

The latest news from UKTram and the LRSSB

UKTram appoints Interim Chair

The light rail sector's representative organisation has appointed Lindsay Murphy as its Interim Chair at a recent board meeting.

A transport engineering specialist with over 30 years' experience, Lindsay first joined the UKTram board in 2019, and her broad experience has already proved valuable to the organisation as it strives to support its members and promote the benefits of light rail.

A Member of the Institution of Civil Engineers, Lindsay has a proven track record in the delivery of major transport projects, including maintenance delivery during network extensions in Nottingham. Previously, at Manchester Metrolink she developed real hands-on experience of asset management and leading effective maintenance teams.

Now the Technical Director at specialist consultancy TXM Consult, Lindsay said she is extremely proud to have the opportunity to step into her new role.

"With the launch last year of the Light Rail Strategy for the UK,

endorsed by the DfT, the board believes that we are at a critical point in demonstrating the value of light rail to deliver key national strategic transport objectives," she said.

"UKTram has achieved a lot over the past few years but this momentum needs to be maintained against a backdrop of challenges faced by the sector, including changing customer demands."

UKTram Managing Director, James Hammett, added: "Lindsay's extensive experience and enthusiasm will be vital to helping the board to continue delivering on our ambitious business plan while further consideration is given to the fulfilment of the role in the longer term."



Reporting system roll out set to boost tram safety



Pictured at the TAIR pre-launch event are (from L to R): HM Deputy Chief Inspector of Railways, Richard Hines; Carl Williams, LRSSB Chief Executive; William Renfrew, TAIR lead developer at software solutions company Synergi; and Russell Copley, TAIR Project Lead.

An enhanced accident and incident reporting system has been welcomed by light rail leaders and is now ready to deliver a major boost for tramway safety.

At a recent pre-launch event in Birmingham, senior executives from UK networks heard the Tram Accident and Incident Reporting system (TAIR) had reached another vital milestone.

Following months of intensive work, the LRSSB is now rolling out an

upgraded system designed to be even more effective and easier to use.

Carl Williams, LRSSB Chief Executive, explained: "From the outset, our primary focus has been to ensure TAIR helps individual networks, and the wider sector, to meet the Office of Rail and Road's requirements for a centralised platform that gathers data for incident reporting and analysis.

"While tramways have an enviable safety record, the Sandilands accident in 2016 is a constant reminder of the importance of risk identification, as highlighted in the resulting Rail Accident Investigation Branch report.

"The enhancements to the system will make it much easier for all UK networks to use TAIR, which has a vital role to play in driving the development of effective risk models that will help prevent a similar tragedy."

As part of a significant investment by the LRSSB, consultants and software developers have worked closely with operators on enhancements to TAIR designed to streamline and standardise the data input process, and also provide national and local outputs and analytics.

"We've received a lot of positive feedback on the project from the light rail executives since the pre-launch event," Mr Williams added.

Light rail warned of cyber threats

The increased risks to light rail operations from cyber-attacks and similar IT threats have been highlighted during recent presentations by the Office of Road and Rail (ORR).

Over the past few months, UKTram has been working with the ORR to raise awareness of the importance of cyber security and the measures needed to protect against a range of criminal activities designed to disable computer systems or steal data.

With their complex IT infrastructure, transport networks provide a tempting target for both hostile foreign agents and criminal gangs, and, as a result, tramways and similar transit systems need to ensure they

do all they can to protect themselves.

James Hammett, UKTram Managing Director, commented: "We are grateful to the ORR for sharing their insights with us during a presentation to one of our working groups. We will continue to work with them to raise awareness of this increasingly important issue."

Further information on ways rail and light rail operators can protect against cyber-attacks is available [here](#).



Data analyst joins LRSSB team

The upgrade of a comprehensive Tramway Accident and Incident Reporting (TAIR) system has been boosted with the appointment of a dedicated data analyst by the LRSSB.

