

# Transport Infrastructure Skills Strategy

## Four years of progress

A report by the Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce **October 2020**



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# Forewords

## Introduction

It has now been four years since the formation of the Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce (STAT) which was tasked with addressing the challenges set out in the Transport Infrastructure Skills Strategy (TISS) of getting a highly skilled, diverse workforce in place to meet ambitious levels of investment in transport infrastructure. During this time, STAT has expanded on its original commitments considerably and is a positive example of how Government and industry collaboration can be a force for change.

Since 2016, the world has changed significantly. The scope and remit of STAT's work has adapted to reflect the new context, to ensure it is aligned to the challenges and opportunities brought about by these changes. As we seek to support the economy in its recovery from the challenges caused by COVID-19, it will be vital to ensure we continue to build on our innovative and collaborative approach, with effective, holistic strategies in place to support the future needs of the transport workforce.

Over the last four years, 11,254 apprenticeships have been created in road and rail client bodies and their supply chain. STAT has led on making apprenticeships

mainstream, normal and an accepted part of doing business within the transport industry. This has been achieved through a variety of means, ranging from procurement mandates at the hard end, but also through collaboration, removal of barriers, and using research data to support the business case.

Some things have remained constant and will continue to be important areas of focus for our work. Ensuring that the transport workforce of the future is diverse and provides opportunities to all remains a key priority and will be fundamental to a sustainable recovery within the sector. While we have made some good progress on this agenda, there is more work to do to understand the data and deepen our understanding of some of the issues and barriers for underrepresented groups joining, or leaving, the sector.

There will also be new priorities, to address the new context we find ourselves in. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the transport industry heavily, and the implications for skills, training and employment cannot be underestimated. There will be a need for STAT to play a responsive role in the coming months and years, setting future strategy for the skills agenda to ensure it is playing

a key part in supporting both the short and longer term economic recovery plan.

Industry apprenticeship recruitment processes for 2020 were well underway at the onset of the pandemic. The number of cohorts starting in September generally remains unchanged, but in some cases intakes may be deferred and there may be further, currently unknown impacts.

Increasing skills and apprenticeships in transport and contributing to restarting the economy will depend on:

- public safety, confidence and behaviour when using transport networks – there will continue to be uncertainty around the realities of living in a post-COVID world and what the new 'normal' will look like;
- the continuation of highly skilled apprenticeship roles and training;
- supporting those who become unemployed through upskilling and retraining, keeping skills within the transport industry where possible;
- improving diversity across the industry and attracting new talent.



Some parts of the transport industry have been more heavily affected by the pandemic than others and will take longer to recover. This will inevitably have an impact on apprenticeships, training programmes and employment opportunities. STAT has already undertaken work to develop a skilled workforce that is diverse and represents today's society. It will be critical to understand the extent to which this work can mitigate the effects of unemployment and be incorporated into current plans and revised strategies. STAT will also work to identify and mitigate the risk of substantial gaps in skills.

While the future landscape is undoubtedly challenging, there is an opportunity to build on the work and achievements of STAT over the last four years, to learn lessons from successes and to look to the next chapter. The first stage of the TISS laid solid foundations for the future workforce, and we will now build on this work to ensure we meet the ambitions and challenges ahead.

I would like to conclude by expressing the STAT Board's thanks to Mike Brown, who stood down as Chair at the beginning of this year. His leadership has helped STAT to create opportunities for those starting their careers in the transport sector. On leaving the role, he tasked the Board with addressing the inequalities that exist within our industry. We will take up this challenge with enthusiasm and continue our efforts to ensure the transport industry workforce is more diverse and better reflects the society it serves.

Thanks must also go to Catherine de Marco at DfT, who established STAT in 2016 and has been the constant driving force behind it during the last four years. We know her next challenge will benefit from her tenacious and wise approach.

**Neil Robertson,**  
Chief Executive  
of National Skills  
Academy for Rail  
and Interim Chair  
of STAT

## Andrew Stephenson MP, Transport Minister for Skills



### The future of transport skills

In recent years, the Department for Transport has set out an increasingly ambitious programme of transport infrastructure investment. To match this ambition, we must ensure we have a highly skilled workforce in place to deliver these projects to a world class standard, in the coming decade and beyond. I am encouraged to see the progress made by the Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce over the last four years. We are now facing a challenging period of economic recovery as a result of the impacts of COVID-19.

Prior to the pandemic, the Prime Minister made clear that this Government is committed to 'levelling up', so that every corner of the country can benefit and share in future prosperity. COVID-19 has had a profound impact, affecting how we work, interact and travel for the foreseeable future. Implementing the right interventions on skills can support the levelling up agenda, allowing people to benefit through the training and job opportunities created as a result of investment in transport infrastructure regionally.

We must also keep step with advances in technology. The transport systems of tomorrow will be cleaner, more connected, shared, on demand, electric and highly automated. Physical infrastructure and the way we design, build and maintain it is already evolving, with increasing use of digital technologies. This will improve services for the travelling public, and we will be thinking more carefully about how we cater to a more diverse range of needs.

To date, the focus of STAT has rightly been on the creation of high quality apprenticeships, and this should continue to be a key part of its future strategy. However, in a new economic context focused on recovery which will lead to growth, it will need to broaden its focus to consider other skills initiatives which will support the sector more widely. In addition to supporting those entering the labour market for the first time, retraining and upskilling those who have become unemployed, through training and work placement programmes, will also play a vital role.

STAT members have committed to refresh their strategic priorities and workstreams to ensure that its work and focus reflects the current context and circumstances. I look forward to introducing a renewed strategy and while some elements will be refreshed and updated, I am clear that at its core will be a strong, collaborative approach between Government and industry to drive ambitions forward.

