

# Network Rail given award by disability experts and business leaders

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Network Rail has won an award for its commitment to being a diverse and inclusive employer.

The infrastructure owner and manager picked up the annual Recruitment Industry Disability Initiative (RIDI) Disability Confident Award, following a process where the organisation was judged by disability experts and senior industry leaders.

They commended Network Rail for its five-year diversity and inclusion strategy, called Everyone Matters as well as the Disability Matters workstream that is part of it.

The Everyone Matters strategy was published in 2019 and was planned and developed with the input of disabled colleagues and the disabled employee network CanDo.

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the Disability Matters project has provided fresh opportunities for employees to meet and ask questions around disabilities whilst working from home – for example through focus groups and interactive webinars. And Network Rail's reasonable adjustments guidance for employees and their line managers was updated.

Meanwhile, Network Rail chief executive Andrew Haines, and chair Sir Peter Hendy CBE, have both pledged to increase the number of disabled employees, after figures showed that less than 3% of their 44,000-strong workforce have shared that they are disabled or have a long-term health condition.

Loraine Martins OBE, Network Rail's director of diversity and inclusion, said: "I am delighted that we have won this Disability Confident Award. Becoming a more diverse and inclusive employer is vital for us, and this award signals that we are on the right track.

"I would like to thank all colleagues involved in making Network Rail a better place to work. We will continue to make progress through our Disability Matters initiative and through working with our CanDo employee network. This is great recognition, and we know that we still have much more to accomplish."