# HR Leaders Group

Thursday 16 January 2025

## Meeting summary

Chair – Dan Appleby, Head of HR, Loram UK
Vice Chair – Iain Taylor, Head of HR and Support Services, CAF
Partner – Ruby Rai, Partner, Nelsons
Rail Forum Host – Elaine Clark, CEO

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The 6th HR Leaders Group took place on 16 January with 32 attendees on the day. The delegate list was issued with the joining instructions. Dan and Iain welcomed everyone to the meeting and welcomed our guest speakers for this meeting.

**Lydia Fairman, Head of Capability and Skills Development, Network Rail**

Lydia presented some of the overarching findings from the recent National Skills Academy for Rail Skills Report. The data shows the significant challenges the industry faces. Replacement demand for certain key roles is a major concern. Lydia referenced several initiatives that members can get involved with including the Industry Talent Exchange and Industry Work Experience Programme. Slides are available with these notes and the full NSAR Report can be accessed here
https://www.nsar.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/ONLINE-Annual-Workforce-Survey-2024-compressed.pdf

**Apeksha Naik and Odis Palmer, EDI Leads, GBRTT**

Apeksha and Odis talked about the Rail Unites for Inclusion group (open to all to join/get involved) and the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Maturity Model which is being used in GBRTT and some of the publicly (DfT) run train operating companies. The model provides benchmarks across 15 categories at 4 levels for organisations to self-audit against. Slides from the presentation plus further background benchmarking information and tools that can be used in companies are available with the notes. If you want further information, please contact Elaine@railforum.uk and she can put you in touch with the team at GBRTT.

**Ruby Rai, Senior Associate, Nelsons Law**

Ruby provided an important update focussed on the "*Bandi and Others vs Bolt*" case. This case saw over 10,000 drivers take an employment tribunal case challenging their self-employed status. The tribunal found in favour of the drivers saying they were engaged as workers. Full details of the case are in the slides with these notes.

Following the presentations and a few question/answers Iain said that he and Dan were keen to get feedback on what future topics the group would like to focus on. Examples suggested included those listed below at Appendix 1. A separate survey will be circulated to seek views from the members of the group.

Elaine Clark mentioned that the Rebuilding Futures Alliance concept that had been presented at our Annual Conference in October had progressed and she suggested they have a speaking slot at the next meeting. In the meantime some slides are available with these notes.

Future meeting dates are:

Wednesday 2nd April @12.30
Wednesday 2nd July @ 12.30
Wednesday 15th October @12.30

**Event Partner**

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## Appendix 1

**Skills Shortage**

- **Talent Acquisition Strategies**: Innovative ways to attract and retain skilled workers.
- **Training and Development**: Programs to upskill existing employees and prepare them for future roles.
- **Partnerships with Educational Institutions**: Collaborations to create a pipeline of qualified candidates.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)**

- **Inclusive Recruitment Practices**: Ensuring job postings and hiring processes are unbiased.
- **DEI Training Programs**: Workshops and training sessions to promote understanding and acceptance.
- **Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)**: Supporting ERGs to foster a sense of community and belonging.
- **Measuring DEI Success**: Metrics and benchmarks to track progress and identify areas for improvement.

**Health & Wellbeing**

- **Mental Health Support**: Programs and resources to support mental health and reduce stress.
- **Physical Health Initiatives**: Encouraging physical fitness and providing health screenings.
- **Work-Life Balance**: Policies to help employees balance work and personal life.
- **Ergonomic Workspaces**: Creating safe and comfortable work environments.

**Trade Unions**

- **Collaborative Negotiations**: Working with unions to address employee concerns and negotiate fair terms.
- **Union Engagement**: Regular communication and involvement of union representatives in decision-making.
- **Conflict Resolution**: Strategies to resolve disputes and maintain positive labour relations.
- **Union Training**: Providing training for union leaders to enhance their skills and knowledge.

**Digital HR**

- **HR Technology Adoption**: Implementing digital tools for HR processes like payroll, recruitment, and performance management.
- **Utilizing Technology**: Leveraging AI and other technologies to streamline recruitment and training processes.
- **Data Analytics**: Using data to make informed HR decisions and improve employee experiences.
- **Employee Self-Service Platforms**: Empowering employees with access to their own HR-related information.
- **Cybersecurity**: Ensuring the protection of employee data and compliance with data privacy regulations

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