I would like to thank the STAT Board and its many partners who have been involved in this work to date, and look forward to further close collaboration in future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Andrew Stephenson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

# The work of the Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce

**The Strategic Transport Apprenticeship Taskforce (STAT) was formed in response to increasing investment in transport and the need for a sector wide approach to skills and people.**

STAT represents a workforce of over 800,000 people across roads, rail, maritime and aviation. Four years on, STAT continues to ensure that a strategic approach to developing high quality apprenticeships is being taken across the sector. This will create a diverse, highly skilled and responsive workforce, able to deliver the transport networks of the future.

The Transport Infrastructure Skills Strategy (TISS) 2016 set out existing skills shortages in key industries across the sector, with recommendations and ambitions to address skills gaps across infrastructure and transport bodies.

The TISS set stretching ambitions for apprenticeship numbers and diversity. These included 20% increase in BAME representation in line with government targets,

and 20% of technical and engineering roles to be filled by women, reaching parity with the working population by 2030.

STAT was set up to enable leading employers to work collaboratively with Government to take forward these ambitions and committed to reporting on progress annually. This is the fourth annual report and summarises the progress made by STAT against the TISS.

## STAT board members

**Neil Robertson**  
– Acting Chair

Chief Executive,  
National Skills  
Academy for Rail  
Shared Apprenticeship  
Working Group Chair



**George Clark**  
Director of  
Engineering, TfL



**James Featherstone**

Construction  
Manager,  
Network Rail



**Katie Kelleher**

Former Crossrail  
apprentice and  
Crane Operator



**Iain Mackinnon**

Secretary to  
the Maritime  
Skills Alliance



**Richard Mould**

Corporate  
Procurement  
Director, HS2 Ltd  
Supply Chain Skills  
Network Chair



**Kate Myers**

Head of Skills,  
Employment and  
Education, HS2 Ltd  
Social Mobility  
Working Group Chair



**David O'Neil**

Supply Chain Director  
Commercial and  
Procurement,  
Highways England



**Poorvi Patel**

Head of Education,  
Employment and  
Skills, Heathrow



**Leila Rahimzadeh**

Industry HR Partner/  
Head of People  
Strategy, Rail  
Delivery Group



**Kevin Rowan**

Head of Organization,  
Services and Skills,  
Trades Union  
Congress



**Richard Steele**

Chief Executive,  
Port Skills and  
Safety Ltd



**Richard Turner**

Head of Apprenticeship  
Delivery,  
Network Rail



**Tracey Worth**

CEO & Secretary to  
Viscount Falkland,  
President Institute  
of Couriers  
Diversity Working  
Group Chair





## Trade Union Congress (TUC)

Earlier this year the TUC published a new guide about how union reps could support LGBT+ apprentices.

Unionlearn has launched the first ever lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT+) inclusive guide to apprenticeships. The new guide, published during LGBT+ History Month and National Apprenticeship Week, will help union reps fully support LGBT+ apprentices in the workplace. LGBT+ inclusive apprenticeships explores the barriers LGBT+ people can face at work, explains workplace rights and offers practical advice on how to improve diversity. It also stresses the importance of clear and robust policies and a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of discrimination and harassment.

The new guide follows TUC research published last year, which found that nearly 7 in 10 (68%) LGBT+ people reported being sexually harassed at work.

Unionlearn director Kevin Rowan said: *“Apprentices come from a wide range of backgrounds and have unique workplace experiences. It’s so important for all of them to feel safe at work and be able to grow in their chosen profession. But many employers could do more to ensure their apprenticeships support those from minority sexual orientations or gender identity backgrounds.”*

*“Bosses need to make sure they have policies and practices in place to make their workplaces inclusive. And they must collect and analyse monitoring data from all their workers to ensure those policies are working. I’d advise any apprentice to join their union. Unions are working hard to build inclusive workplaces and to negotiate effective policies to make working life better for everyone.”*

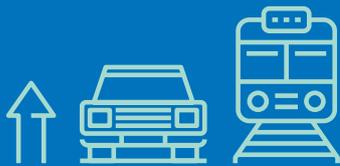
The new guide is part of a series of resources Unionlearn has produced to provide detailed guidance on apprenticeship issues relating to:

- LGBT+ inclusive apprenticeships
- Tackling apprenticeship gender inequality
- Supporting Black and minority ethnic apprentices
- Accessible apprenticeships

# 2

# Creating high quality apprenticeships

## Apprenticeships in Numbers



# 11,254

**apprentice opportunities** in road and rail bodies since 2016, in client bodies and as a direct result of public procurement



# 11%

**of starts in 2019/20** were degree level apprenticeships



# 1,207

**starts in 2019/20** within the organisations of DfT, Highways England, HS2, Network Rail and TfL

**The TISS set an initial target of reaching 30,000 apprenticeship starts in road and rail client bodies by 2020. Following consideration of progress against the 30,000 target, STAT (in agreement with the Department for Transport) revised and reforecast to 15,200 apprentices by 2020.**

There were 11,254 apprenticeship starts in road and rail client bodies and the supply chain since the inception of STAT in 2016 to 2020. These apprenticeships have been created both within the client organisations in line with the public-sector target, and in the supply chain through our procurement contracting. This number excludes apprenticeships that may otherwise have been created in private sector supply chain organisations.

Against the three core ambitions set out in the TISS we have seen the following:

- There were a total of 11,254 starts from 2016/17 to date. 3,238 starts were reported in 2019/20, an increase of 8% from 2018/19.
- BAME representation now stands at 21%, ahead of the target of 20%.
- Female proportion of technical and engineering starts is down to 12%, with the target 20%.

There has been continued growth in degree level apprenticeships, which now accounts for 11% of starts in 2019/20 – up from 3.5% in 2016/17. This represents 363 roles this year compared to 199 in 2018/19. Of these 363 roles, 13% of apprentices are from a BAME background.

