

Rail freight companies come together in support of Rail Safe Friendly programme

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DB Cargo UK and Freightliner have attended a joint 'gold disc' presentation to mark their partnership with education programme Rail Safe Friendly.

The two freight operating companies have joined Rail Safe Friendly as gold level partners and were presented with the discs in honour of their support at a lunch held at Freightliner's Basford Hall depot in Crewe.

Rail Safe Friendly was launched in March 2023 and delivers Network Rail's video safety content about the dangers of trespassing on railways directly to schools via digital education provider Learn Live, which, since 2019 has reached over 21 million young people in over 12,500 schools across the UK in partnership with the Trespass Improvement Team at Network Rail.

The programme was launched last year by Stuart Heaton, Learn Live and Rail Safe Friendly Managing

Director, following the tragic death of 11-year-old Harrison Ballantyne who received a fatal electric shock after climbing over a fence to retrieve his football at a train depot.

Presenting DB Cargo and Freightliner with the gold discs, Stuart Heaton said: “In the highly competitive rail freight market it is excellent to see companies coming together to spread the crucial rail safety message to young people. Safety crosses all boundaries, and I am delighted and grateful to DB Cargo and Freightliner for partnering with us. In the space of just a year we now have 70 partners from across the rail industry helping to ensure rail safety education is delivered in schools and youth organisations. That is a phenomenal achievement and I thank them all.”

Andrea Rossi, CEO of DB Cargo UK, said: “We are proud to be gold partners of Rail Safe Friendly and to support the programme’s aims of delivering critical rail safety messages to as many young people as possible. The railway is a dangerous place, and it is crucial that children understand the risks and that they should never trespass on or near to rail lines, or in depots and yards.”

Louise Ward, Safety & Sustainability Director at Freightliner, said: “We are committed to working with Rail Safe Friendly and across the industry to promote this important safety education. I have no doubt that reaching children directly in schools through this programme will give them lifelong knowledge about the dangers of the railway, and that it will save lives.”

The Learn Live channel also has a moderated, GDPR compliant “LIVE CHAT” facility to promote interaction and involvement from the schools and colleges taking part in Rail Safe Friendly.

Schools can achieve a bronze, silver or gold award depending on their level of outreach beyond delivering the training to students.

More than 4,000 UK schools are already on board with the programme, which is raising awareness, saving lives and preventing injuries.