

SIR MOIR LOCKHEAD

Leaders in Safety Award

soe

SAFETY LEADERS

The Sir Moir Lockhead safety award recognises leaders in operational safety around the world. In this, the fourth year of the award, three winners are profiled

Sir Moir Lockhead, the founder of First Group, pictured, says that the award named after him does not follow traditional definitions of health and safety. "That is about compliance with regulations, and if you comply, you're fine. Here, the SOE is going one step further. Instead of usually talking about compliance, we are talking about injury prevention and well-being, which is about caring for people. There's a simple message: if you can't do it safely, don't do it."

He adds: "Those people nominated and who are being rewarded have created in their companies a change of culture where injury prevention and caring for



people is at the top of the list. Where this occurs, where leadership is strong, what happens, as we all know, is that they are more successful."

An ex-colleague of Lockhead involved in the awards, Naveed Qamar, adds: "It's leaders that make safety happen.

Where the organisation's culture is driven by the belief of leaders, it makes a huge difference, and I saw that first-hand at First Group under Sir Moir. He always put safety where it needs to be: first and foremost, and everything else fell in line behind."

Also named as a safety leader this year is Jim Latham, former MD of ConsolEnergy's Baltimore Marine Terminal, profiled in the December issue of *Operations Engineer* magazine. **TE**

STEVE JOBSON

ASSET MANAGEMENT
BUSINESS PARTNER,
DHL SUPPLY CHAIN

Although Jobson's official role involves trucks, he clearly spends lots of time thinking about the people that drive them. "As an engineer, I know it [the DHL safety specification] is not just about fitting safety systems; it's about making sure that all of our colleagues understand why we're doing it, how things work, and what we are trying to avoid. It's about keeping people informed. It's not just, 'we've fitted this' and pinging over an email. As engineers, we are visible and accountable, engaging with driver representatives, unions, transport operators and supervisors. It's about being out there so you can be questioned.

"We need to keep people informed of why we're doing this and how it helps them. I think drivers can feel isolated; we are bringing them in and keeping them informed. Some of the systems that are installed on trucks can be overridden or ignored. If people understand why we are doing it, they are more likely to buy in to the changes."

Jobson's wide-ranging background in commercial vehicle engineering also informs such a considered view. Originally apprenticed as a technician to armoured car operator Securicor – back when people used cash – he also worked in roles culminating in service manager at Northampton dealer Gerald White Group (now RH Commercials). When an opportunity from Tippet Britten came knocking in 2004, he moved back to an operator role, becoming a VMU/fleet manager on the Homebase contract, until promotion to his current position in 2010. He remained while the company ownership changed, to Exel Logistics and then DHL.

At DHL, he has brought in load restraint innovations including bespoke rave to rave bungee systems and kite systems for diminishing loads, technology that originally gave voice audible warnings when the park



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brake was not applied, to systems which automatically apply the handbrake when the driver opens the door, now factory fit with top-end Volvo and Scania tractors.

He is a little sceptical of new technology. He observes: “You do see a lot of stuff come down the line. I still see the people with some systems that they say will change the world but which don’t last long.”

Having said that, he adds: “Trucks are improving all of the time. A lot of it is led by the logistics industry, because we’re telling manufacturers what we need, although it doesn’t always work as quickly as we would like. We still have to fit proximity sensors on the front, where any cheap car now comes with them installed. With trucks and Direct Vision, people are now looking at windscreens and dashboards to make their vision lower; it’s all really positive.”

He adds that DHL would like more systems standard from the manufacturer, because of ease of repair at the dealer network – not because of quality concerns. “Electronics is progress. Even the cheapest budget car has a lot of electronics on it now, and it’s a lot more reliable than when I started out. Now, sealed systems and microchips – if you can get them – are the way forward. The vehicle repair industry has embraced that. You see them doing diagnostics remotely now.”



ANNIE SOVCIK

FORMER DIRECTOR OF BUSING ON THE LOOKOUT (NOW SENIOR DIRECTOR OF PROGRAMS & STRATEGIC INITIATIVES), TRUCKERS AGAINST TRAFFICKING

The public-spirited US lawyer was set on her career path after a summer internship working with asylum seekers in US immigration detention on the US-Mexico border. She recalls: “It was a completely life-changing experience. I was connecting with the clients on the issue and their plight, the importance of refugee protection and the importance of legal representation for individuals going through the process. That started me on a path to a career in human rights advocacy on a policy level.”

That experience led her to lobbying the US government in Washington, DC, for policies to better protect refugees and victims of trafficking and forced migration.

In early 2018, she joined Truckers Against Trafficking (TAT), which Sovcik says, seeks to tap into a desire of most people to want to help others. “I was drawn to its organisational theory of change; the idea of activating the bystander, moving from passive bystanders to active disruptors. It was so appealing the way that Truckers Against Trafficking looked at the private sector on the transport side, from large corporations to small [family] owner-operators, and engaged them as partners and entities that could effect broad system-level change.”