Internally within the organisations of DfT, Highways England, HS2, Network Rail and TfL, STAT have reported 1,207 starts in 2019/20, compared to 1,179 in 2018/19, representing an increase.

The largest volume of starts in the last few years has come via the rail sector. In 2018, train operating companies (TOCs) embraced the Level 3 Train Driver Apprenticeship Standard and begun welcoming their first cohorts of Apprentice Drivers over the course of the year.



**3,238**

starts were reported in 2019/20, an increase of

**8%**



BAME representation now stands at

**21%**



Female proportion of technical and engineering starts is down to

**12%**



### **Rail Delivery Group – Level 3 Train Driver Apprenticeship Success**

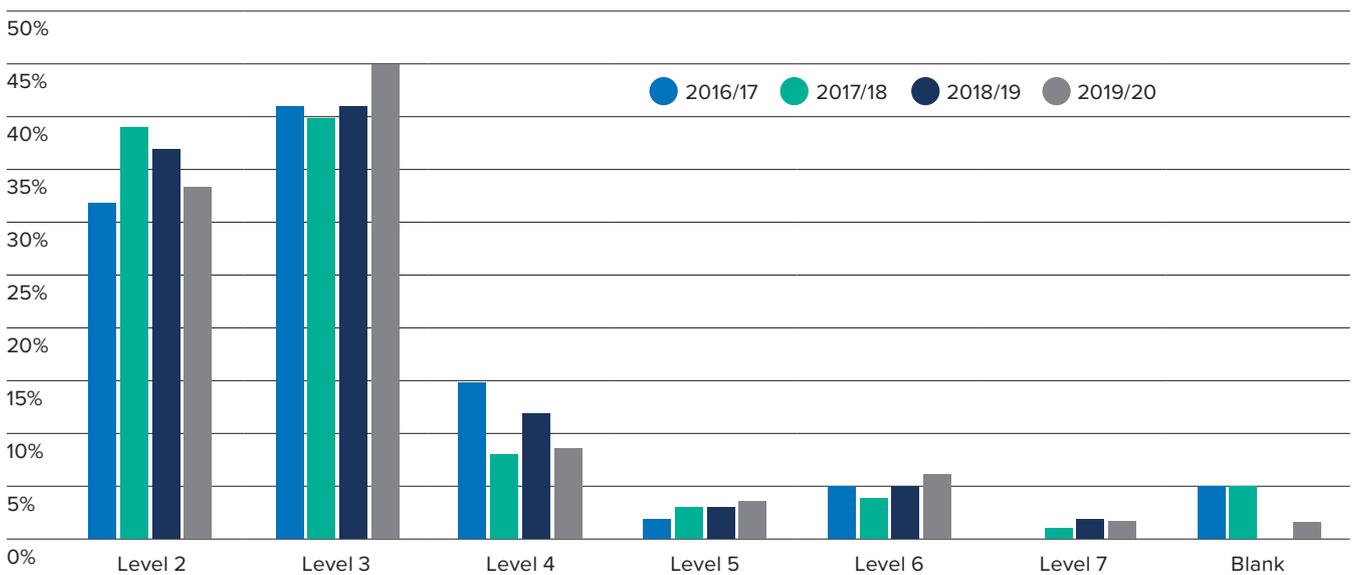
Over the past 15 months East Midlands Railway's commitment to ensuring an excellent 'learner journey' has enabled the company to develop a robust programme of training using a blended combination of traditional classroom learning and cutting-edge technology such as Mission Room. Knowledge, skills and behaviours are developed throughout the course to equip drivers with the technical and non-technical skills needed to be successful in their career as a driver and beyond. East Midlands Railway have successfully secured their place as main provider on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers and have a dedicated team committed to the success of their apprentices.

Despite COVID-19, East Midlands Railway's training team have worked round the clock to ensure, where possible, training is unaffected which has seen a seismic shift from traditional class room based learning, to predominantly online delivery and now, as we slowly head back to normality, a happy blended medium of both formats.

East Midland's Railway's first cohort have recently all passed their End Point Assessment which is testament both to the commitment and dedication they have shown throughout their training, and to the skill and expertise of their training team and provision.

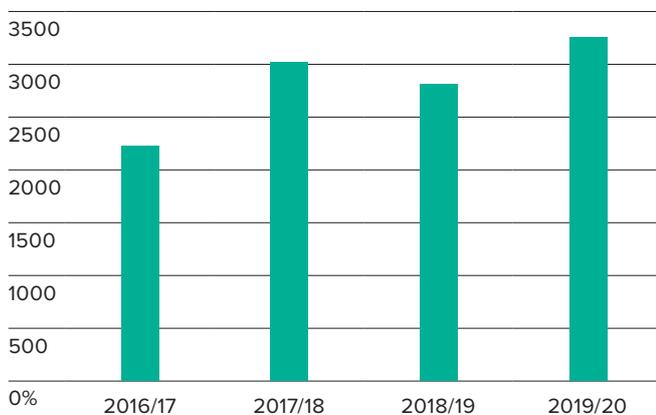
**Figure 1** There has been continued growth in degree level apprenticeships, which now accounts for 11% of starts in 2019/20 – up from 3.5% in 2016/17. This represents 363 roles this year compared to 199 in 2018/19. Of these 363 roles, 13% of apprentices are from a BAME background.

**Total Start by NVQ Level – Combined**



**Figure 2** There were a total of **11,254 starts** from 2016/17 to date. 3,238 starts were reported in 2019/20, an increase of 8% from 2018/19.

