

ONTrack

July
2022

The latest news from UKTram and the LRSSB

Funding confirmed for Light Rail SSB and UKTram

The organisation responsible for light rail safety in the UK is all set to press ahead with its vital work thanks to continued government funding.

The Department for Transport has confirmed a £3.3 million package of support for the Light Rail Safety and Standards Board that will help it to drive a wide range of projects over the next three years.

The new funding agreement is part of a wider £4.5 million financial arrangement that also includes support for UKTram – the sector’s representative body.

Welcoming the new financial package, Carl Williams, Light Rail SSB Chief Executive, commented: “This continued funding will enable us to accelerate our ambitious delivery programme in a number of key areas.

“These include the further development of sector-wide approaches to risk management and accident reporting, enhancing stakeholder engagement, updating safety guidance and leading on research into new technologies.”

UK Tram Managing Director, James Hammett, added: “Tramways and similar urban transit systems have a vital role to play in improving connectivity, reducing harmful carbon emissions and boosting regional economies,” he explained.

“With continued funding we will be able to start work on the implementation of a bold strategy for the future of light rail.”



Carl Williams



James Hammett

For the full story on the funding announcement, [CLICK HERE](#)

Strategy sets out benefits of light rail

A bold and ambitious strategy aimed at securing a sustainable future for light rail in England, Scotland and Wales has been welcomed by government ministers.

Published by UKTram, following engagement with the Department for Transport, the landmark strategy document draws on expertise from across the sector to build a compelling case for tramways and similar transit systems, highlighting the benefits that existing networks already deliver.

Launched recently with support from Transport Ministers Grant Shapps and Baroness Vere, it marks an important milestone for the sector’s representative organisation as it strives to forge a fresh approach to overcoming barriers to the expansion of the sector.

George Lowder, the Chairman of UKTram, explained: “The strategy document itself represents many months of work by professionals from across light rail and addresses the key challenges they face, including recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic.

“At the same time, it brings into focus the many benefits of putting tramways at the heart of future integrated urban transport networks

– not least in terms of enhancing connectivity, driving inward investment, reducing congestion and improving air quality.”

In addition to providing a wealth of detail on the benefits that existing systems have brought to key cities where they already operate, the strategy calls for closer collaboration between sector stakeholders to drive innovation and best practice.

Its key principles have also helped to shape UKTram’s latest Business Plan, which sets out a clear programme of initiatives that will help to reduce the cost and complexity of future projects whilst driving cross-sector partnerships.

“As well as offering a definitive answer to the question, ‘Why light rail?’ the strategy document will act as a rallying call for the entire sector to unite behind a bold vision for the future, and we are delighted that it has been welcomed by senior government figures,” Mr Lowder added.

A Light Rail Strategy for the UK can be downloaded from the UKTram website [here](#) and the organisation’s latest business plan can be viewed [here](#).



Transport Minister Baroness Vere and George Lowder, the Chairman of UKTram, meet ahead of the recent launch of the landmark Light Rail Strategy.

Summit speakers confirmed

Transport Minister Baroness Vere has been confirmed as the keynote speaker at a high-profile event in September that’s set to attract professionals from across the light rail sector.

The impressive Deansgate headquarters of Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce has already been named as the venue for an eagerly anticipated Light Rail Summit, and a packed programme of presentations is now taking shape.

Organised by UKTram, the event on September 15 will put a range of ‘hot topics’ under the spotlight.

Paul Appleton, Deputy Director, Railway Safety and HM Deputy Chief Inspector of Railways at the Office of Rail and Road will be leading a debate on cybersecurity while other guest speakers include James Wingerath, Commercial Director of Youth Employment UK, and Guillaume Chanussot, Managing Director of KeolisAmey Metrolink.

Further information about the summit, including booking details, is available by emailing lorraineGeorge@uktram.co.uk.



Sector welcomes launch of online RM3 platform

A new online learning platform that's set to enable health and safety professionals to learn more about a comprehensive Risk Management Maturity Model has been welcomed by the Light Rail Safety and Standards Board.

Launched by the Office of Rail and Road, the e-learning resource has two modules that allow users to gain a full end-to-end understanding of how RM3 works and how to apply it to an organisation.

The model was initially developed by the regulator as a tool to help assist organisations to manage health and safety risks, identify areas for improvement and provide a benchmark for year-on-year comparison.



The LRSSB has since worked closely with the regulator to ensure it meets the needs of the light rail sector.

Carl Williams, LRSSB Chief Executive, commented: "RM3 provides the ideal framework for organisations to effectively assess their ability to successfully manage health and safety risks.

"By working closely with the ORR and our other stakeholders, the LRSSB has helped to ensure this latest evolution of the model meets the needs of light rail, and we look forward to driving its adoption across the sector."