Mohamed Hefny joins the organisation responsible for enhancing light rail safety having recently completed an MSc in Business Analytics at Aston University. His studies built on his previous experience as a software engineer working with a global team developing human-machine interface systems in the automotive industry.

While at university he also completed internships as a market analyst for consultancies that help leadership teams make fact-based decisions, and his skills, knowledge and experience will play an important role in supporting the sector-wide adoption of the LRSSB's upgraded TAIR database.

Carl Williams, the organisation's Chief Executive, commented: "The appointment of a dedicated data analyst will help ensure that operators are able to make the most of the enhanced TAIR system."

In his new role, Mohamed will be responsible for designing and implementing effective reporting protocols and managing continuous improvement of data collection and quality. He will also provide trend



analysis for, and insights into, the light rail sector's accidents, incidents and near misses.

"I am really looking forward to working on the next phase of this exciting project that will continue to drive improvements to light rail safety," Mohamed said.

"As part of this process it will provide tools to enhance a sector-wide risk model while informing research, development and strategy," he added.

Risk modelling workshops

A series of workshops is helping tramway operators to review their own risk models.

As well as enabling organisations to better manage their individual health and safety processes, the resulting models will help the LRSSB to produce a comprehensive, sector-wide risk profile.

To ensure colleagues are able to make the most of a vital risk management tool, members of the LRSSB team are visiting all UK operators to assist them in updating their existing models.

Laura Reardon, LRSSB Head of Safety Risk Management, explained: "Over recent we've been working with colleagues on the process of enhancing risk models tailored to their unique circumstances.

"These will then feed into a national risk model, helping us to identify potential safety improvements at a national level."

Guidance helps operators meet climate challenges



As climate change continues to make extreme weather events more frequent and intense, new guidance has been published to help light rail operators respond to severe conditions.

Free access to comprehensive legislation library

Light rail safety professionals now have free access to the most up-to-date legislation, thanks to a new agreement between the LRSSB and the best-known provider of specialist information services.

Founded in 1957, Barbour EHS also provides regular updates on changes to UK legislation across a number of key areas, including health and safety, environment and energy, estates and facilities management, fire and security, and mental health and wellbeing.

Mark Ashmore, LRSSB Safety and Assurance Manager, commented: "This new agreement with Barbour provides significant value for our customers. It gives them easy access to legislation, guidance and policies from over 800 trusted sources, including the Health and Safety Executive, the Environment Agency and the British Standards Institute, as well as a host of trade organisations.

"The LRSSB has made a significant investment in a licensing agreement that ensures colleagues across the light rail sector can enjoy free access to a comprehensive database that will help them to comply with the latest legislation and best practice."

The Barbour agreement complements the continued development of the LRSSB's own online reference library, which contains guidance specific to light rail. For further information, email MarkAshmore@UKTram.co.uk.

Published by the LRSSB, the guidance has been developed in partnership with members of an Operators' working group led by the sector's representative organisation, UKTram.

It highlights the impact of severe weather on tramway operations, and how pre-planning can help mitigate against extreme hot and cold temperatures as well high rainfall or drought, fog, lightning, high winds or snow.

Steve Duckering, UKTram Operations Manager explained: "Our guidance highlights the need for every Light Rail system to set out an Extreme Weather Management Plan (EWMP) so that operators can respond quickly and effectively to the different challenges that they face from adverse weather of all kinds."

The full guidance, entitled LRG 37.0 – Weather and Climate Resilience, can be downloaded [here](#).

Birmingham venue for 2023 Light Rail Summit

The Institute of Engineering and Technology's impressive conference facilities in the heart of Birmingham are set to host a major light rail event in September.

IET: Austin Court has been named as the venue for this year's Light Rail Summit, staged by UKTram, and the sector's representative organisation is now inviting professionals from across the sector to take part in the high-profile event.