**Total Starts by Year – Combined**



**The apprenticeship levy and apprenticeship standards**

STAT continues to engage with the Department for Education (DfE) on the design of the apprenticeship levy. There are a number of stakeholders in the transport sector that have requested more flexibility in how the levy funding can be spent. In particular, they have requested the opportunity to use levy funding for pre apprenticeship training which is seen as increasingly important in the wake of COVID-19.

STAT has also been engaging with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE) on concerns around apprenticeship policy impacting the sector, specifically on the provision of End Point Assessments (EPA), funding cap decisions for some apprenticeship standards, and the provision of degree apprenticeships. The STAT membership looks forward to continuing work with DfE and IfATE to address some of the emerging challenges in delivering high quality apprenticeships in the sector.



## Network Rail – Delivering in the face of a pandemic

Jack Hicks, Level 6 Digital and Technology Solutions Professional

Jack was new to Network Rail and joined the Digital Factory team in December 2019 after 3 months of intense residential training at Sheffield Hallam University, having moved from his home in Great Yarmouth. His apprenticeship plan was interrupted by COVID-19, but during that time he was instrumental in building several apps for Network Rail that made it easier for people to work from home including an app that made investment “papers” paperless. He also built an app to support Network Rail’s volunteering initiatives during the COVID-19 crisis. Today he is back to his Digital Factory role, and is looking at app development as well as increasing the use of O365’s tools across the business. He was shortlisted for an award from the Tech Partnership.

*“I joined the Digital Factory team at Network Rail in December 2019 after 3 months of intense residential training at Sheffield Hallam University.*

*In response to COVID-19 Ben Atherton (another IT Apprentice) and I helped my team to design and build C-19 information app in less than two weeks which was released to track and office workers. The app holds the keyworker letter and key links and information on COVID-19. I was also responsible for working with the test team to fix any technical issues with the app and created and issued a user guide on how to download the app. Another app I was involved in designing and building was the concept app to support Network Rails volunteering initiative which was designed and built in 3 days at the start of lockdown. The app allowed employees to share and accept volunteering opportunities across the business.*

*More recently I have been working on an investment paper app to replace the manual process that has existed for approximately 10 years and make investment papers paperless which will reduce the amount of human error while providing visibility of the pipeline to the user.*

*My team is amazing, and I have the best assignment manager who has mentored me throughout.*

*I am eager to continue developing my career within Network Rail and help make everyone’s job a little bit easier.”*

## Supply Chain Skills Network

The Supply Chain Skills Network is formed of procurement specialists across DfT client bodies who work together to keep a consistent and united approach to the apprenticeship agenda when engaging with the supply chain.

Across our road and rail delivery bodies, skills requirements are embedded in our contracts. These require suppliers to create apprenticeships in proportion to the contract value. This is in the range of one apprenticeship to every £3–£5m of spend, or 2.5% of the contract workforce per annum.

Since the publication of the TISS, the Supply Chain Skills Network has put in place a number of tools and activities to improve the number and quality of apprenticeships delivered through our shared supply chain. This has included:

- agreeing common contractual processes and measurement tools, to allow us to speak with one voice to the market and assess progress;
- working with suppliers to understand, and address, barriers to apprenticeship uptake. This work has helped improve the capability of all parties and shared learning has been an important factor in progress.

This year, the network has taken steps to capture this learning in a Maturity Matrix tool which sets out the culture and procedure organisations should have in place in order to deliver quality apprenticeships.

Each participating organisation has mapped progress against the matrix. This has enabled the Supply Chain Skills Network to identify pockets of best practice for future shared learning, and also any common areas of weakness we collectively need to address.

These areas will form new workstreams of activity moving forward, with continued plans to measure progress. There also remains the potential in future to roll the matrix out to our supply chain partners.

## Shared apprenticeships

The Shared Apprenticeship Working Group have been exploring options to stimulate and increase the demand for apprenticeships by co-ordinating activity and focusing on smaller employers, who may require more support.

Activity was led by the National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) and sector employers to help develop a pipeline of people coming into transport and generate a more level playing field in terms of access to opportunities and addressing barriers.

Working across various locations with Rail Forum Midlands, CECA and TfL on four pilot schemes, which included data analysts and enhanced digital skills, research was undertaken to test options and get a better understanding of the barriers to the pilots. A lot was learnt about the design requirements and criteria to create workable models for recruiting and sharing apprentices.

It was concluded that the pilots could have been more successful if interventions on an increased scale were initiated earlier, an analysis of the learning and range of barriers emerged which included:

- practical considerations like geography, responsibilities and accountabilities;
- cost of training;
- absence of suitable candidate availability;
- insufficient overlaps in SME requirements; and
- challenges around accessing two data systems.

The fourth pilot focused on larger sector organisations who worked together to address a concerning shortage of skilled data analysts in the transport industry. The initial cohort recruited proved to be a great success, with further cohorts planned. However, the impact of COVID-19 has meant that recruitment is temporarily paused but this will be followed up and included within future recovery plans.

Going forward the group are looking to explore the possibility of linking various government incentives around traineeships, T Levels and apprenticeships to create a pipeline and progression pathway to help navigate some of the recruitment challenges that have been faced. The Shared Apprenticeships Working Group will also explore initiatives to provide opportunities for younger people, including neurodiversity as a focus of apprentice recruitment.

# 3

# Diversity and Inclusion, and Social Mobility



**Over the last four years, STAT has made good progress in addressing the diversity of the transport workforce, focusing on those entering the sector and ensuring there is an increase in representation from a range of underrepresented backgrounds. Acknowledging the challenges faced by the sector in terms of future skills shortages, it will be more important than ever to draw from as wide a talent pool as possible.**

The members of STAT are committed to the transport industry workforce reflecting the diverse society it serves, particularly when taking into account the future design and use of transport systems – data shows that when decision making and design does not include diverse thinking, needs of different groups within the population are less likely to be taken into account.

