

CHANGES SET TO RAISE BAR

Drivers in front line as son of QIC looms and new Euro licence is introduced in September

TWO major new innovations designed to raise standards in the industry are being introduced this year.

The first is a new quality standard scheduled to be introduced by Transport for London from June. It is known as Quality Incentive Contract 2 (QIC2).

The second is the introduction in September of a new European licence called the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence.

Although not linked, both QIC2 and the Driver CPC have a direct bearing on each other.

QIC2 is aimed at improving driving standards, reducing the number of driver-related complaints and improving bus presentation.

The Driver CPC comes from new European legislation aimed at achieving and maintaining consistent, high standards among professional bus, coach and lorry drivers across the European Union.

QIC2 aims to reduce complaints

THE Quality Incentive Contract tendering scheme was introduced by Transport for London in 2000.

Its principal aim was to improve service reliability route by route.

It works by rewarding operators whose routes meet performance targets and penalising operators whose routes fall below minimum standards.

Rewards include financial 'bonuses' and the option of operating a route for two years beyond the contract period, usually five years. Penalties include 'fines' and routes being retendered at the end

of five years, or even before in very serious cases of under performance.

QICs have worked well and have brought about "significant reliability improvements across the network" says London Buses.

QIC2 is designed to raise standards even further by focusing on:

- reducing the number of driver-related complaints, which have risen by 70 per cent over the past four years
- improving vehicle presentation.

The big difference between QIC1 and QIC2 is that QIC2

monitoring will not be carried out on a route-by-route basis, but garage by garage.

Individual garages therefore will qualify for quarterly 'good performance' payments or penalties if they fail to meet the set standards.

Resources manager Keith Wood said: "It is a new and challenging regime for all of us. However, we see it as a very positive move to increase the professional standing of the industry and the people it

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Betty scoops top TfL award



Betty receives her award from David Brown, TfL's managing director of surface transport.

ONE of London General's most respected characters has won a major bus industry award.

Betty Gallacher, who is London General's convenor, was presented with the Natalia Muir award last month (February) for her "outstanding contribution to equality and diversity in the London bus industry".

The Bus, Tram and Dial-a-Ride awards were created four years ago by TfL to acknowledge and reward individual and team achievements. It is the second year running that a London General employee has walked away with the Natalia Muir prize – Stockwell's Liz Lee won in 2007.

Betty said: "I was honoured to receive this award and very surprised. I knew I had been nominated, but never thought it would go any further."

Betty has been in the industry for 37 years and during that time she has devoted herself to supporting the rights of the individual and equality of treatment for all in the workplace.

"There has been a lot of progress in the London bus industry over the years," Betty said, "and I like to think I have

played a part in getting us to where we are now."

Three other company stalwarts were nominated for a prize in the 'Contribution to the London Bus Industry' category. They were Sutton driver John Doyle, Putney driver Rauley 'Trini' Venter and Camberwell operating manager Ted Dalton.

Managing director John Trayner attended with special guests who were Sutton administrator Evi Amor, Sutton drivers Gary Hunt and Gary Charlton, Bexleyheath driver Colin Welch and Bexleyheath senior vehicle engineer Kevin Crane.

John Trayner said: "We owe special congratulations to Betty for all the good work she has done over the years, not just in this company but for the bus industry as a whole. She richly deserves her award."

"I would also like to congratulate our trio of industry stalwarts who weren't lucky enough to win a prize, but who are certainly worthy of recognition."

Hosts for the occasion were TfL Commissioner Peter Hendy and managing director of surface transport David Brown.

All change for road managers

THE following changes to road managers' responsibilities were made on March 1. They are:

- Martin Bilham took responsibility for the day services at Camberwell garage while continuing his work with iBus
- Paul Britnell assumes responsibility for services operating from Stockwell and Mandela Way
- Des Turner relinquishes his

responsibility for Peckham to concentrate on routes operating from New Cross

- Alan Austen took control of routes operating from Peckham garage in addition to his role as manager of the service quality squad
- Collette Connolly, who is based at Camberwell, has been seconded as acting senior controller for night services.

Raising the bar on standards

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employs. "We rose to the demands of QIC1 and have been among the top performing companies ever since. We can do it for QIC2 as well.

"Monitoring will involve two separate incentive schemes, one for drivers and the other for bus presentation. It is up to garage management to ensure that both meet rigorous standards.

"We know that service reliability remains paramount, but driver standard and the presentation of buses could make all the difference in a tendering competition where two or more companies' performance is equally good."