Lorraine George, UKTram Business Manager, commented: "With state-of-the-art facilities within a charming and historic listed building, Austin Court looks set to provide a perfect setting for top level discussions on the challenges and opportunities faced by the light rail sector.

"We will soon be announcing details of the 'hot topics' for discussion, together with a line-up of guest speakers, and we are already starting to take bookings for what promises to be another landmark event that's also free to attend."

Building on the success of previous similar events in Manchester and Edinburgh, this year's summit will take place on September 21 and further information, including booking details, are available by emailing lorraine.george@uktram.co.uk.



Engineers discuss embedded tracks

The management and replacement of embedded track assets was the key topic at a recent, well attended, meeting of light rail engineers.

In total, 37 members of the Group attended, either in person or online, for what was an extremely productive meeting and best practice day, held at the Manchester Metrolink depot and Transport for Greater Manchester offices and led by LREG Chairman, Ian Hale.

Phillip Terry, UKTram Lead Engineer, explained: "We believe this meeting had one of the highest attendances ever, indicating that sharing information and best practice for embedded track renewals is a key concern within the sector.

"The Best Practice Day session started with an informative and thought-provoking presentation on TfGM's past and future challenges of embedded track renewals.

"The meeting provided an ideal opportunity for professionals to share their experience and knowledge on this important topic while addressing the challenges that are common to all maintainers, including procurement, planning, standardisation, and budgets."

During the best practice day, presentations were also given by industry experts on condition monitoring of infrastructure assets, innovation, and embedded rail renewals with representatives from Instrumental Ltd, Volker-Rail (Laing O'Rourke – MPT Consortium), IADS Co and Voestalpine contributing.

"In conjunction with UKTram and Instrumental Ltd, a trial of instrumentation for track condition monitoring is to be fitted on a standard vehicle and volunteers are now being sought to take part," Phillip added.

Congress provides European perspective on light rail challenges



New financing models for future light rail projects in Europe have been highlighted during a successful international event this week.

UKTram Managing Director, James Hammett was among the delegates at the European Light Rail Congress in Tenerife which also included a fascinating update on the recently expanded Helsinki Metro in Finland.

The use of artificial intelligence to predict emerging travel patterns was also put under the spotlight and all these developments are set to be discussed at future meetings of UKTram working groups.

"The event provided an ideal opportunity to learn from, and share best practice, with our European colleagues," James said. "As well as providing valuable updates on a range of important projects, it has provided us with a wealth of information across a range of topics that will be of interest to our members.

"We would particularly like to thank Tenerife Metro for hosting a special demonstration that offered an insight into their SIMOVE speed control system."

Operators highlight third-party incidents

The impact of third-party actions on effective and reliable tramway operations has been highlighted at a recent meeting of the UKTram Operations Group.

Representatives from networks in Dublin, Manchester, Sheffield, Nottingham, Docklands and Birmingham took part in the hybrid meeting – hosted by Tram Operations Limited in Croydon – and several reported that incidents beyond their control were a major contribution to disruption.

Steve Duckering, UKTram Operations Manager, commented: "Best practice on degraded services will be a future focus of the Group and members also discussed the development a 'hazard perception' tool that is more focused to persons on and around the tramway, including track workers and customer-facing employees.

The meeting also included a tour of Croydon's, control centre, training simulator and workshop while representatives from Blackpool Transport and Costain joined in debates through Teams.

"As a result, the group enjoyed very engaging discussions taking place within the group on future workstreams that will be of benefit to the sector," Steve added.



WORKING ON SAFETY TOGETHER

New video sets out sector risk framework

Key projects to further reduce the risk of tramway accidents have been highlighted in a new video from the organisation responsible for driving light rail safety.

Outlining the four key pillars of an inter-connected risk management framework developed by the Light Rail Safety and Standards Board, the short film also features an introduction by the HM Assistant Chief Inspector of Railways at the Office of Rail and Road, Patrick Talbot.