There has been continued success with programmes of pre-apprenticeship and pre-employment training within the industry, which STAT employers are keen to build on. These programmes will be of increasing importance in the coming months and years as part of efforts to support young people, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, into a more challenging labour market.

### Progress to date

Although we have seen some small decreases in the proportion of those from under-represented groups joining the sector in the last year, overall progress has been made against the original targets set out in the TISS.

**BAME representation has exceeded the initial TISS target of 20%**

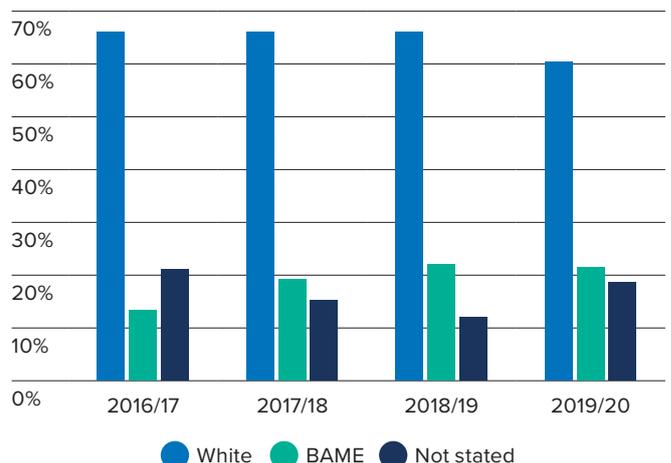
### BAME Representation

BAME representation has slightly decreased to 21%, down from 22% last year, but up from 14% in the first year of STAT’s progress report and exceeds the initial TISS target of 20%.

Notably, there has been an increase in those not reporting on ethnicity to 19% in 2019/20. There is more that organisations could do to encourage their employees to disclose diversity data, which will help us to build a more accurate picture of potential challenges and issues. Where things are going well, we also want to build a better understanding of why that is. Although the target has been met, there is more to do in this area, particularly when it comes to retention of the BAME workforce. We will be doing further work to build data on apprenticeship completions which will help to deepen understanding.

**Figure 3** BAME representation **now stands at 21%**, ahead of the target of 20%

#### Total Starts by Ethnicity – Combined



## Female Representation

Overall female representation has decreased slightly to 21% from 23.5% in 2018/19, but the levels have remained broadly consistent over the four-year reporting period. The proportion of Technical and Engineering starts that are female has dropped from 14.8% to 12%. This is a reduction from 2018/19 but remains above previous years, so some progress has been made – but against an original target of 20%, there is more that needs to be done.

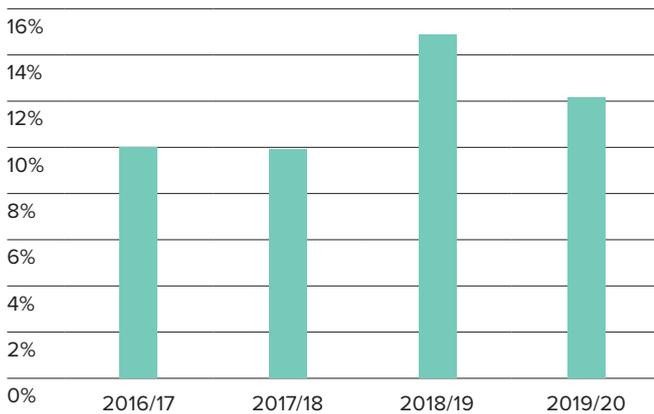
Overall, STAT has made some good progress on improving representation in the sector, but in some areas, particularly female representation, it has not achieved change quite at the rate originally hoped.

In the coming year we will scrutinise the data to get behind the numbers and build a deeper understanding of some of the issues and barriers to those from underrepresented backgrounds entering the sector. We will then develop a substantive plan to outline what action should be taken to address these issues.

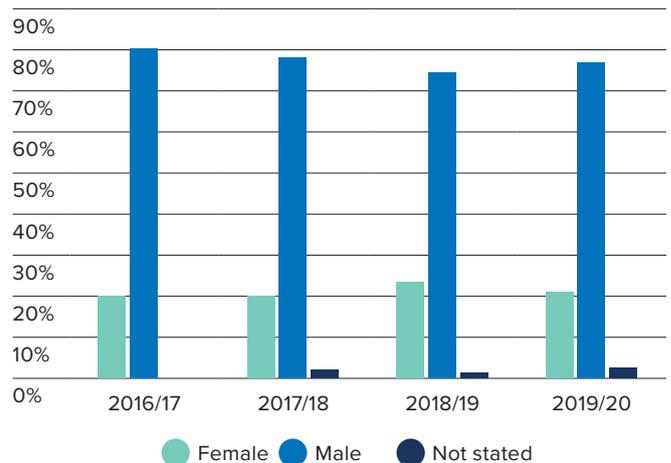
There will also be more to do in exploring the issues for those further on in their careers within the industry and the retention issue. While the focus has been on recruiting, a greater understanding of why it is more likely that people from underrepresented groups may not complete their apprenticeship, or leave the sector, needs to be developed.

**Figure 4** Female proportion of technical and engineering starts is down to 12%, with the target 20%.

**Female Starts as a Percentage of Tech/Eng**



**Total Starts by Ethnicity – Combined**



## Diversity Research: ‘Making Gender Equality Count in Transport’

To build understanding of gender diversity in the sector, in March of this year, STAT member organisations joined forces with the Science and Policy Research Unit (SPRU), University of Sussex, on a collaborative research project led by doctoral researcher, Phillippa Groome. This project will dig beneath STAT’s diversity data, to unearth how our industry is best placed to diversify its workforce, both inclusively and sustainably. Using gender as an analytical lens, we seek to evaluate STAT’s industry-wide quantitative approach around target-setting, data collection and monitoring.

