Logistics Skills Network
Statement of Intent

1. Background to the establishment of the Logistics Skills Network

Before the COVID-19 pandemic began to impact the UK in February 2020 the logistics sector training providers had little connectivity with government and its agencies such as the DVSA, DVLA and JAUPT other than on a transactional basis.

This lack of connectivity had little impact on the successful running of these training providers. That said, LGV and PCV learners would have been better served if the test booking systems had been properly digitised, there was more examiner availability and tests were not cancelled with sometimes only a moment's notice.

This prolonged shutdown of vocational training and testing had a marked effect on the already chronic LGV and PCV driver shortage considered to be as many as 60,000. It is estimated that with a typical 1,500 tests conducted weekly and a 60% pass rate the loss of new drivers entering the sector has been as many as 15,000 over this period.

Skills for Logistics felt there was a need to actively engage with the DVSA, DfT and other stakeholders on a regular basis during this period in order to represent the views of providers and to present the case for a robust resumption plan that would tackle the testing backlog.

To gather the views of across LGV / PCV training providers a survey conducted on 15th May. This received an immediate response from 70% of the provider base, between them representing more than 1,000 tests per week. The survey results suggested that 76% of providers felt confident they would be able to resume operating again at pre-COVID 19 levels if tests resumed as planned on 22nd June. When it became clear this date would be missed a further survey was carried out on 24th June. This indicated the level of confidence had dropped to 58% based on the expectation that resumption of testing would be delayed a further 3 weeks.

Once testing had resumed the providers remained concerned that the DVSA would not have the capacity to deliver the volumes required to tackle the backlog. They would need DVSA to double their pre-COVID-19 capacity to make up the lost tests in a reasonable timeframe. There was clearly a need to continue the dialogue with government to press home the need for greater resources and to argue the case for taking bold steps such as creating more delegated examiners.

Skills for Logistics had by this time concluded that their role in representing the interest of providers was not going to be a one-off exercise during the crisis but would be an on-going need into the future. They decided to ask the 155 providers they had engaged so far if they would want to come together as a collective network. With 73% giving an immediate yes and everyone else bar 1 saying maybe, it was decided to proceed and establish the Logistics Skills Network.

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The founding members of Logistics Skills Network are Skills for Logistics and Mantra Learning. The former is a highly respected authority in logistics training and a provider of apprenticeship end-point assessments. The latter is a long-established training provider in the North West and the founder of The National Logistics Academy, a consortium of 24 of the larger logistics training providers in the UK and a deliverer of logistics apprenticeships to many of the top 50 employers.

Thereafter, an Advisory Board of 10 provider representatives with sector specific knowledge and experience with time has been established to help steer Logistics Skills Network to become the first endorsed trade body for the sector. Logistics Skills Network is now set for launch in September 2020. See Appendix 1 – Advisory Board Members

2. Aims

The UK logistics and passenger transport sector depends on access to a skilled workforce to keep the flow of goods and people moving into, out of and around the country. The training of the labour-force is invariably provided by small, independent training providers. The Logistics Skills Network is a new membership organisation with a remit to represent logistics training providers and promote their collective interests to government, regulators, the wider logistics and passenger transport sectors and to those working in the sectors. Specifically, it aims to:

- Promote the value and importance of the logistics and passenger transport sector to the UK economy
- Improve the image of the logistics and passenger skills training sector and its contribution to the professionalism and productivity of the UK logistics and passenger transport industries
- Improve communication between providers and the regulatory organisations
- Support the regulatory authorities to provide practical improvements to enhance labour-force operations
- To support regulatory authorities to meet the labour-force needs of the logistics and passenger transport sector
- Raise the career aspirations of logistics and passenger transport labour-force
- Improve the career opportunities of logistics and passenger transport labour-force
- Improve the skills of logistics and passenger transport trainers

3. Activities

The Logistics Skills Network will seek to:

1. Be a highly respected voice of our sector
2. Represent the great majority of logistics and passenger transport skills training organisations in the UK
3. Provide a communication platform for its members to share common concerns and coordinate a collective response
4. Lobby on behalf of members by engaging with specific stakeholders
5. Conduct socio-economic surveys on behalf of members providing informed guidance for policy makers
6. Provide strategic support to members towards the delivery of Government priorities and the priorities of Combined Authorities with devolved powers
7. Facilitate collaborative working between members which provide vocational and non-vocational learning and skills training in the logistics and passenger transport sector
8. Develop and share best practices, initiatives, expertise, knowledge, experience, and resources
9. Create a buying and procurement group for the benefit of members
10. Undertake funded/commercial projects on behalf of government and other stakeholders.

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4. Membership and constitution

The Logistics Skills Network is a not-for-profit organisation that represents specialist training providers in the logistics and passenger transport sectors. This will cover LGV / PCV training, MHE training including FLT and IPAF, warehousing, distribution, supply chain, and freight forwarding, motor vehicle, heavy repair – LGV, PCV (bus and coach), traineeships, apprenticeships, and a host of other vocational skills courses including health & safety, supervisory and management.

The potential membership includes circa 1,100 logistics and passenger transport training organisations employing some 10,000 trainers, instructors, tutors, and assessors. Members would contribute to the overheads of running the network through an annual membership fee.

Appendix 1

Advisory Board Members

Name	Company Name	Location
Laurence Bolton	National Driving Centre	Croydon
Nichola Davis	Automotive Transport Training	Hinckley
Billy Hammond	GTG	Glasgow, Edinburgh, Wolverhampton
Tony Higgins	SP Training	Carlisle
Carl Hughes	Hughes Driver Training	Leicester / national
Claire Lee	System Group	Liverpool / national
Paul Moon	2 Start	Portsmouth, Southampton, Reading & Worthing
Nick Rees	WTTL	Devizes
Ruth Wallace	Wallace School of Motoring	Park Royal, London
Richard Weston	Mantra Learning	Manchester / national