

Northampton, UK
20 October 2015

National Training Academy for Rail (NTAR) officially opened by Transport Minister, Claire Perry MP

Today, 20th October, the National Training Academy for Rail (NTAR) was officially opened by Transport Minister Claire Perry. The state-of-the-art training facility is now ready for the first intake of students.

The academy was established in response to a forecast skills shortage of around 8,000 people over the next ten years, caused by factors such as the technological advancement of rolling stock, an ageing workforce, and significant investment and growth in the industry.

An innovative agreement between the National Skills Academy for Rail Engineering (NSARE) and the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS) with support from the Department for Transport (DfT) has provided half the funds required to build NTAR, with Siemens contributing the other 50 per cent. The 50/50 funding agreement will release 50% of the academy's training capacity to the wider UK industry, with the remainder used by Siemens's own rail sector employees.

NTAR will offer 20,000 man days of training per year and will act as a national 'hub' with regional 'spokes' located at other train care facilities around the country. The bespoke facility, which is located in Northampton, close to the Siemens train care depot at Kings Heath, will combine the use of unique hands-on equipment and workshop facilities in addition to classroom-based teaching, using cutting-edge technology.

Members of the Rail Engineering Apprenticeship Group are also set to make full use of the academy and the first intake of students will include those from train operating company South West Trains.

Rail Minister Claire Perry, said, “We are working closely with the transport industry to bring a sustained and lasting legacy of skills and opportunity for people across the UK. The opening of the National Training Academy for Rail is a major milestone towards delivering a network of transport infrastructure skills colleges and training academies, promised as part of our transport skills strategy.

“The government is investing billions of pounds in rail and road projects, which will create thousands of exciting new job opportunities. More and more of these jobs are cutting-edge, highly technical and require Britain’s best minds. This new facility – and more like it – are just what the country needs to ensure we develop a workforce with the advanced skills required to build a transport network fit for the future.”

Skills Minister Nick Boles, commented: “This Academy will help provide the skilled workforce industry needs as we embark upon one of the UK’s biggest ever investments in new rail infrastructure.

“Industry-led training will ensure that learners are getting the skills employers want, while many rail firms have also designed new apprenticeship standards for roles like Rail Engineering Technician to deliver the skills needed for UK rail to expand here and internationally.”

Simon Rennie, General Manager at NTAR, said, “Our ambition is to focus on transforming training in traction and rolling stock to genuinely contribute to tackling the Skills Gap in a way which both raises and creates standards, provides a fantastic learning environment, delivers innovation and, when put together, helps transform the perception of our industry to one where the breadth of technology and career opportunities are understood and developed”

Neil Robertson, Chief Executive Officer of NSARE, said, “The UK rail industry is at an exciting juncture, with many projects creating thousands of jobs across the country. The skills shortage in the industry remains a challenge, with far too few young people dreaming of an engineering career, and fewer yet looking to specialise in rail. The well documented ageing workforce and significant technological advancements in our industry prove that there is a clear need for NTAR.”

Steve Scrimshaw, Managing Director of Siemens Rail Systems UK, said, “Together with NSARE, BIS and the DfT, Siemens has invested in creating the National Training Academy for

Rail (NTAR) to make sure the UK rail industry has the skills and expertise necessary to meet the future demands of this exciting and dynamic industry. I am looking forward to welcoming not only our staff and apprentices but also the wider industry being trained at NTAR.”

For further information on NTAR, please see ntar.co.uk

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About the National Training Academy for Rail - NTAR

At NTAR, our ambition is to be recognised as an international Centre of Excellence for training in traction and rolling stock – to be the source of pride for the rail industry, acting as a flagship for skills development and for collaborative working, delivering a successful and sustainable model.

Born from an immediate need to train a workforce to maintain the new Thameslink rolling stock, a unique and more ambitious public/private partnership across government, agencies and private enterprise was developed to address the Traction and Rolling Stock training needs of the market more widely. From this partnership, NTAR was created with a core objective of playing a leading role in the new Railway Skills development programmes being driven by NSARE – all underpinned by strong collaborative working and consultation with the market to make sure prioritised needs of the industry are met.

About Siemens

Siemens AG (Berlin and Munich) is a global technology powerhouse that has stood for engineering excellence, innovation, quality, reliability and internationality for more than 165 years. The company is active in more than 200 countries, focusing on the areas of electrification, automation and digitalization. One of the world's largest producers of energy-efficient, resource-saving technologies, Siemens is No. 1 in offshore wind turbine construction, a leading supplier of combined cycle turbines for power generation, a major provider of power transmission solutions and a pioneer in infrastructure solutions as well as automation, drive and software solutions for industry. The company is also a leading provider of medical imaging equipment – such as computed tomography and magnetic resonance imaging systems – and a leader in laboratory diagnostics as well as clinical IT. In fiscal year 2014, which ended on September 30, 2014, Siemens generated revenue from continuing operations of €71.9 billion and net income of €5.5 billion. At the end of September 2014, the company had around 357,000 employees worldwide. Further information is available on the Internet at www.siemens.com.

About the National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering – NSARE

Following two years of research and development, the National Skills Academy for Railway Engineering (NSARE) was established in November 2010, when the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation & Skills, Vince Cable, announced that the UK Government would support the Business Plan. NSARE Limited was incorporated in January 2011 as a 'not for profit' company, wholly owned by its Members and 'opened for business' from its National Office in central London. The corporate Membership scheme was launched at its first national conference in June 2011; today it has over **350** Member organisations and is still growing. Membership includes railway companies, private sector training companies, Further Education Colleges, Universities, Qualification Development and Awarding Organisations. Two-thirds of NSARE Members are SMEs.

The five key areas of activity are:

- Forecasting the skills challenges to deliver the railway of the future
- Promoting the rail industry in schools, colleges and universities
- Developing the railway engineering skills standards and qualifications
- Accrediting the railway engineering training provision
- Supporting competency management processes and systems