The aim is to understand more through this research by asking: ‘How far can this approach transform gender inequalities in practice?’ and, ‘Might there be any unintended consequences to affirmative action in STAT policy?’ We also acknowledge that ‘gender’ is positioned under an umbrella of wider diverse characteristics, closely intersecting with co-existing identities e.g. ‘Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic’ (BAME) and social status.

This research is co-produced with STAT, and will inform the future diversity vision, mission, and policy, as we support the industry to recover following the impacts of COVID-19. Alongside academic publication, research outputs will include (1) practitioner guidelines in the form of an industry report, and (2) potential for the design of a complementary ‘toolbox’ or ‘performance metric’.

This STAT publication is forecast for online delivery in January 2021.

## The Year of Diversity

STAT Board Member Tracey Worth, of the Institute of Couriers, has led an engagement strategy during the past year to reach employers across the freight and logistics sector to improve diversity. The Year of Diversity (YoD) was created to improve diversity in the freight and logistics sector through leadership, knowledge creation and mentoring. It was launched at an industry event in May 2019, reaching over 90 attendees, with 41 sector organisations signing a pledge proposal to support diversity and commit to taking steps that will lead to action.

All freight, logistics and transport organisations were encouraged to sign up to social media set up specifically for the year. The pledge brings diversity into boardrooms, extends to organisation managers and through to the workforce, signposting support for organisations to access employer assistance programmes.

## Events

There were three well attended YoD events during the year, with representatives from the Road to Logistics scheme, Jobcentre plus and Women in Logistics, taking the stage to offer delegates advice on implementing practical diversity processes. The first event set out a vision for the year and as a result, the sector has:

- created a network of transport representatives who are committed to achieving improved sector diversity;
- raised awareness through organisational activities and created a culture where diversity is celebrated;
- built a cross-sector alliance of employers who have signed the YoD pledge and act as champions of change in the industry;
- been proactive in campaigning for an all-inclusive culture, with one organisation achieving parity in numbers with a majority (73%) female board.

Tracey has also undertaken one to one counselling with operators to start driving forward diversity in her sector, as well as speaking at events with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to explain the opportunities in the sector. She has also given talks to people from BAME backgrounds in areas around South Yorkshire.

It is recognised that further work is required to improve the diversity of the workforce in the freight and logistics sector, as the majority of employees are over 40, white, and male. The sector mainly consists of people who describe themselves as ethnically white (91%) and male workers comprised of 85.6% of the logistics workforce in 2017.

Going forward, work will continue to support the whole workforce, including apprentices through raising awareness and educating leaders. This will be achieved through workshops and support, providing the platform for both current and future employees in the industry to develop their potential and bring their full self to the workplace.

## Social Mobility

Apprenticeships can act as an essential tool to address inequality and support social mobility. Not everyone who wants to take up an apprenticeship is able to do so, for a variety of reasons including lower educational attainment, lack of opportunities locally, or lack of support and guidance. These can all be barriers to entering the workplace and the industry has a responsibility to ensure that steps are being taken to support people from lower socio-economic backgrounds into facing these challenges into jobs and training.

The STAT Social Mobility Working Group brings together representatives from Transport for London (TfL), Heathrow, HS2, Highways England, Trades Union Congress (TUC), Network Rail, The National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR), Rail Delivery Group (RDG), Think Logistics, and TSP Projects to drive forward the agenda on developing opportunities for all through a focus on improving social mobility across the transport sector. Members of the group are strong advocates of pre-employment training, including initiatives such as work experience, work placements and pre-apprenticeship schemes.

In 2019, TfL, HS2, Heathrow and NSAR partnered to support underrepresented and disadvantaged groups to access employment opportunities in their supply chains across engineering, administration, customer service, marketing, environmental and commercial. In total, 19 work experience opportunities were identified with 7 different employers.

## Rozie's engineering dream comes to life

30-year-old Rozie Harris, from Stratford Upon Avon, describes the path that led her to Europe's biggest engineering project – HS2.

*“My obsession with engineering started at a really young age and is all down to my dad. He worked as a civil engineer with Birse Rail.*

*I didn't achieve as many A levels as I needed, so I completed a foundation year in engineering at Coventry University before moving on to a degree in Automotive Engineering Design. I graduated in 2011 with a 2:1 BEng Honours. I was the only girl on the course, which didn't really surprise me, but it's great to see that things are changing.*

*My career started at Stadco, within Jaguar Land Rover's supply chain. I went on to work for JLR directly in material planning and logistics and spent four years at their Castle Bromwich plant before moving to the Gaydon site for two years as Project Planner. In March 2019 I took voluntary redundancy and later that spring, things really started to take off.*

*I came across HS2's Women into Construction post on Instagram, promoting a 6-week programme they were running to encourage more women into the sector. It offered a combination of training and hands-on site experience, with the opportunity to gain a CSCS card, followed by a four-week placement with one of HS2's supply chain companies.*



*I was accepted on to the programme and when it finished that summer, I applied and was offered a contracting job working with HS2's early works contractor, Fusion Joint Venture, as Senior Project Engineer.*

*I've been with Fusion for just under a year now and it's been amazing to be part of the team delivering HS2 – it really doesn't get any bigger! Fusion is responsible for delivering essential preparatory ground works on approximately 100km of the Birmingham – London section of the new railway and that includes everything from highway design and build schemes, to utility diversions and building new ecological sites. Essentially, we're paving the way for the major construction element of HS2 which starts this summer.*

“  
I've now secured a permanent role and I couldn't be happier

*The team at Fusion have been great to work with and I was immediately struck by the number of female employees – it's a far cry from my student days.*

*My contract with Fusion has led to me being offered a permanent position with BAM Nuttall, part of the Royal BAM Group of civil engineers. I'm still working with the team at Fusion, supporting the delivery of HS2, but I've now secured a permanent role and I couldn't be happier.”*



“

*The success of Women with Drive has gone beyond expectations”*

commented Susannah Dillon, STAT Working Group Member and Head of Apprenticeships at Go-Ahead.

