

# SSE Enterprise Rail and VolkerFitzpatrick host joint safety forum

December 18, 2017



Two of the country's leading rail industry principal contractors, SSE Enterprise Rail and VolkerFitzpatrick, held a joint safety forum in December at SSE's new Forbury Place offices in Reading. Attended by around 70 organisations, the event was designed to engage, educate and inspire SSE Enterprise Rail's and VolkerFitzpatrick's respective supply chains to deliver safely and deliver well – developing safety awareness and giving both companies' stakeholders an opportunity to discuss workplace safety culture and share perspectives on how, by collaborating, they will help to create a better railway for Britain. A major theme of the day was identifying and supporting those struggling with mental health and well-being challenges.

SSE Enterprise Rail and VolkerFitzpatrick, both part of larger organisations, have decided to come together to offer a one-stop-solution on infrastructure projects across the UK – recognising that together they are better-placed to innovate, add more value and offer unique opportunities across the UK rail network, including depots and stations.

SSE Enterprise Rail is seeking to develop reciprocal relationships that could see the company financing, designing, building, maintaining and owning railway assets.

The forum featured presentations from a host of experienced speakers from SSE Enterprise and VolkerFitzpatrick, and was attended by key figures from the rail industry, customers and supply chain partners – ranging from civil engineering businesses to overhead line specialists and signalling and

infrastructure companies.

An interactive Q&A session took place with Dr Catherine Hallahan from Platform Medicals, who addressed the topic of mental health and wellbeing in the workplace. Her guidance and advice was said to be 'invaluable' by delegates at the event. There were several other activities that took place, including a University Challenge-style 'Meet the suppliers' quiz.

SSE Enterprise and VolkerFitzpatrick shared 'safety moments' and expectations throughout the day and the team was delighted to be joined by Andy Duffin, Anglia Regional Delivery Director, Network Rail, who gave an inspiring presentation on safety from a client's perspective - outlining Network Rail's ongoing wants, needs and expectations.

Raj Sinha, Managing Director of SSE Enterprise Rail, said: "The joint rail safety forum was an extremely positive event for all parties involved. It was a fantastic opportunity for our team to meet with our supply chain partners and discuss key issues surrounding safety and collaborative working as well as exploring best practice in our work. Our objective is simple. We want to be known as the best in the business from a delivery and safety perspective and our aim is to influence and ensure we receive 'best in class' services from those people and organisations who work with us - delivering a service that is defined by our 'if it can't be done safely, don't do it' approach. This forum was essentially about making sure that we are all 'match fit' to achieve these objectives.

"The forum created an atmosphere of sharing, where people were encouraged to openly discuss issues surrounding safety, drawing on each-others' experiences and identifying shared knowledge and best practice to help achieve our common goals. To achieve stronger performance, we must all work together because we believe that the sum of our collective efforts is greater than the individual parts, and that was the message we aimed to convey at the event."

John Cox, Managing Director of VolkerFitzpatrick's rail division, said: "The safety forum was an excellent opportunity for both companies to collaborate and share thoughts on our desired outcomes. We aim to influence a fresh approach to safety in the operating environments we work in, and are united in our determination to reduce accidents and incidents.

"The subjects covered in the forum were relevant to today's industry and helped us explore how we can work better together, whether that is through adaptive supply chains, use of technology or adopting a collaborative working approach. Our safety goals are aligned with Network Rail's commitment to building a safer railway for Britain's rail workers and passengers, and it was fantastic to see delegates from across the industry coming together under one roof to address them. The forum demonstrated a common objective and collective effort to make sure that everyone arrives home safely every day."

This was the third supplier safety forum that SSE Enterprise Rail has hosted since 2015, each designed to keep the supply chain focused on doing the right things from a health, safety and performance perspective. Previous events were held in Thatcham and Glasgow.