



NEWS VIEW 152

Haven't we forgotten the people?

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Occasionally we can hear such questions: "Haven't we forgotten the signalman?" or: "Haven't we forgotten the driver?" or: "Haven't we forgotten the maintainer?" etc. In short, haven't we forgotten the people?

Railway signalling IS people

Railway signalling is not "plug and play". Railway signalling is a system. It is an interconnected system that has interfaces all over the place. The rail transport business involves infrastructure, track works, electrification, rolling stock, telecommunications, etc.

All areas that need people; and specialised people ("experts") who are of paramount importance from their design to the commissioning and the operation, and all along the life of the system for 30 to 40 years or more.

As far as rail safety is concerned, it comes from a variety of elements put together. Rail safety involves three kinds of items: signalling products of course, but also specific operational rules and, last but not least, people, who are trained and who precisely respect the rules. Railway people bring indeed a key contribution to rail operation and to rail safety.

Technology changes mean a cultural revolution

For the railway signalling profession, technology changes seem often not to be efficient; at least not at they should be. It seems rather than, the more modern the equipment is, the worse its reliability seems to be.

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