QIC2 will be rolled out from June this year and reviewed in June 2009 when it is expected the scheme will be fully operational.

Mystery travellers are to be employed to monitor drivers and aspects of the bus in relation to its overall performance and cleanliness. Additional static 'inspections' will be made at stands where a monitor will ask permission of the driver or service controller to board the bus.

What London Buses expects from drivers

- comfortable and safe driving
 - provision of a reliable service and the correct observation of stops
 - smart appearance (wearing the uniform) and challenging situations handled professionally
 - basic route knowledge
 - courteous communication with passengers (including effective use of PA systems)
 - active ticket checking.
- What's expected of buses**
- to be clean and in good condition
 - to be free of damage and

- vandalism
- blinds displayed correctly
- ancillary equipment in full working order, ie Oyster readers etc
- notices, advertisements and running numbers appropriately displayed.

Driver and bus presentation surveys will be comprehensive enough every quarter to enable garages to get an accurate picture of how they are doing and make necessary adjustments.

Garages will be developing their own schemes to make drivers and engineers aware of the fine detail of QIC2 over the coming weeks and months. Assistance will be given by the driver and engineering training schools.

In conclusion, Keith emphasised: "We are being asked to review our driver standards and bus presentation through the eyes of our passengers. We must not lose sight of that."

Major change to bus driver licensing law



EVERY bus driver will need a Driver CPC – Certificate of Professional Competence – by 2013. It is, however, being rolled out from September this year.

The new directive is being introduced across the European Union and its aims are to:

- improve road safety
- recognise and accredit the knowledge and skills required to drive buses, coaches or lorries
- ensure drivers update their skills and knowledge
- raise the status of the industry to promote driving as a career.

Although there is no connection between QIC2 and the Driver CPC, the training involved for the latter will include much that is relevant to the new London driver standards.

The Driver CPC will be implemented in this country by the Driving Standards Agency (DSA), which is working closely with the Confederation of Passenger Transport and other industry representatives.

London General and London Central's resources manager Keith Wood, driver training manager Eric Dale and driver training team leader Paul McKenzie are involved in working groups preparing for the introduction of CPC.

An important milestone in the company's ability to deliver CPC training was to get accredited as a training centre by the DSA. Having gained accreditation, the development of relevant courses can now begin.

How will the CPC affect drivers?

- Current PCV holders have 'acquired' rights – sometimes known as 'grandfather' rights – for five years. Although this enables drivers to continue to work, they do need to start 'periodic training' and complete the first 35 hours of training by September 2013.
- Periodic training is 35 hours over five years and will be arranged by an employee's garage. A range of courses will be developed,



Keith Wood, Paul McKenzie and Eric Dale are playing a key role in the introduction of Driver CPC.

which will be a minimum of seven hours duration. They come under three core headings – safe and fuel efficient driving; legal requirements; and health, safety, service and logistics. On average, it is envisaged that each driver will attend a one-day course every year.

● Only courses approved by the DSA and delivered by accredited training organisations will count towards the periodic training, which enables drivers to obtain and retain their Driver CPC.

● Drivers have to renew their Driver CPC every five years, which means completing 35 hours of periodic training every five years.

● People attending CPC courses will not be tested at the end of the course. Therefore there is no

'pass or fail' but drivers must be able to prove that they attended a recognised course.

Keith Wood said: "This is the biggest change in licensing laws for years and demands massive investment from the industry in terms of cash, training and people."

"The aim of the Driver CPC is to achieve and maintain high standards of professional driving across the 27 nations in the European Union. It will introduce a consistency of standard that has not existed before. Bus drivers will need to ensure that they have undertaken the correct number of hours training as well as keeping their PCV up to date through the existing renewal process to enable them to continue to drive buses for a living."

Phil Margrave takes top group engineering role

PHIL MARGRAVE has been appointed group engineering director for Go-Ahead.

Key elements of this role will include:

- procurement of vehicles, fuel, equipment and services for the bus companies
- delivery of best practice initiatives, standards and performance of engineering functions across the group
- development of alternative fuel technologies for the fleet.

Phil retains his current role as engineering director for London General and London Central, where he reports to managing director John Trayner.

Group chief executive Keith Ludeman said: "Phil brings many years of experience and expertise to this role. He will co-ordinate engineering activity across the group to take advantage of scale and best practice while preserving the benefits of operating company autonomy."

Mandela Way is now home to two big 24-hour services

NEW GARAGE IN FULL SWING

IT'S NOT often that a garage doubles in size overnight, but that's exactly what happened at Mandela Way last month.