### **Go-Ahead – Women with Drive**

Go-Ahead have been working closely with TfL to devise initiatives that are changing negative perceptions of men only driving buses, and they’re succeeding, showing us that times are changing. Although there are more men than women currently driving the infamous red buses, women bus drivers now account for approximately 12% of their London workforce.

Apprentices who have completed the driving training say that a main factor of its success is that it is targeted purely at women, focusing on issues directly relevant to women.

## Koli Begum

One of Koli's biggest concerns was the care of her children and whether her needs could be accommodated, so she went along to an open day as she knew there would be an opportunity to meet and chat with women bus drivers and learn about their experiences.

Koli realised almost immediately that you're never too old to learn and that she has a lot to offer, so she signed up the apprenticeship training.

Koli says *"I don't think that driving a bus is a masculine thing, anyone can do it, I certainly have a lot more respect for bus drivers now I know the challenges they face each day. I quite like the challenge of driving a big vehicle too and the seat can be changed, which is great because I'm small and was so worried about not being able to touch the brakes."*

“

*I'm even recommending the apprenticeship scheme to family, friends, anyone – give it try!*

## Clariacetta Thomas

After being at home for a number of years with her children, Clariacetta wanted to return to work. First, Clariacetta attended a Women with Drive introductory course, which focused on customer service and processes, including visits to depots and the opportunity to meet and talk to employees about her concerns. Following this opportunity, she applied immediately for the apprenticeship training.

Clariacetta remembers sitting on the bus as a child and watching her dad drive the buses. The family connections don't stop there – her daughter's father also started as a bus driver and has now progressed to be a bus engineer.

She also remembers how lovely her instructor was, which made her feel very comfortable and confident, especially when learning how to manoeuvre a bus.

The instructor also told her that she was a natural bus driver!

Clariacetta says *"I love driving the bus and see myself doing it for 3 – 4 years and then go on to progress my career in the industry, perhaps becoming an instructor myself or joining the management team"*

## Dobbett Donaldson

*"My passion for driving is what pushed me to apply for the bus driving apprenticeship. I was surprised to learn that apprenticeships aren't just for young people and that the skills obtained in my previous job would be useful, as I was used to handling customers working in the prison services."*

*The apprenticeship training was good, it included Maths and English classes, which I thought would be the worst part, however it was made relevant to the bus driving and enjoyable.*

*I couldn't believe I was out on the road on my first day, it was scary at first, especially manoeuvring through the Blackwall tunnel which I found out is so much different in a bus to a car.*

*I also thought my driving was good, but I learnt from my trainer that I don't look ahead far enough. My trainer was so very good, I'm really pleased that he encouraged me and got the best out of me. I'm based close to my home now but the training was on the other side of the city.*

*The apprenticeship provides me with various career options that I'm pleased about but I want to be a bus driver for the foreseeable future. However, I know if I wanted, that I could branch out to become a trainer, work in the office or even take up another operational role.*

*I'm even recommending the apprenticeship scheme to family, friends, anyone – give it try!"*



## The Pre-Employment Programme

The Pre-Employment Programme consisted of an information session to launch the programme, a two-week training programme covering general employability skills and a two-week work placement. The launch was a success, seeing;

- 160 candidates registered to attend the information session
- 63 attendees on the day
- 18 candidates successfully secured a work placement
- 16 people started the Pre-Employment Programme
- 12 candidates successfully completed the entire programme of which 5 have already secured employment

The Social Mobility Working Group will continue to design initiatives that support disadvantaged groups, particularly those who were likely to be further from the labour market even before COVID-19 and the economic downturn. The group seeks to provide new opportunities as we move into the recovery, focusing even more strongly to ensure that those from disadvantaged and underrepresented groups are given additional support and consideration to reach their potential in the transport and infrastructure sector.

## Get into Transport 2020 – London Event

The London Get into Transport event took place on the first day of the 13th National Apprenticeship Week (NAW) in February 2020. The event was opened by TfL's Commissioner and former STAT chair, Mike Brown, along with Nusrat Ghani MP, Cllr Catherine Faulks and a panel of current transport sector apprentices from TfL and HS2's supply chains.

The event featured over 40 exhibitors promoting more than 500 vacancies across transport and construction. There were 738 attendees from across London, with a resulting 1,916 expressions of interest for these vacancies.

- During the event Morgan Sindall hosted interactive soft skills workshops called 'Being Brilliant' and 'Boost your confidence' which were well received.
- Network Rail brought VAR headsets to demonstrate the latest in training technology.
- There was a strong presence from TfL's bus operators who parked a new Routemaster bus outside the venue and had an engine and gearbox on display to give prospective apprentices a hands-on demonstration of bus engineering roles.
- The National Careers and Apprenticeship Services were in the advice area, providing one-to-one advice for attendees.

For those who don't have a network of support or contacts in the industry, the National Apprenticeship Week events act as a bridge for meeting the challenges of social mobility. The events offer attendees insight into what opportunities exist, including the chance to talk to employers, find out about apprenticeship vacancies, take part in careers workshops and hear inspirational personal stories from apprentices, which will show that a career in transport is relevant and attainable to them.

## Get into Transport 2020 – West Midlands Event

The inaugural West Midlands National Apprenticeship Week event also take place this year, welcoming 168 people from a range of ages and locations, with people attending from as far away as Newcastle. The event featured talks from guest speakers, including Mark Corbin from Transport for the West Midlands, Tim Reardon from Highways England, and Kate Myers from HS2 Ltd.