Further information about the platform, and the Light Rail SSB's work with the ORR, can be found [here](#).

Guidance on drugs and alcohol policies

Recommendations for effective drugs and alcohol testing are highlighted in a new guidance document published recently by the LRSSB.

The responsibilities of staff and managers to develop and enforce policies on substances that may have an impact on the performance of safety-critical tasks are also put under the spotlight.

The guidance has been developed following consultation with a working group led by the light rail sector's representative organisation UKTram.



Caring for vulnerable customers

Ensuring the safety of vulnerable people on tramways and similar transit systems is the subject of recent guidance published by the Light Rail SSB.

Providing colleagues with invaluable advice on how to handle situations where a customer may need additional help, the document is available to download [here](#) from the organisation's expanding online reference library.

Steve Duckering, Operations Manager at the LRSSB, said: "Although the vast majority of passengers are able to travel without needing specialist help or support, there are occasions when staff encounter incidents such as a medical emergency, or a member of the public finding themselves in distress due to drink or drugs.

"This new guidance sets out processes to ensure that their needs are addressed promptly, and that appropriate steps are taken to safeguard them until assistance arrives from other support agencies such as the police or ambulance service."

Subjects covered by the guidance include reviewing and improving policy and procedures, staff training, safeguarding, suicide prevention, and collaborating with other agencies and with other light rail operators.

Operators to share best practice on tackling anti-social behaviour

Light rail operators from across the UK, together with colleagues from Dublin, are joining forces to look at ways of tackling anti-social behaviour on their networks.

Members of the UKTram Operations Group have reported an increase in incidents since the lifting of Covid restrictions and have pledged to focus on the issue at a future meeting.

Steve Duckering, UKTram Operations Manager, explained: "Light rail systems do not operate in isolation from the communities they serve, and anti-social behaviour appears to be a growing problem for all transport operators.

"However, there are measures that can be taken to minimise the impact of such behaviour and reduce the number of incidents, and members of the group are committed to sharing best practice on dealing with the problem."

The most recent meeting of the Operations Group, which was held online, also featured a presentation by Graham Fitzgerald from Dublin's Luas network on Signal Passed at Stop management.

READ MORE HERE

New Chair for Engineering Group

Light rail engineers have welcomed the new chairman of an influential working group.

Ian Hale, Infrastructure Manager at London Trams, was elected at a recent meeting of the UKTram Light Rail Engineering Group, replacing outgoing chair Ian Middlemiss of Transport for Greater Manchester.

With a wealth of experience as a chartered engineer, consultant and rail project manager, Ian said he felt honoured to accept the role and paid tribute to the group's achievements while led by his predecessor.

"I'm looking forward to building on the excellent work of Ian Middlemiss and this group in sharing best practice and exploring innovative solutions to the engineering challenges faced by the sector," he added.

Future plans set out in three-year business plan

A clear vision for the future evolution of the organisation responsible for driving light rail safety has been set out in an ambitious three-year business plan.

It sets out how the Light Rail Safety and Standards Board aims to deliver its core objective: 'Prevent Incidents, Reduce Harm'.

Enhanced stakeholder engagement, the further development of an integrated risk management framework and the upgrading of a comprehensive incident reporting database are among seven key strategic aims set out in the plan.

Released following confirmation of continued financial support from the Department for Transport, it also commits to producing new safety guidance and updating existing documentation while driving innovation and exploring new commercial opportunities.

Carl Williams, Light Rail SSB Chief Executive, explained: "Now that the funding package is in place we are in a position to accelerate our ambitious delivery programme.

"This is clearly set out in the new business plan that builds on the organisation's many successes since it was established in 2019, and reflects recommendations made earlier this year in a report from the Office of Rail and Road on our work to date."

The ORR has praised the Light Rail SSB for adding value to light rail and for providing the tools required to improve the sector's understanding of risk, while calling for a long-term strategy for project delivery and wider stakeholder engagement.

"This latest business plan aims to fulfil those objectives, and we are now looking forward to forging even closer relationships with operators, owners, unions, statutory bodies and other key relevant organisations," Mr Williams added.

[Download The Light Rail SSB Business Plan in full here](#)



Successful launch of safety videos



A series of animated safety videos has proved to be a popular resource for operators following their online premieres earlier this year.

Using eye-catching graphics, they provide top tips for passengers when using a tramway or similar transit system, as well as advice for pedestrians when crossing the tracks.

Commissioned by the Light Rail SSB, the 'be SMART around Trams' videos can be used by network operators to complement their own safety campaigns and are ideal for posting on social media channels and on tram-stop information displays.

A full-length version, that includes all the videos in sequence, can also be used for presentations in schools and at community events.

