

# The closer working relationships that are transforming the railways for the better

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Regular conference calls, shares of information and communication generally between Network Rail and its supply chain has never been better.

This developing working relationship and engagement is transforming the way projects are being drawn up and at the same time improving efficiencies and deliveries.

AmcoGiffen is one of the UK's leading partners for the safe and efficient design and delivery of innovative, integrated engineering solutions with 561 staff and 615 directly employed operatives, with a full range of multi-disciplinary competencies.

The company is a principal contractor to Network Rail, London Underground, Environment Agency and Canals & Rivers Trust, amongst other partnerships highlighting a proven track record of safety, quality and competency.

Managing Director John Booth has spoken to [railbusinessdaily.com](http://railbusinessdaily.com) about the working relationship with Network Rail and how it has to be how they operate in the future.

"There certainly has been a sea change recently and it's definitely for the better, driving efficiencies and delivery," he said.

"We're having regular conference calls, sharing information, projects and challenges. There is more of an understanding of what Network Rail is trying to achieve, what the challenges are and how ourselves and the rest of the supply chain can play our part in coming up with solutions in overcoming the challenges.

"It's about not being afraid to raise issues that haven't worked well in the past and talk about them collectively and then going forward to commence works on site. It is such a huge step change, but one that offers so many benefits.

"With any team you want to get everybody aligned with a common purpose, which in this case is 'Putting Passengers First'. We are now coming together as one team, playing more of a role in drawing up projects. Every contractor knows the role they have to play so we are working collaboratively and together and coming up with the best possible solutions. This is driving the performance and results everyone is looking for."

AmcoGiffen has a strong reputation for its work in the rail industry. Its enhanced range of skills and expertise enables the organisation to offer clients a totally integrated approach – securing contacts for every aspect of design, construction, renewal, refurbishment, installation, commissioning and maintenance.

John, who became MD in April, said: "Rail is the primary sector where AmcoGiffen has forged its reputation, and we consider ourselves to be part of the 'rail family' that makes the industry such a unique and exciting place to be.

"As the world's safest, most carbon-friendly means of mass transport, we are enormously proud of our contribution to the industry, in terms of people, suppliers, clients and stakeholders.

"We are fully aligned to 'Putting Passengers First' by contributing towards the network operating at optimal efficiency, with minimal disruption.

"We don't just protect the environment; we contribute towards ensuring businesses and communities thrive safely and sustainably and, in doing so, safeguard the national economy, particularly in challenging times."

A key to the company's success is its importance placed on safety. The strategy of SHEQ 24/7' supplemented by its recently-introduced 'Good-2-Go' programme underpins the way in which AmcoGiffen, and its supply chain, operates.

This kind of forward-thinking, alongside a reputation for delivery on time and budget, has built a formidable reputation in the rail sector – including the role as a principal contractor for Network Rail.

John said: "We at AmcoGiffen are proud to serve Network Rail as one of our primary clients. As a client, Network Rail live and breathe true collaboration, no better illustrated than during the current challenges

presented by COVID-19.

“They have demonstrated true leadership, particularly in the enormously uncertain early days of the pandemic. This was illustrated in the way that across all Network Rail regions the supply chain partners came together to provide a safe, practical and efficient way of working.

“The commercial leadership from the client was key too in providing reassurance, ensuring cash flow, and offering further support for those who needed it.

“As we move forwards with Network Rail in CP6, the open and transparent relationship we have ensures we can understand the primary drivers from the client and their stakeholders.

“The key is to work closely with Network Rail as a collective supply chain, to share and learn from safe and efficient ways of working, ensuring we deliver the most efficient ‘pounds in the ground’ whilst ensuring we consider and deliver on ‘Putting Passengers First’ too.

“Network Rail’s visibility of future projects also allows to plan and make investments when it comes to training and development.

“Among just a few of our initiatives include the supervisors’ academy and bringing in apprentices. We want to play our part in inspiring the next generation and giving them the opportunity of work. I’m more confident investing in training when I know there will be projects in the future for them to work on.

“That way of working brings innovation and efficiencies that we know Network Rail and the industry on the whole needs.”

Just like Network Rail engaging more with the supply chain, that is something AmcoGiffen has, and has vowed to continue doing into the future.

John said: “AmcoGiffen have a direct delivery model that ensures we deliver the best value for our clients. We are truly multi-disciplinary and also recognise the added value that key supply chain partners can bring.

“As a national business with a regional model, many of our supply chain relationships are with local suppliers, indeed 64% of our subcontract spend is engaged through SMEs. We recognise our responsibility to engage our supply chain fully in the areas that are our priority – whether that be safety initiatives, innovations, and shared learning to provide our clients with a truly efficient delivery model. Good ideas aren’t just exclusive to us so it’s better to come together collectively and work on ideas.

“In addition to our core civils and building capabilities, we offer a range of other disciplines including signalling and telecoms power, distribution and systems.

“Our BIM-accredited multi-disciplinary internal design team ensure that we can offer clients a full range of practical, efficient and innovative solutions from the earliest stages of development.

“We at AmcoGiffen are also keen to develop solutions to serve our clients, ranging from our own internal fabrication facility to our innovative plant such as tunnel cleaning and repair solutions.

“We look forward to working with Network Rail and other strategic partners, in sharing our collective challenges and goals, helping to ensure the rail industry is looked to by others as the example of open, collaborative relationships that drive true value for the clients, stakeholders, passengers and the wider communities across all regions.”

*AmcoGiffen Managing Director John Booth*