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New collaboration will deliver fresh thinking for rail

RSSB and TRL have agreed a strategic partnership that is set to share and combine research expertise in transport with their specific experience in the road and rail sectors. Each organisation has a common vision to enhance the value of their services to RSSB members and TRL's customers around the world.

The partnership has been established to enable the development and application of world class transport research, innovation and technology and will provide a joint platform to deliver better value and efficiencies.

'This partnership will build on a wealth of experience in rail and transport and will enable both organisations to develop and deliver new, cost-effective, solutions to a broader transport market, as well as the international rail industry,' commented Sue Sharland (Chief Executive of TRL).

She went on 'Complementary skills, innovative thinking and the ability to link in with evolving technologies mean that both organisations can work together to deliver new and real benefits to every aspect of rail operations, as well as a broader transport market'.

'There is the opportunity to unlock a great deal of potential within this unique combination,' says Len Porter (Chief Executive of RSSB). He added: 'We have identified how knowledge can be exchanged through RSSB's technical and research experts and TRL's Chief Scientist network. We are also working together to share thinking between different transport modes and deliver maximum value where these overlap.'



The primary focus of the partnership will be:

- Providing broader and better access to transport, road and rail research and developing better integration of thinking to deliver real value solutions
- Drawing together technical expertise on transport sustainability, climate change and energy issues with a focus on protecting and future-proofing critical transport networks
- Exploring and securing new initiatives and funding streams at an international level (both in Europe and across other parts of the world)

All the above will involve both organisations working together to pool thinking, jointly exploiting Intellectual Property, software development and knowledge management with opportunities already being identified for the sharing of knowledge, resources and facilities.

Professor Neil Paulley who is Chief Scientist of the TRL Academy concludes that: 'The established TRL Academy is already working with RSSB knowledge experts and the potential for this partnership to create technical solutions that can deliver real step-change in transport network performance, cost savings for operators and efficiencies in delivery of innovative thinking is huge'.

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For further information, including a photograph of the signing, please contact:

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1. RSSB builds industry-wide consensus and facilitates the resolution of difficult cross-industry issues. It provides knowledge, analysis, a substantial level of technical expertise and powerful information and risk management tools. This delivers a unique mix to the industry across a whole range of subject areas – with the aim of:
 - Driving out unnecessary cost
 - Improving business performance
 - Where reasonably practicable, continuously improving the level of safety in the rail industry
2. TRL is the UK's Transport Research Laboratory, recognised world-wide for over 75 years for evidential research and impartial advice across a range of transport disciplines. Although perhaps less recognised for its work in the rail sector, TRL has been involved in rail for many years, working for the Department for Transport (DfT), RSSB, the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR), Network Rail and a range of rail operators, consultants and civil engineers.

The TRL portfolio of rail projects includes a range of infrastructure, asset management, resilience, safety, security, human factors and low carbon work.

TRL has also helped the rail industry develop its own research strategy: the Second Rail Industry Research Strategy (RIRS2). This has been developed from a programme of consultation and workshops with representatives of the Rail Industry. This work is supported by the Department for Transport (DfT), and has the prime purpose of building upon the strengths of the First Rail Industry Research Strategy (RIRS1) and gaining industry-wide consensus on the actions required to improve the effectiveness of rail research.

For further information contact our Rail Programme Development Director – Mike Grimsey on 01344 770317 (email: mgrimsey@trl.co.uk)

3. RSSB manages the rail industry's research and development (R&D) programme, which covers 'systems' issues across the railway, engineering interfaces within the railway, and interfaces with other parts of the community and society. It's also instrumental in supporting the development of a future vision for the railways – including its technical strategy and sustainable development - and assessing how that vision can best be delivered. A major benefit for industry is that the programme represents an efficient and cost-effective means for the industry to research, develop and problem-solve whilst retaining ownership and direction of the products through RSSB.