. **'Business to Business' services** between employers (especially SMEs) and training organisations – provision of viable training locally leading to 'portable qualifications'
4. **Standardisation** and management of training course content
5. **Promoting** the industry as an attractive, sustainable place to work

Employers, training providers and individuals will all benefit from NSARE's activities. Most of these activities will be carried out by a modest-sized headquarters team operating at national level, supported by a number of small regional teams where viable, probably using existing facilities. The detail will be worked-up during the bidding and start-up phases, in consultation with key stakeholders.



Who is Involved?

The proposal is led by the **Railway Industry Association** on behalf of a cross-industry Steering Group chaired by Terry Morgan, Chairman of **Crossrail**, and which also includes senior executives of **Network Rail**, **Transport for London**, the **Association of Train Operating Companies**, the **Rail Freight Group**, **Go Skills** (the Passenger Transport Sector Skills Council) and the **North West Regional Development Agency**. The **Department for Transport** has contributed funding, as have most of the Steering Group members, along with **RSSB**, the **Lloyd's Register Educational Trust** and **Unite**. Representatives of the **National Rail Contractors Group**, the **Railway Engineers Forum**, and the **SME** members of the supply chain have also recently joined the Steering Group.

Howarth & Co is developing the initiative on behalf of the Steering Group and leads a Working Group of specialists drawn from the organisations listed above or their member companies.



Newly-appointed Chairman of the NSARE Steering Group is Terry Morgan CBE, Chairman of Crossrail.

A wide range of other organisations has been consulted on the proposals as they have emerged and have expressed support in principle for the concept. These include:

Aspire Rail	PM Professional Learning	Association of Rail Training Providers
Arriva	Rail Signalling Solutions	Derby & Derbyshire Rail Forum
Babcock Rail	Rail Tech Group	Rail Alliance
Bombardier Transportation	Renown Railway Services	Railway Forum
Carillion Rail	Thales	
FirstGroup	Tube Lines	FE Colleges
HSBC Rail	Unipart Rail	National Skills Academies
Jarvis Rail	Virgin Trains	Sector Skills Councils
LNWR		Regional Development Agencies
Merseytravel	Office of Rail Regulation	Trades Union Congress
MTR Training		Universities

“We believe in investing in our people. A bigger and better railway needs the very best in skills to succeed. By investing in the future of our employees and people joining us, we invest in our own future too. This year Network Rail will spend more than £30 million on vocational training and is set to take on more than 200 graduates, double last year’s intake and train over 1,200 apprentices in the next five years. But unless we innovate and work together as an industry we will not achieve the challenges ahead. That is why Network Rail supports this industry-wide initiative.”

“NSARE will play a major role in developing the engineering skills that we will need, to achieve our plans for enhancing rail’s contribution to a sustainable transport system for London, including the delivery of the Crossrail project.”

Ian Brown
MD of London Rail & Chairman, DLR Transport for London

Iain Coucher
Chief Executive, Network Rail

“GoSkills welcomes the development of the Academy as a way of supporting employers in improving the efficiency and safety of their businesses.”

Nick Mitchell
Chairman, GoSkills

“The ORR strongly support this initiative and believe it will be good for the industry.”

Bill Emery, Chief Executive
Office of Rail Regulation

“We recognise the huge potential NSARE will bring to the industry, improving infrastructure that will benefit the economy for years to come”

Steven Broomhead
Chief Executive, Northwest Regional Development Agency

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