

Operator signs up new mental health charter

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Great Western Railway has signed up to The Railway Mental Health Charter (RMHC).

The charter is a framework that helps rail companies promote, manage and support mental wellbeing in the workforce.

Developed in collaboration with RSSB and the Mental Wellbeing Group, the charter aims to:

- encourage all member workplaces to engage with and embrace the mental health agenda.
- support rail companies in preventing and addressing mental ill health, including the effective management of stress in the workplace.
- make good practice and information readily and freely available to member organisations.
- support the industry in taking a proactive approach to end mental health stigma, get conversations underway and create an open and inclusive culture where all colleagues know where and when to ask for support

The charter was developed by Lee Woolcott-Ellis, mental health lead manager at Southeastern Railway, in collaboration with Rail Safety and Standards (RSSB) and the Mental Wellbeing Group.

Lee said: “The rail industry exposes the workforce to unique working conditions. Shift patterns, challenging demands and working conditions, and exposure to potentially traumatic events are some of the issues that make the management of mental health in the industry particularly complex.”

GWR human resources director Ruth Busby said: “The charter helps us to ensure we’re doing everything we can to support the mental health and wellbeing of our colleagues, which we know is so important.

“It also helps us to connect with others in the rail industry, ensuring we can learn from one another and provide the very best support we can to our colleagues.”

GWR customer service & operations director, Richard Rowland, said: “This is important because it underlines to all of our colleagues – everyone from drivers to gateline staff, managers and apprentices, and engineers to administrators – that we are committed to their wellbeing and they know that support is available should they need it.”