Praising the work of the LRSSB since its foundation in 2019, Mr Talbot recognises the value of having a dedicated body meeting the specific needs of the light rail sector and ensuring it has a structured approach to enhancing safety standards.

This process has included the incorporation of related projects into a comprehensive platform covering risk identification, management and mitigation.

At the heart of the framework is the LRSSB's upgraded Tram Accident and Incident Reporting system (TAIR) and the video explains how this vital project will support future risk modelling, standardised Bowtie risk assessments and an adoption of the ORR's Risk Management Maturity Model (RM3).

All four initiatives are covered in the video, providing a comprehensive overview of the LRSSB's work in supporting the sector to further enhance its already impressive safety record.

The video can be viewed on the LRSSB YouTube channel, [here](#).

Sector professionals discuss light rail communications

Marketing and customer service professionals from across the light rail sector have agreed to share best practice across a range of activities that aim to promote tramways and similar transit systems.

Under new Chair Tom Singleton, members of a UKTram sub-group have met to agree terms of reference as colleagues face a series of shared challenges.

Tom, the Head of Service Delivery at London Trams, explained: "At the meeting of the Communications and Customer Services sub-group, representatives from a number of networks reported that tram patronage across the country continues to recover following the removal of Covid restrictions, but, in most cases, it remains below pre-pandemic levels.

"In response, operators are developing campaigns to boost customer numbers, and the future meeting will provide the ideal platform to share ideas and benefit from the experience of other systems facing similar challenges."

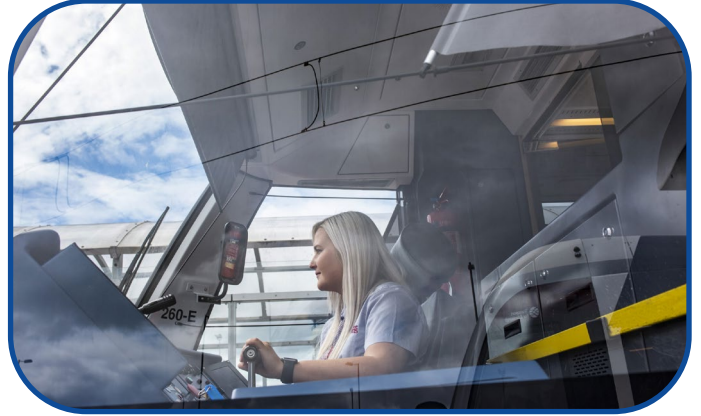
Moving forward, the group will report into UKTram's Light Rail Operators Group and discuss a wide range of topics covering marketing, public relations, enhancing the customer experience and safety messaging.

Further information about the group is available by emailing info@uktram.co.uk.

Driver recruitment and training guide reissued

As part of a continuous review of existing light rail guidance, a document covering for the effective recruitment and training of new tram drivers has been reissued by the LRSSB.

The guidance covers everything from psychometric testing to the physical and mental abilities required for a job where public safety is absolutely paramount. The latest version is now available to download from the LRSSB's online reference library [here](#).



Appeal for tram volunteers in Blackpool

Ahead of the summer season, Blackpool Heritage Tram Tours is appealing for volunteers to help it run a packed programme of activities.

It's on the lookout for Heritage Ambassadors to engage with visitors to Blackpool's famous Promenade. In addition to selling pre-booked seats on Promenade and Coastal tram tours, they will assist the tram team with checking in passengers and delivering a warm welcome to customers as they board.

Volunteers may also be asked to assist with the online shop, deliver leaflets to local hotels and businesses or represent Heritage Tram Tours at trade and tourism events.

The heritage operator is also appealing for volunteer tram conductors responsible for collecting fares, helping customers on and off trams, and operating manual points.

Gary Conn, Heritage Commercial Manager, commented: "We already have volunteers from around the country, and we are particularly keen to hear from anyone who has experience of working with trams, whether they are retired or still working on a light rail system, who can spare some of their free time."

Further information about the roles, and details on how to apply, can be found [here](#).



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