

## Safely does it

UK Power Networks Services has been awarded an elite safety accreditation by the SafeContractor assessment scheme.

Says Lucy Innes, a safety expert at UK Power Networks, 'As a business we are very proud to have gained this accreditation, which ensures clients can be confident of our high commitment to safety. It also helps create a better working environment for all our colleagues. We are always striving to improve our practices.'

Over the course of a three-month period, UKPNS said the assessors 'took a magnifying glass' to the company's practices. The accreditation puts UKPNS in front of more than 200 companies which have signed a pledge to only hire contractors with SafeContractor accreditation.

John Kinge, Safecontractor's technical director, said, 'Major organisations simply cannot afford to run the risk of employing contractors who are not able to prove that they have sound health and safety policies in place.'

'More companies need to understand the importance of adopting good risk management in the way that UK Power Networks Services has done. The firm's high standard has set an example which hopefully will be followed by other companies within the sector.' ●

## Inspiring wiring

Keltbray Aspire has named its innovative new wiring unit after one of its longest-serving engineers, Les Blake.

The vehicle has been named after rail industry veteran Les Blake, who has worked on virtually every major electrification project since the early 1960s.

The overhead electrification wiring unit, which was displayed at Rail Live 2016, is a first in the UK. Developed by Sweden's SRS Sjölanders AB and German-based ZECK, the road/rail vehicle can run out contact and catenary wires at full tension, halving the time it typically takes to install conductors for rail electrification. The unit also offers more flexibility than a conventional wiring train - it doesn't rely on the availability of train crews and drivers.

Les came up with the initial design and led the team which brought the concept to fruition. Now 73 years old, Les began his career in the freight department of British Rail before moving over to rail electrification. He said the naming of the unit was 'a proud moment'.

Says Les, 'I've always been committed to the rail industry and electrification... I've always set high standards - even as a trainee lineman.'

Says director of Keltbray Aspire Martin



Brown, 'Les has worked with rail overhead line electrification for 54 years and is well known in our industry. He has worked on nearly every major electrification project in the UK since 1962, and despite being in his 70s, he is showing no signs of slowing down.'

'Besides being out there at the coal face, working night shifts and supporting our projects, Les is an expert on problem solving and innovation. He is also a fantastic mentor for our apprentices.'

'Beyond Keltbray, Les acts as a key industry adviser on projects worldwide, and most recently his knowledge and expertise have been sought after to support projects in Australia.'

Keltbray Aspire has invested almost £6 million in the development of new rail electrification plant over the past two years. The Les Blake road railer has been approved by Network Rail and has already installed overhead catenary for AmeyInabensa on the Great Western Main Line. ●





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