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ARTP Newsletter August 2009

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Chairman's Report

ARTP Board

Welcome to the ARTP's third newsletter of 2009. The Board have been busy on your behalf attending meetings, forums and Board meetings. It is proving to be a busy year despite the recession with several reviews of systems and training and assessment packages some of which are explained in articles within this newsletter.

With the reduction in work generally in the industry, there have been many redundancies experienced at all levels of the supply chain. My concern at this stage is that we are repeating the mistakes post privatisation where many experienced and highly skilled people left the industry and the skills gap, in my opinion, will widen once the recovery occurs. Therefore the ARTP members will be critical to help train and assess candidates to help fill that skills gap, with professional trainers and assessors and effective training and assessment packages.

Railway Strategies Event – 24 June 2009

The focus of the event, held at the National Motorcycle Museum) was on three key components for future business success – Skills, Innovation and Technology - all linked by one common theme: people. Part of the event was a skills debate with the following speakers as shown in the photo:



Kevin Marchand, Head of Skills, GoSkills

Lesley Hodsdon, Senior Workforce Development Specialist, Rail Safety & Standards Board and President of the ARTP

Peter Loosley, Policy Director, Railway Industry Association

Andy Crago – Chairman of the Association of Railway Training Providers

There was a lively debate with questions from the floor to the panel on various subjects around the area of skills and competency. The questions raised were answered by each in turn and the panel gave their views on each of the subject areas.

Special Interest Groups

The Plant & Standards Special Interest Group (SIG) is well established and performing well with a core of 12 to 15 active members attending the monthly meetings. There are good lines of communication with Network Rail and RSSB which enable the continual improvement of training and assessment packages and with information of changes that can be disseminated.

The Track Safety SIG has proven more difficult to become established and I draw your attention to the next meeting on the 16th September. If you want to influence the future in regard to the content of Track Safety

training and assessment packages then please attend the meeting.

Future Actions

The board are in place to serve you the members. If you think there are other issues that we should be addressing please don't hesitate to contact me to discuss either by e-mail or by phone:

Andy Crago
andy.crago@hydrex.co.uk
07802 869408

ARTP & Network Rail look to the future

As most of you will know Network Rail's contract with Achilles for the audit and accreditation service for the Sentinel scheme ends on 31 December 2009. ARTP were delighted to be asked by Mark Ruddy, Head of Training and Competence at Network Rail to contribute ideas to be taken into consideration when a new specification for this service is drawn up prior to the tender process. ARTP has always worked with Network Rail to review the current audit protocol (this work is described in Steve Diksa's report below) but this is a new opportunity to have a fundamental influence on its future design.

Thanks to the support of members who attended, a very lively workshop held in Nottingham on the 4th June resulted in a report submitted to Mark Ruddy. The report addresses these key issues:

- The current audit and accreditation system
- The role of the audit and accreditation body
- What the new audit and accreditation system should aim to achieve
- How the contract holder could be evaluated and measured
- What a new audit and accreditation system could look like

We hope that our efforts will contribute to changes that benefit ARTP members.

Kath D'Archambaud

Audit Protocol Review

ARTP recently took part in the review of the current training / assessment provider audit protocol (currently administered by Achilles on behalf of Network Rail). It was a real opportunity for ARTP to provide proposals for change to the current process and have a say in how we would like to be measured and audited in future.

The review panel consisted of Network Rail, Achilles and ARTP which resulted in a positive meeting with proposed revisions to the protocol that will help raise the bar and further improve the current audit protocol. The proposals will be further considered with a view to implementation in early 2010. An opportunity was also taken to review the current process for providing training schedules and random audit process. The final day of the 2 day workshop resulted in the trainer / assessor 'observation of performance' document being streamlined for ease of use by Achilles and licensed providers.

All in all, it was a worthwhile exercise that saw ARTP step up to the plate with worthy proposals and innovative ideas. The next date for review is 8/9th March 2010 and ARTP members are welcome to provide feedback.

You have a voice via ARTP and all members are encouraged to become active and get involved!

Steve Diksa

Track Safety Special Interest Group

Unfortunately this ARTP special interest group has not yet succeeded in meeting. **If you want to make a difference to the training assessment materials for track safety then your views need to be heard.** I intend to hold a meeting at our Fradley Training centre (near Lichfield Staffs) on Wednesday 16th September at 10.00 and then to hold a meeting at least once every 3 months. Please e-mail me directly (andy@amtrain.co.uk) if you wish to attend.

ARTP continues to influence the NR produced training materials through attendance at the working group, the most important element of this being your feedback through the NCCA website. Please continue to submit your information in this way. I look forward to seeing some of you and sharing ideas in September.

Andy McKenna

ARTP talks with Achilles

I recently met with Neil Willings of Achilles to explore some issues surrounding the interface between ARTP members and the former ARTP process. Members felt that the service had deteriorated since the centralisation of service in Oxford. The key points and actions are as below.