The garage opened as an operational base in November last year when Route 133 was relocated from Stockwell. There were 33 WVL buses and 90 drivers.

Then London General took over the stewardship of Route 453 on February 16, which added 25 brand new Mercedes-Benz Citaro articulated buses to the garage's fleet and 105 new drivers to the payroll.

In addition to a total of 195 drivers, other permanent staff include general manager Colin Opher, who also looks after Stockwell, operating manager Trevor Pirks and four senior garage administrators – Samantha Hannigan, Paul Muffitt, Karl Tyson and Ray Utting.

The SGAs work 10-hour shifts and do minor running repairs to the WVLs, like changing light bulbs.

Stockwell's engineers carry out bigger running repairs on the WVLs while planned servicing and FFDs are looked after by engineers at Camberwell. EvoBus engineers look after all work on the bendy buses.



133 driver Janet Sterling.

Route 453 is a long and busy service operating between Deptford Bridge and Marylebone stations, via Elephant and Castle and Westminster Bridge.

Preparations for the service, which was won from Selkent last year, were going on for weeks prior to its arrival at Mandela Way with driver recruitment, inductions, type training and route learning.

Drivers new to bendy buses were tutored by Waterloo's Tony Sicilia and Chris Maher before being given sole charge of Red Arrow Route 507 for a duty to become accustomed to driving an artic in scheduled service.

General manager Colin Opher said: "We have two high-profile, 24-hour services at Mandela Way and although it's early days for the 453 they are both operating very well."

"The drivers who came over from



Above: driver Robert Brion with Mandela Way operating manager Trevor Pirks. Below right: 'Mac' Dziubinski is one of the garage's first mentors.

Stockwell with the 133 have settled in really well and most of those on the 453 were recruited specifically for Mandela Way. We have a very good team here and they are laying the foundations for a successful operation."

● Stockwell-based accident prevention manager Cliff Frost, road manager Paul Britnell and engineering manager Nick Rouse have responsibility for Mandela Way. Camberwell's engineering manager David Clark is responsible for planned servicing of buses.



General manager Colin Opher, second from right, chats to drivers at Mandela Way.

Mac's journey from Warsaw to London



PROFESSIONALISM and a good knowledge of the English language have enabled Maciej 'Mac' Dziubinski to become one of Mandela Way's first mentors.

With the arrival of Route 453 and its bendy buses last month, Mac found he was much in demand to help drivers with the route and to familiarise them with the new vehicles.

Mac knows a thing or two about artics because he used to drive them in the Polish city of Warsaw.

Mac joined London General in September last year with his brother Slawomir, who works on the 133.

Mac said: "We were living in Cambridge, working for Stagecoach, but really wanted to work in the capital for London General."

Four earn certificates of success for engineering

IT'S A DATE they'll remember for the rest of their lives.

July 13, 2007, marked the beginning of a promising career in engineering for four young men following the completion of a gruelling three-year apprenticeship.

It all came together for the group when they met in engineering director Phil Margrave's office before Christmas to receive their framed Advanced Modern Apprenticeship certificates. The certificates were signed by Phil and group chief executive Keith Ludeman.

The four men are Darren Connolly,

Nick Field, James Martin and Robert Pitt. All are senior vehicle engineers.

Robert and James work at Stockwell, Darren at Bexleyheath and Nick at Merton.

Phil Margrave said: "These young men are a credit to the company and to themselves. They have completed an apprenticeship that is recognised as one of the best in the country and we wish them success in their careers."

Go-Ahead in London is training 20 engineering apprentices, all of whom are aiming for the advanced certificate.



With engineering director Phil Margrave are engineers Robert Pitt, Nick Field, Darren Connolly and James Martin.



Debbie Glading, left, and Carole Linkson share duties on the reception desk at head office.

Changing times for trio

STAFF at head office in Merton have welcomed three new faces.

They are Debbie Glading, who works as a receptionist and also in the commercial department; Carly Hawkins, commercial assistant, and Carole Linkson, receptionist.

Debbie, who used to work for an air conditioning company until it relocated to Slough, said: "There's plenty of variety in the work here and the people are very friendly."

Carly worked for a residential lettings agency before joining London General and London Central.

She said: "Since I've been here I've worked primarily on the administration of rail relief services. The work's totally different from what I used to do, but it's challenging and enjoyable."

Carole used to be a receptionist with



Carly is enjoying 'totally different challenges' from those in her previous job.

the company in the late 1990s. She left to join Cochlear, the makers of ear implants.