Apprentices from HS2, Highways England & Network Rail were also invited to deliver three presentations about their lives as an apprentice throughout the day that were well received.

Exhibitors from industry promoted over 50 apprenticeship vacancies, which resulted in over 130 expressions of interest. The National Careers and Apprenticeship Services also attended and provided one-to-one advice for attendees.



# Impact of migration changes on skills

**From January 2021, free movement will end and the UK will introduce a points-based immigration system. The new system will treat EU and non-EU citizens equally and transform the way in which all migrants come to the UK to work. Under the new system, points will be assigned for specific skills, qualifications, salaries and shortage occupations.**

In collaboration with the Department for Transport, STAT has responded to the Migration Advisory Committee's Call for Evidence on Salary Thresholds (2019) and the Shortage Occupation List (2017 and 2020), to help inform immigration proposals. We continue to work with the Department for Transport to understand the impacts of a points-based immigration system on the transport infrastructure sector.

Despite the short-term challenges, this presents an opportunity for productivity and progression. STAT will work to develop skills interventions and non-skill levers to address longer term responsiveness to support the labour market. Whilst we work to drive change as the new migration arrangements are implemented, we see the need for the sector to access workers of all skill levels. This will enable the delivery of major infrastructure projects and maintenance of modern, safe and reliable transport networks and services which are essential in supporting wider improvements across the economy.

## Diversity in Maritime

Maritime UK, the umbrella body for the £46bn maritime sector, launched the Diversity in Maritime programme in May 2020. The Department for Transport's Maritime 2050 People Route Map states: "The maritime workforce of the future will be diverse. New roles, new technologies and a changing image of the sector will draw in people from all backgrounds across the entire UK" and recommends expanding on the foundations laid by the Women in Maritime Network to look at diversity as a whole. Diversity in Maritime was launched, alongside the establishment of the new Maritime Skills Commission, to support this and ensure the sector has a continuous pipeline of highly skilled, diverse people.

The programme currently involves four networks: Women, Mental Health, Pride and BAME. The networks operate as open, safe-space communities to share good practice and break down barriers for change. The networks are supported by four working groups: Retention and Progression; Recruitment; Pledge and Charter; and Communications and Events. The Chairs of the Networks and Working Groups sit on the Diversity in Maritime Taskforce to ensure cross-collaboration.

Current initiatives include:

- **Mental Health Survey:** Maritime UK is partnering with Safer Highways to deliver the first Mental Health benchmarking survey for the sector. The survey questions are based on the standards set out by the 'Thriving at Work' report, which was an outcome of the Prime Minister's independent review into mental health within business. The survey results will be released in December 2020.
- **Interview Pool:** The interview pool has been set up to assist maritime organisations access other women in the sector to help with recruitment, enabling gender balanced interview panels to be created. The initiative is being relaunched in September 2020 under the Diversity in Maritime banner.

- **Pledge:** The Pledge is the first step to becoming a Charter company. The Pledge currently has a gender focus but will be expanding shortly to be a diversity pledge. Signatories make clear their support for creating positive change within their respective organisations, and collectively, across the UK maritime sector. Each signatory can profile their work to improve diversity within their respective organisations. To date over 121 companies have signed the Pledge.
- **Charter:** The Charter creates a framework to challenge companies to make progress on diversity and is supported by a suite of 'toolkits' and resources to help companies realise those targets. Charter companies are required to agree an 'action plan', setting out individual targets for each participating company. A key commitment is that companies identify a member of senior management responsible for implementation of the action plan as well as distributing a survey to staff on workplace culture.

Performance against action plans will be self-assessed via online portal and national performance published in a public-facing report. There are currently eight companies signed up to the Charter initiative.

- **Speaker Bank:** The Speaker Bank has been established to ensure there is a gender balance on speaking panels and provides a portfolio of female speakers spanning a range of different roles, levels and sectors across the maritime industry. The initiative will be expanded later in 2020 to cover other protected characteristics.

Maritime UK is now working with the sector and the Department for Transport to secure funding for the continuation of the programme.

# Next steps

**The ambitions originally outlined in the TISS were due to be fulfilled by 2020. STAT has reported on progress against these annually, with new commitments to meet those ambitions set each year.**

Over the course of the Autumn of 2020, work will begin on developing a refreshed strategy to replace the TISS and outline a new set of long-term strategic aims. These will refocus the work of STAT to ensure that it not only continues with the good work it has achieved in the last four years, but that it supports economic recovery and prioritises workstreams that reflect the changed circumstances we find ourselves in.

It will be important to align the priorities and workstreams of STAT to wider work across Government and industry, particularly in efforts to mitigate against the impact of unemployment within the transport industry and across the labour market.

**The new strategy will focus on three key areas:**



Continuing to deliver high quality apprenticeships and traineeships across the industry, to ensure that a skilled workforce is in place to deliver an ambitious programme of investment, and that it meets future skills needs;



Continuing to improve the diversity of the workforce to ensure that transport careers are available and accessible to everyone, regardless of their background;



Supporting those who have become unemployed in areas of the industry most affected by COVID-19 into jobs in growth sectors, ensuring they have access to retraining and upskilling where needed.



# End notes

**The STAT Board would like to thank the following individuals who have contributed to its work over the past year through the working groups:**

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Elaine Clark – East Midlands

Hayden Clare – STAT Member (until February 2020) DfT

Huw James (Network Rail) – STAT Member (until April 2020)

Iain Murray – TUC

Ione Ojanguren – RDG

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Karen Wallbridge – TfL

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Kimmy Hibbert – STAT Member (until August 2020) TfL

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Soryah Brown – DfE

Steven Gregory – Heathrow

Stuart Tickner – DfT

Susanna Dillon – Go-Ahead

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## Contact STAT

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