

# News Release



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## CHANGE OF OWNERSHIP FOR DOCKLANDS LIGHT RAILWAY

The ownership of the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) transferred from London Transport (LT) to the London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC), today (1 April 1992).

The intention of the transfer is to enable the DLR's performance more effectively to meet the needs and expectations of the travelling public, local businesses and the Docklands communities. All DLR property, equipment and staff are now vested in DLR Ltd, which is now a freestanding railway company owned by the LDDC.

A new DLR top management team for the DLR, appointed by Sir Peter Levene, takes over today. Malcolm Hutchinson is the new managing director, Anthony Jackson becomes finance director, Stephen Gibbs becomes projects director and Stephen French is to be planning director.

The new DLR Board, chaired by Sir Peter Levene, will directly control management and day-to-day operation of the railway and oversee all major projects to improve and extend services. The LDDC will have no role in day-to-day running of the DLR but the Corporation will set quality of service targets for the railway, and provide resources for DLR Ltd to achieve them.

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The first task of the new DLR Board and management team will be to improve the reliability of the railway's operation. To achieve this, the DLR Board will give added impetus to the improvement programmes already underway. It also proposes to appoint a 'prime contractor' to provide more effective and integrated management of the company's construction, engineering and signalling projects. The prime contractor should be in place by mid 1992 following a competitive tendering process.

Safety will obviously be a vital consideration for the new organisation. A new safety regime will be established to mirror the existing one operated by LT, including independent expert safety audits. These audits will be commissioned by a new LDDC Board Safety Committee.

A high priority for both the LDDC and DLR Ltd is to strengthen and extend the arrangements for consultation with local interests. Accordingly a new DLR Consultative Forum will be established to provide a more effective dialogue between DLR and the local boroughs and business interests.

The DLR will continue to be a part of London's integrated public transport fare structure. Agreement has been reached with LT and British Rail to keep DLR in the Travelcard scheme. Concessionary fare arrangements for pensioners and other special groups will also continue.

The LDDC's Board has resolved that the DLR should remain within the jurisdiction of the London Regional Passengers Committee. Accordingly, the Corporation has asked the Secretary of State for Transport to make the necessary orders under the Transport and Works Act 1992. Until the position is formalised, the LDDC and DLR Ltd will accept the LRPC's jurisdiction on a voluntary basis.

LDDC Chairman Michael Pickard said today: "The DLR is a central element in the drive to regenerate London Docklands. Its ability to provide a reliable service is paramount to the success of the area."

DLR Chairman Sir Peter Levene said: "I welcome the challenge. DLR staff are working hard to eliminate technical problems and I am confident that passengers will soon see a significant improvement in the railway's performance. Other major changes planned, including a new signalling system, should provide the frequent and reliable service which Docklands needs."

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