It was agreed that the following would be instigated forthwith:

- Processes

An RTAS payment form will now be sent out with all application forms and Annual Audit Confirmation e-mails. This will enable all members to pay by credit card, wire transfer and BACS payment which will speed up the time taken due to invoicing and awaiting cheques

- Communications

The following are to be set as typical response times:

Telephone: A 48 hours response. Achilles will seek to shorten this period as their work to multi-skill the team progresses. On occasion queries of a technical nature will have to be referred to auditors for help. If an auditor is in an audit it is unlikely that we will receive an answer the same day. There is now a dedicated RTAS telephone line which has been advised to suppliers. This is shown on the bottom of all E mail correspondence and has also been circulated across other rail teams in Achilles who deal with external customers. Telephones are always covered even if someone is unable to help with the query they can take a message.

Email: always acknowledge the mail within 48 hours even if obtaining a full resolution to any issues raised takes longer.

Actions and Activity Requests

These represent the times taken to address reviews, address paperwork

issues and to upload onto the NCCA website. Some of these activities involve specific individuals in Network Rail or arrange for interview panels to be convened.

Trainer Assessor Up-skilling: The lead times of application forms can depend on time taken to receive cheque for payment. At present this is taking 2-3 weeks turn around

Registration of a Trainer/Assessor with a New Company. This should be undertaken within 48 hours. Removal from a company following transfer is entirely dependent on Achilles receiving a request to do so. There is no requirement for this to take place and many organisations seek to maintain registrations.

Random Audits

Random audits are of the trainer/assessor rather than the company for which they work or are registered. Achilles audit 20% of the trainer / assessor population We can only arrange random audits on the basis of the weekly activity reports being issued to us. For those companies who do not submit these reports Achilles cannot arrange an audit of any of their staff and so the burden falls disproportionately on those that do. Of those that are able to be included in the process we operate a truly random selection of the individuals. Clearly for those organisations with large numbers of staff they are more likely to have one of the trainer/assessors selected for audit on their books.

A letter will be issued by Network Rail on behalf of the Sentinel Operations Meeting members stating that on-going failure to meet the requirement to submit weekly training plans will result in suspension of the training organisation from the scheme

I would hope that ARTP members are submitting their training assessment schedules.

Should any members have further issues that they feel are not being resolved please direct them to me and I will pursue on your behalf. A further meeting is scheduled in October.

Andy McKenna

Plant & Standards Group SIG

Plant & Standards Group SIG

The Plant and Standards Special Interest Group meet on a monthly basis with an opportunity to meet fellow members with similar roles or views. The meeting enables them to keep up-to-date with new or amended standards and to review these documents enabling feedback to the applicable stakeholder. This is beneficial both to the members and the stakeholder who has a range of perspectives to enable a holistic approach when developing or amending standards. If you are interested in Plant why not join the SIG and become a working member?

Review of Sentinel On-Track Plant (OTP) Schemes

The ARTP Plant Group raises concerns in relation to omissions, inaccuracies and potential improvements to the Sentinel OTP Operator and Machine/Crane Controllers schemes. Issues with the NCCA database are also discussed and a log is developed of each issue raised and sent to Jackie Judge of Network Rail. Due to this process and with ARTP members' input, continual improvement of the training and assessment packages is maintained. There was a meeting with Jackie Judge, Ken Mosley, Paul

Leyland and Bryan Smith on the 7th August which discussed the issues raised from the SIG and feedback has been provided to the members of the outcomes. **This demonstrates that you the members can have a voice and influence the Industry.**

On Track Plant

You may be aware that Network Rail were concerned with the number of major injuries that involved OTP and that a 'Yellow Plant Group' were set up which reviewed over a 6 month period the following areas:

- Machine Design
- Competence and Training
- Roles and Responsibilities

The report has now been issued with 21 recommendations which cover all aspects of the use of OTP. There are recommendations, as you would expect that cover training and competence issues: one of the areas is Machine/Crane Controller which is of specific interest to the ARTP Plant Group. I have been asked to represent the ARTP on a working Group to look at issues raised in this report regarding competence and training.

PTS logbooks

You may be aware of the requirement for PTS holders to have a logbook from September which raises the question whether MC/CC or Machine Operators (MO) have to carry one in addition to their specific competence logbook. I have raised this at the meeting on the 7th as it would require double entries which are not justifiable. I have had a oral agreement that MC/CC don't need to do both but will confirm the position with this and the MOs once I have it in writing.

Changes to the Rule Book

There have been no major changes to the Rule book since the last newsletter. Before the changes take place in December, Les Moyles of RSSB will attend the Plant SIG to detail the major changes and the impact on those involved with Plant and Track Safety.

Tandem Lifting

You may be aware that there is a Tandem Lifting Working Group chaired by Darren Smith of NR which looks at all aspects of the tandem lifting process. I and other ARTP members are part of this group and you may have seen the banning of tandem lifting 60 foot concrete panels using RRVs to wagons on an adjacent line which was a recommendation from the working group. There will be an impact on the Sentinel scheme that covers this process for MC/CC, MO and of course Trainers and Assessors. Hopefully you will see the changes based on recommendations from the group which will result in this process being planned and operated safely which prevents another incident of an RRV overturning when tandem lifting.

Location

The meetings are held in Derby. The meeting is open to all members who are interested in Plant or Standards and if you need any further information, please contact the Secretariat at artp@riagb.org.uk or Andy Crago at: andy.crago@hydrex.co.uk.

