

Network Rail and Arriva Rail London team up for innovative job swap initiative

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Network Rail and Arriva Rail London have joined forces on a ground-breaking industry move to facilitate a senior level industry job swap.

From August 2023, Matt Pocock, ARL's Operations Director will join Network Rail's Wessex route as Operations Director on an 18-month secondment. In turn, Gunnar Lindahl, Network Rail's Wessex route Operations Director will join Arriva Rail London (ARL – the London Overground operator) as Operations Director for the same period of time.

This partnership between ARL and Network Rail is not only a demonstration of both organisations investing in and developing their teams, but recognition of the need for track and train to work more closely than ever before, as the rail industry moves towards Great British Railways (GBR) where infrastructure and train operations will work as one, under a single guiding mind.

Matt and Gunnar's strong skillsets are expected to greatly benefit their new temporary organisations, sharing new insight and ways of working. The experience they will gain will also be hugely beneficial once they return to their substantive roles, enhancing Network Rail and ARL's executive-level knowledge of managing both infrastructure and train service operations. This new, increased understanding will further enhance both organisation's long-term decision making that truly puts passengers at the forefront of their activities and decision-making processes.

This is the first senior level industry job swap between Network Rail and ARL and is hoped to be rolled out more widely in the future.

About Matt Pocock

Matt has been with Arriva since 2012. He has worked at ARL from the beginning of the current concession in 2016, initially as part of the mobilisation team and then as performance director. He became operations director in 2021. Prior to this, he led the mobilisation of the operations elements of the new Northern Rail franchise and worked as the head of train planning & resources for CrossCountry. He's now come full circle having started his rail career with Network Rail in 2001, where he held roles in both Western and Wessex routes. He also spent time in what is now the System Operator function, where he led the centralisation of Short Term Planning (STP) at Milton Keynes.

About Gunnar Lindahl

Gunnar Lindahl has been with Network Rail since 2017 having previously spent four years working for London Underground starting as a Graduate Trainee in 2013. He joined the Wessex route as Operations Director in 2020, having also led the corporate response to the industrial action over the last year. Before that he was Senior Incident Officer for the South East Route responsible for leading the response during major incidents. At London Underground he was the Service Controller for the Central Line, with real time responsibility for the busiest metro line in Europe.

Ellie Burrows, regional managing director for Network Rail's Southern region, said: "It's never been a more important time that track and train work together to ensure the rail industry operates hand in glove for the benefit of rail customers and the taxpayer.

"The opportunity to work in partnership with ARL to grow our leaders' whole system knowledge of the industry was an easy decision. There is never a bad time to listen, learn and improve and learning from each other and sharing this knowledge will undoubtedly mutually benefit both organisations.

"This is the first senior level industry job swap for Network Rail's Southern region and ARL and it's something to celebrate. We are committed to growing and supporting our team members so we create an organisation fit for the future and we hope this initiative is the first of many.

"I'd like to take this opportunity to wish Gunnar and Matt all the very best in their new roles."

Paul Hutchings, Managing Director at Arriva Rail London, said: "Arriva Rail London is committed to supporting internal development for colleagues across the business. This exciting agreement will have long-term benefits for both ARL and Network Rail, through wider industry insight and fresh perspective. I wish Matt every success in his secondment and look forward to welcoming Gunnar to the ARL family."