

Buses

Supporting our employees

The Employee Survey and the liP action plan have formed the backbone of the year's activity, with work co-ordinated through a divisional steering group. Travel Dundee was awarded liP status in November 2005, whilst Travel Coventry and Travel London aim to achieve accreditation in 2006.

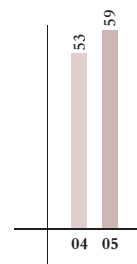
The scale of our bus operations creates challenges in managing and supporting our employees. Many employees rarely visit depots as their shifts start and end on route. However, individual development review meetings have been launched in four of our five operations, ensuring that employees benefit from annual personal reviews. We have also launched a divisional staff handbook and are working with Go Skills, the sector skills council for the passenger transport industry, to develop a new DVD training package on engineering workplace safety.

In 2005, we focused on attracting the right people into the business, ensuring candidates have the skills to cope with a difficult operating environment. In addition, we promoted greater co-ordination among our dispersed management team. With the bus industry still embracing a historic management style, we are focused on rolling-out a more people centred style of management for first line managers. More than 60 first line managers and supervisors from across the UK have attended a two-day refresher management skills training course.

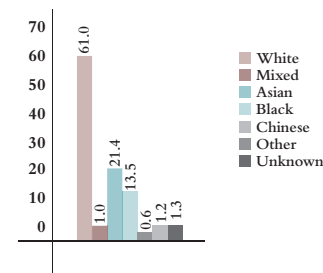
We continue to develop our drivers. During 2005, we recruited over 400 bus drivers from Poland. Over 10% of these drivers have already achieved their NVQ qualifications and we are starting to see the first promotions to traffic controller level. At Travel Dundee 47% of drivers are SNVQ accredited and 81% of Travel London drivers have BTEC qualifications. All new drivers are encouraged to achieve NVQ or BTEC qualifications and we use video technology to increase route knowledge.

Turnover within the bus industry is an ongoing challenge. Leavers' questionnaires have confirmed that the rigours of dealing with the public and the stresses of driving in city centre traffic create challenges. In response, we have developed a new customer care training course to assist employees in their front-line roles. To address traffic congestion we continue to lobby for bus priority measures.

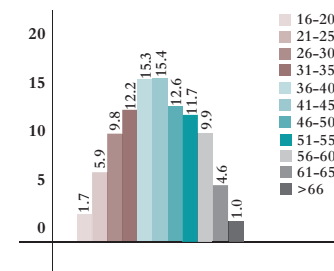
NVQ ACCREDITATION OF TRAVEL WEST MIDLANDS DRIVERS (%)



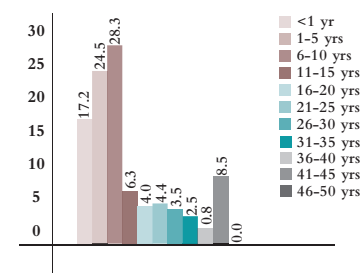
OVERALL SUMMARY OF ETHNICITY FOR BUSES (%)



OVERALL SUMMARY OF AGE FOR BUSES (%)



LENGTH OF SERVICE FOR BUSES (%)



Buses

Training our people, improving our business

The training and development of our people is a key characteristic of every National Express Group business. By providing our employees with more and better skills we help them fulfil their professional potential, reach their personal goals and – at the same time – ensure that we operate our business safely, effectively and with maximum focus on customer service.

On acquiring Travel London in February 2004 a more formalised training scheme for employees needed to be put in place.

Learning from Travel West Midland's (TWM) experience

The Travel London team identified two core objectives:

- ♦ To launch an induction programme so that all new starters understood their roles and the Travel London business.
- ♦ To provide ongoing education and support.

The immediate solution was to adopt many of the procedures that were in place in our TWM bus operation. Proven over many years, these were easy to replicate at short notice. Following an initial period, we subsequently modified TWM's training programmes, tailoring them to the specific needs of Travel London.

Induction training Today, our new induction programme plays a crucial role in introducing new employees to the Travel London business and the larger picture relating to the National Express Group. The programme is particularly important because it underpins Travel London's commitment to achieving liP status during 2006. In addition, with the continued growth of Travel London being a key strategic goal, attracting and retaining employees is vital. Training for new drivers ensures they understand their role as well as the company's priorities.

Since August 2004, almost 400 employees have attended induction sessions at Travel London's head office in Walworth. First impressions are important and feedback from new starters has been very positive. The induction programme features a mix of practical training and classroom modules. Sessions are professionally designed and focus on a wide range of key issues, including:

- ♦ Health and Safety
- ♦ Employment policies
- ♦ Business background
- ♦ Pay and conditions
- ♦ Equal opportunities
- ♦ Conflict resolution strategies

Continuing support Beyond the initial induction period, we provide ongoing support. A new mentoring programme is currently being launched. We have also produced a series of publications which are designed to foster teamwork and share best practice whilst also providing the tools that our people need to carry out their tasks. These publications include:

- ♦ Comprehensive staff guide
- ♦ Driver safety guide
- ♦ Guide to helping disabled passengers
- ♦ Ticketing guide
- ♦ Travel London newsletters

"I found the training is comprehensive, relevant and very effective. It helped me understand my role within the company and I feel this is reflected in my job performance and potential for promotion." Sam Mensah, Bus Driver, Travel London

www.travellondonbus.co.uk

Formalised training has improved the quality of our employee offering at Travel London