"I was travelling to and from Weybridge and wanted a job nearer home," she said. "I heard about the vacancy here through friends. I applied and was successful. I enjoy the work and it's good to meet old friends again."

On the road to promotion

THE highly-successful pre-promotion courses for drivers are starting up again this month (March), with new elements to reflect recent changes in the industry.

The idea behind the courses is to find drivers who are cut out to be future supervisors and managers and to help them develop their careers as the company grows.

Well over 200 drivers applied for just 36 places on three, six-week courses held last year.

Camberwell general manager Bill Roberts, a key figure in the programme, said: "We were amazed to find so many people willing to give up two hours of their own time for six weeks.

"Attendance on the course is no guarantee of getting on the first step of the management ladder, but it is all part of our succession planning strategy and could certainly be a big help to an individual in the future."

The top two people from each of the last year's three courses were seconded to supervisory roles and some have permanent positions now.

Among the revised elements in the new course are an expanded role-play session and guidance on the new Quality Incentive Contract 2 (QIC2). Managers involved in the courses include Alan Austen, Eric Dale, Colin Opher, Bill Roberts, Roy Sayers and Andrew Smith.

New Cross driver Barry Douglas was selected to train as a driving instructor last month following his success on the course plus



Debbie James and Barry Douglas with their course certificates.

preliminary assessments and interviews.

Barry, a former telecoms engineer and lorry driver, said: "I am determined to be a driving instructor, but on the course I was very interested to learn about the business side of the industry."

"My passion is logistics and I want to know how companies make money from the movement of goods and people."

Debbie James came joint top at the end of the second course.

Debbie joined the industry in 2002 in Darlington. She moved to London in 2006 and drove out of Merton for about a year before being appointed to regulator. She is now a senior regulator, based at Stockwell.

She said: "The course helps you to understand the industry. It is explained why we do the things

Steve Kennedy – 'a much missed employee'

IT WAS with great sadness that colleagues learned about the death of Steve Kennedy, just days after his 47th birthday.

Steve, who died on Sunday, December 28, worked as a licensing administration assistant at head office, Merton.

The funeral was held at Putney Vale Crematorium on Friday, December 16, where guests arrived in three buses. Many colleagues, predominantly from head office and Putney garage, attended and they were joined by friends and relatives.

Steve was a keen darts player and had represented London Buses in national competitions. There were two floral tributes in the shape of a dartboard. He was a keen supporter of Fulham football club, where a reception was held after the service.

Steve began his career with the company in 1980 at Putney. In 1988 he became a traffic clerk at the garage and then moved to Merton in 1992. He became senior traffic clerk in 1996 and moved to head office two years later as an admin assistant.

Steve became ill about eight years ago with lupus, a degenerative skin disease. He lived with his mother.

Engineering director Phil Margrave, who attended the funeral, said: "Steve was a very popular chap. I have known him for years. You could always rely on Steve to do a good, professional job and even through his illness he maintained his sense of humour and cheerfulness. He is sadly missed."

Colleagues have raised well over £400 for the charity Lupus UK.

News and features

EXCLUSIVE: Nigel beats the press gang

IT'S SAID that being in the right place at the right time can change the course of your life ...

Well, it might not have been that dramatic, but being well in with his football club put Nigel in the right place and has led to recognition undreamed of more than a year ago.

It all started when the Merton operating manager was asked to set up a youth team by Tooting and Mitcham United – he'd been a supporter for years and involved in youth football management.

That was in August 2006. A few months later he bought a decent camera and took it to Imperial Fields – the club's ground – to try it out at a match. He was pleased with the results and sent the pictures to the club website.

That's when it all started.

He got a call from the South London Press asking permission to use his work. It was the first of many requests from that paper and others, including the national Non League Paper, as the season progressed.

"A number of things came together," said Nigel. "My work improved as I covered more matches and other events regularly, the club was looking for its own 'official' photographer and it was having a good season. It won two cup finals and it was in the play-offs for promotion in the Ryman Football League. The papers wanted pictures and I was able to supply them.

"It was great. I was getting my name in the papers as a photographer and being asked to cover matches and functions for the club. That's the buzz for me. There's no real money in it, but I like the kudos and the fact I can help give the club a positive image."

Nigel has set up his own website for the match photos and between September last year and January it had received 36,000 hits.

Perhaps the real surprise in all this is that Nigel had no interest in photography before the end of 2006.

"I bought this camera and now I'm buying more equipment for it and wanting to branch out into portraiture and landscape.

"I don't think photography could ever replace my passion for football, but it's certainly a big thing in my life."