In launching TAT’s Busing on the Lookout programme, Sovcik recalls: “I spent most of 2018 and 2019 travelling to any bus conference where I could get an invitation or a speaking slot or setting up booths with information, and running workshops, and trying to connect with as many leaders as possible to both educate them but also talk with them about next steps,

and ways for them to take this information back to their company and community, leveraging their own networks, and spreading information.”

Over the last five years, the organisation has trained 160,000 members of the bus industry. Although how much impact the programme has had on the human trafficking is hard to quantify, she says that it does possess a wealth of anecdotal evidence from industry partners. She says: “We have story after story of the different ways in which people have taken their training and chosen to act. There were two security guards in the San Diego Metro Transit System who had received human trafficking training and noticed a man in the transit centre approaching young women in a way that seemed to make them uncomfortable. They noticed a few other red flags that this man might be recruiting potential victims. They took the evidence they collected and turned it over to the San Diego Human Trafficking Taskforce, which launched an investigation that resulted in the arrest of the man and an accomplice at a hotel where they were holding a woman against her will.”

When asked about what the award means, Sovcik replies: “So many of the people that TAT works with are safety managers and operations managers, and there is something very encouraging and symbolic about being recognised as part of safety within operations, and that the type of training TAT offers fits into that. Our goal is for anti-trafficking training to be integrated and operationalised, and sustainable, and this award reinforces that we’re doing that.”

“We have story after story of the different ways in which people have taken their training and information and chosen to act, to take an extra step to help, to intervene, for someone in need”

CLIVE BURROWS

GROUP ENGINEERING DIRECTOR, FIRST GROUP

Clive Burrows has worked in between the worlds of bus and rail, and operations and manufacturing. Burrows explains: "Operations teams tend to try to cope with whatever they have thrown at them. It's important to have feedback from their experience to design: 'next time, don't do that, do this'. Operational experience in the field tells us that this creates a safer and more reliable design."

His extraordinary career began in the 1970s with a British Rail-sponsored degree in electrical and electronics engineering at the University of Bath "at the time when British Rail had ships, hovercraft, hotels and even a golf course [Gleneagles]. The great advantage was that it gave me the opportunity to see across the spectrum of all the transport systems."

Having been promoted to Intercity route fleet manager, in 1991 he became involved with the engineering base setting up Eurostar, including the new depot at North Pole in West London, and the train designs. Privatisation of rail led him into the private sector, working for a design and project management consultancy, from which he was recruited to First Group as engineering director in June 1998.

Following the Ladbroke Grove rail crash the following year, in which 31 were killed and 417 injured, he worked with CEO Moir Lockhead to implement the ATP safety system across its fleet of trains (not that it had an effect on the incident). He also worked with train manufacturer Siemens to redesign the aluminium welds of the new class 360 trains to better distribute stress in the event of a high-speed accident, which had affected the Thames train involved in the accident.

A few years later, when First Group bought Laidlaw in North America, which included the Greyhound Lines coach

business, Burrows turned his focus to a number of operational bus safety issues. "Greyhound was burning a bus into the ground every 14 days. There were problems with blow-outs and wheel nuts. There was a general acceptance of safety issues occurring. I started a rigorous programme across First Group America to get to grips with fires, also applying this in the UK. It became obvious that a lot of manufacturers were not aware of fire risks. We were almost unique as such a large fleet operator, having a total fleet of over 70,000 vehicles: we could see trends across different manufacturers' products which probably small bus operators don't get to see."

He continues: "I took a much more proactive role investigating incidents. A lot of evidence had been lost or not realised. I tried to put a spotlight on that and bring a rail approach to automotive. In rail, every incident is followed through minutely, and you don't tolerate any safety risks without detailed investigation, assessment and application of appropriate mitigations. That made a spectacular difference. The team rose to the challenge."

Blow-out issues, it turns out, were partly due to an incorrect design assumption about loading, including an unrealistic average passenger weight of 70kg and no luggage allowance. Other factors included quality standards issues from tyre manufacturers and the inappropriate use of retreats.

When asked to describe his approach to safety, Burrows replies: "First of all, you have to make sure that you understand the risks; that you've assessed and evaluated them and the mitigation measures put in place. Then you have to make sure that the engineering controls are effective at managing risks, and that the way they have been applied is effective, and that



"If you can't feed back operational experience into design, it's wasted"

people are properly trained, are competent to apply these measures, and that there is effective monitoring to make sure they are all applied correctly in all circumstances.

"It's subtly different in rail and bus. In rail, operators carry the responsibilities for ensuring that they have assessed risks from first principles. You can't rely on manufacturers saying, 'it's good enough', as you often do in the automotive world. Because of my background in road and rail, I pressed colleagues to not just accept that it's safe because the manufacturer says it is. You need to make sure the controls are actually effective at controlling the risks you've identified."

One recent focus has been drowsiness and distraction of drivers during their varying hours of work. He brought detection and alerting aids from Australia into use in America, also successfully trialled them on First's Heathrow to Reading services, and more recently on Croydon trams. He hopes to convince UK train drivers' unions of the value of fitting them. It's one example of how his experience in bus is changing rail.

For further detail about Burrows's experience in rail, see companion profile in the December issue of Operations Engineer.