Jamie Swift, Light Rail SSB Head of Commercial, commented: "The videos are already being used by a number of operators and proving a valuable resource for our members."

The videos can be viewed on the Light Rail SSB YouTube channel [here](#), and members can obtain high-resolution versions by contacting jamie.swift@lrssb.org

Design and management guidance published

A comprehensive guide for applying the most recent regulations on the design and management of new or extended tramway systems is now available to download from the Light Rail Safety and Standards Board website.

Mark Ashmore, Light Rail SSB Safety and Assurance Manager, said the new publication – LRG23.0 Application of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 – would prove to be an invaluable aid to the sector.

"This document provides an exhaustive guide to every aspect of the regulations and how to comply with all the legal requirements for light rail projects of all sizes," he said.

The full story can be found [here](#) and the guidance is now available to download [here](#) from the Light Rail SSB's reference library.



Partnership shapes reporting of safety concerns

The LRSSB is forging closer links with the organisation that provides an independent channel for employees to raise their safety concerns.

Working closely with CIRAS, the Light Rail SSB has updated existing guidance on how employers engage with staff on the reporting process and produced a document specifically aimed at the light rail sector.

Following peer review the revised guidance has now been published, and you can read more [here](#).



Retirement tribute to Heritage Group chairman

One of the leading advocates for preserving light rail's rich heritage has retired from his role as chairman of a high-profile forum representing the UK's historic tramways and museums.

Friends and colleagues from across the sector paid tribute to Geoffrey Claydon at a recent meeting of the UKTram Heritage Group, which he has chaired since its inception.

A tireless campaigner for tram preservation, his work for the group followed a distinguished career that saw him play a key role in shaping modern light rail networks.

James Hammett, UKTram Managing Director, commented: "Over many years, Geoffrey has made a massive contribution to the sector, and his experience, expertise and enthusiasm will be greatly missed by all who have worked alongside him.

"In 2020 he celebrated his 90th birthday, and we would like to wish him all the very best as he finally enjoys a well-earned, full retirement!"

In addition to paying tribute to Geoffrey, members of the Heritage Group have also elected former Vice-Chairman Mike Crabtree from Crich Tramway Museum as their new Chairman, and you can read more [here](#).



Geoffrey Claydon (seated, right) is presented with retirement gifts by Mike Crabtree and other members of the UKTram Heritage Group.

Expansion of biometric technology trials



To find out more about Focus+, [click here](#).

Volunteers from tram networks across the country have joined a pioneering project that's using biometric monitoring technology to further boost light rail safety.

The result of a partnership driven by UKTram and operator Edinburgh Trams, FOCUS+ aims to monitor the fatigue levels of key employees.

Utilising compact, wearable devices, it can also alert operators to other wellbeing issues that may impact on safety and is now undergoing extensive nationwide testing.

Dan Hill, Technical Officer at UKTram, explained: "Initial trials in Edinburgh have provided a wealth of useful data, demonstrating the potential of FOCUS+ to further improve light rail safety.

"Now devices have been distributed amongst volunteers from networks in Edinburgh, Blackpool, Manchester and Sheffield, as well as at UKTram, to further demonstrate the potential benefits of the system."

Members News

European award for talented manager

A member of the team running Nottingham's tram network has been recognised as a rising star in the European transport sector after scooping a prestigious international award.

Tram Technical Manager, Laura Bartram, was presented with the Best Young Talent Award at the recent European Mobility Exhibition in Paris, an event that brings together thousands of transport professionals from across the continent.

On receiving the award, the 26-year-old commented: "To hear that I would also be receiving an award was a huge surprise, and I would like to thank colleagues for nominating me for the accolade, and for supporting my career development. I hope this inspires other young women to see engineering as a viable career path in what is traditionally a male-dominated profession."

Click [here](#) for the full story.



Blackpool extension trials

Trams have been running along the extended section of track along Talbot Road between North Pier and Blackpool North Tram Hub, as part of a week-long exercise to operationally test the track and signalling equipment.

The testing marked another step towards the delivery of the Talbot Gateway Phase 2 project, a £220m investment which will improve transport links for residents and visitors to the resort.

As reported [here](#), residents will enjoy a direct link to shops and leisure activities, and commuters will benefit from quicker journeys to and from Blackpool North Train Station.



CALL
0121 214 7107



EMAIL
info@uktram.co.uk
info@lrssb.co.uk



WEB
www.uktram.org
www.lrssb.org



TWITTER
[@UK_Tram_](https://twitter.com/UK_Tram)
[@LightRailSSB](https://twitter.com/LightRailSSB)



LINKEDIN
[@UKTram](https://www.linkedin.com/company/UKTram)
[@lightrailssb](https://www.linkedin.com/company/lightrailssb)