And this year, football and photography are likely to be even bigger for Nigel as the club celebrates its 75th anniversary and he'll be taking most of the photographs associated with the celebrations.



Ace lensman Nigel Wood.

SNAP HAPPY



Nigel's exclusive press picture of his team's Surrey Senior cup final victory celebrations.

Footballers aim to net £5,000 in all day charity tournament

FOOTBALLERS in London General and London Central are helping to improve the quality of life for sick children.

A series of six-a-side football matches is to be held on Sunday, June 22, at The Hub, Tooting and Mitcham's ground, and Merton driver and key organiser Scott Horney is hoping to raise up to £5,000 for three children's charities.

So far the organisers have settled on Great Ormond Street Hospital and the neonatal unit at Tooting's St George's Hospital.

Scott, who used to work as a driver at Peckham, said this would be the third year for a charity football competition. "Over those two years," he said, "we've raised £4,500, but just two teams were battling it out. This year with maybe 20 teams taking part and all playing on the same day we should be able to raise much more."

Merton operating manager Nigel Wood is helping with publicity and arranging the pitches at The Hub.

Organisers are asking participating

teams to pay £50 to enter the competition and for individual players to take their own sponsorship forms to collect money.

Scott added: "We're asking a lot of people, but most of us have families and we love our kids. I think people realise the good work these hospitals do and how much we need them."

Scott and his wife Danielle are writing to football's elite, including all the major London clubs, to donate prizes for a raffle. The couple are also contacting organisations, such as theatres, to provide prizes.

On the day, teams will start in a mini-league and then go onto knockout stages.

After the football, there will be a disco, buffet and licensed bar. That's when the raffle will be held and people are being asked to invite friends and relatives to swell the charity coffers.

For information on the rules, contact Nigel Wood on om.al@londongeneral.co.uk. For other information contact Scott on 07814 875 365 or at home on 020 8947 0134.

Knights of the road

What the travelling public says about the people who work for London General

PUTNEY

● **DRIVER** Anton Kajaba earned the praise of his passengers – most of whom were tourists – when he refused to let a woman off the bus while he called the police. The woman was said to have stolen a camera from another passenger.

● **PASSENGER** Caroline Allan praises Route 430 driver Nebih Fetahu for being "extremely helpful".

● **PEDESTRIAN** Stuart Gould watched as a disabled woman began to "run" towards a stop when she saw her bus coming. Route 74 driver Jackie Treadwell saw her as well and stopped to allow the woman to board and get inside safely before continuing to the bus stop – "a simple act of compassion that deserves praise".

● **N22 driver** Dave Vassallo is thanked by passenger Caitlin Hughes. Caitlin says Dave helped when a man who was soaked in blood boarded the bus.

She adds that Dave took the time to help "when we were vulnerable ... he was amazing".

STOCKWELL

● **PASSENGER** Richard Horsfield says he was running for the bus and thanks Route 24 driver Abdourahmam Elmi for slowing down and stopping at the nearest stop to allow him to board.

Engineer Steve is promoted

STEVE AMBURY has been promoted to operations engineer. He will act as mentor for engineering managers, ensuring operational engineering standards and targets are met and that best practice is shared across London General and London Central.

Steve will also be responsible for the development of staff through the engineering management structure.

Based at New Cross, Steve reports in the first instance to chief engineer Richard Harrington.

New role for Gill

GILL TYNAN has been seconded to the role of general manager service performance for London General and London Central.

She is responsible for coordinating road managers and controllers to maximise service performance and preparing the company for iBus and QIC2.

General manager operations Pat Mahon will assume responsibility for Putney and Waterside Way until further notice.

Robert wins £100

CONGRATULATIONS to Sutton driver Robert Gibbs who has won £100 worth of shopping vouchers. Robert answered all questions correctly in In General's Christmas competition and his entry was the first selected at random.

Safety double

IT WAS a night of celebration for Putney and Waterside Way as staff from the two garages acknowledged the professionalism of colleagues.

At the top of the honours list were Putney driver of the year Nigel Couch, who won the Luke Rees-Pulley award, and Waterside Way driver of the year Robbie Burke.

The garage's top safe drivers who attended were Richard Greene, 21 years, John Howard and Trini Vantor, both 25, Tony Miller, 28, Betty Gallacher, 30, and Pat Mitchell, 33.

Held at Roehampton's DARA Hall, Betty Gallacher organised the event, which was preceded by a children's party. The disco was provided by driver Fergus Crane.



Waterside Way driver Robbie Burke with base manager Wendy Slater, left and Gill Tynan.