



2016 REVIEW



“ FORS members have created a nationwide community of operators who believe in standards beyond basic compliance. All supply chains should be serviced by operators who care, and if they are not, the question should be asked, ‘Why not?’ ”

John Hix, Director,
FORS Community Partnership

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Welcome to the 2016 FORS review



John Hix, Director, FORS Community Partnership
February 2017

FORS operators set the bar for safe and responsible operations, and your commitment to the Standard is what FORS is built on.

You will see in the pages of this review that 2016 saw the number of fleets achieving the FORS Standard grow by an impressive 22 per cent. Perhaps even more significantly, the proportion of fleets progressing to Silver and Gold accreditation has gone up by 69 and 49 per cent respectively. This is a huge achievement of which we can all be proud.

In November, some 350 FORS managers gathered for the first-ever national FORS Members' Conference. This was a great opportunity to celebrate our success and we marked some very significant milestones – the 4,000th accredited member, the 500th FORS Practitioner, the 500th Silver and the

150th Gold member. Each one of these is an important achievement in its own right, so to have all four members at the conference, together with so many long-standing members who helped shape the scheme from its very earliest of days, was a really important moment.

It was a busy year for the FORS Governance and Standards Advisory Group (GSAG), too.

GSAG is the voluntary body of FORS members and specifiers that oversees the requirements of the Standard. The Standard is necessarily a living document – it must evolve to keep pace with current and emerging best practice, and there is a two-year cycle for undertaking major updates to it and its accompanying documents. The last major Standard revision (version 3) was completed in October 2014, so, in the spring of 2016, GSAG started its work to review and update the Standard.

There were three main principles applied to the review process: make the requirements clearer and more digestible (avoid duplication and crossover in requirements); introduce wider environmental requirements; and implement a more robust enforcement approach.

Version 4.0 of the updated Standard was approved by GSAG in early September and was published on 29 September. You can read more about the work of GSAG on pages 26-27 and the new Standard on pages 19-21. We believe we have achieved the objectives of the review, but, of course, we welcome feedback on the new requirements and supporting guidance. ▶



Skills development and training feature large in the portfolio of benefits available to FORS members, and under the new 'FORS Professional' banner we are offering a truly comprehensive package of driver and manager training across the UK. Do please make the most of your membership benefits such as free training, offers and discounts on services and products and the online tools – they are all there to help you meet the FORS requirements. ■



Do you recognise this man?

Perhaps not. His name is Chris Craggs, CEO at McParters Teller, and he recognises the importance of an efficient, compliant and, above all, a safe fleet of vans. That's why he's a member of FORS – the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme. And he's also achieved Silver status, meaning that specifiers and contractors want to get to know him better. **Isn't it time you were recognised, too?**

Safety, efficiency, environment
www.fors-online.org.uk 08448 09 09 44

FORS Members' Conference
Working together, championing best practice

9 November 2016
National Conference Centre

"What's in it for me?"

CARGO Express

A guide to FORS benefits

Prove you're safer and greener
Whatever you are driving, it's what you are in Europe.

Your route to best practice

Equipment
Insurance
Legal Advice

Examples
...
FORS members



FORS:

“...fuel consumption improved yet again by some 10 per cent year-on-year among FORS Gold members* in 2016.”

“...incidence of slight and serious collisions was down by 11 per cent*.”



Benefiting industry, community, economy

Against a background of continuing intensive freight and passenger carriage by road in 2016, the mission of FORS, the Fleet Operator Recognition Scheme, remained that of promoting and monitoring best practice in the commercial road user sector; specifically trucks, vans, buses and coaches.

The benefits of this were widespread and varied. For example, the ongoing reduction in the incidence of serious and minor collisions between commercial vehicles and other road users. This, a direct benefit of the application of both FORS vehicle standards and driver training.

2016 was a year of continuing focus on commercial vehicle operations and their impact on the wider community, not just in London, but across the UK. So the provable advances made in safety and environmental gains helped significantly in the important task of making commercial road transport more widely understood and acceptable to the general public.

In all this, it should be remembered that FORS is a voluntary accreditation scheme.

What was certainly true in 2016, however, was that increasing numbers of transport industry customers made the FORS Standard a central part of their bidding process for contracts. They saw this as a clear route to encouraging better and safer transport, as well as helping to meet their own carbon footprint and

operational safety demands. For operators it has become something of a matter of pride that, in increasing numbers, they are immediately able to demonstrate their abilities in all these respects.

Beyond safer operations and the related savings, fuel economy too has been a clear benefit. The single biggest annual cost for vehicle operators, fuel consumption, improved yet again by some 10 per cent year-on-year among FORS Gold members* in 2016. A significant saving, and with potentially greater benefit as fuel prices rise further in the coming months and years.

Among the wider UK community, FORS delivered the benefits of reduced vehicle emissions, as more and more operators adhered to the strict FORS Standard on vehicle condition and operation. In addition to this environmental gain, the general public found itself increasingly in the company of better equipped, better maintained and better operated vehicles on our roads. All operated by drivers better trained and more aware of their responsibilities and work environment. Among FORS Gold members*, incidence of slight and serious collisions was down by 11 per cent, delivering enhancements to safety across the board.

Overall, the FORS Standard has helped the UK PLC economy across 2016 by:

- Helping transport operators cut costs and reduce pollution
- Saving on fuel
- Delivering a safer, better equipped and properly trained transport sector. A sector crucial for the well-being of the country and the economy. ■

* Statistics drawn from 82 Gold members operating 7,590 vehicles in 2016.

2016: Milestones

2016 saw marked progress in external and internal activities for FORS. This delivered both membership growth and an enhanced awareness of FORS across the UK. During this process, many significant milestones were passed, not only for internal activities, but in industry and public-facing events. These generated increased traffic on our social media profiles and website (pages 14-15), as well as interest in, and attendance at, our first conference (pages 16-18). ■

400

- 15 January
400th FORS Practitioner awarded
- 28 January
New FORS Operator Licence Awareness training available free to accredited operators

- 10 March
'What is FORS?' briefings launched



- 19 April
GSAG work commences on review of FORS Standard

- 28 April
FORS exhibits at the CV Show for first time in eight years

150

- 8 July
150th Gold Member

- 6 July
FORS sponsors the Safety category at Motor Transport Awards

450

- 5 May
450th FORS Practitioner awarded

4000

500



- 9 November
1st National FORS Members' Conference

- 10 August
FORS Cycle Safety eLearning wins A'Education and Training content design award

- 30 August
Safe Urban Driving Course goes international (Austria)

500

- 3 October
New FORS website launched

- 6 October
500th FORS Practitioner awarded

- 14 October
4,000th FORS accredited member

- 27 October
500th Silver member

- 30 October
FORS at Ciclovía event, Belfast



- 29 September
New FORS Standard version 4.0 released

2017

- 13 December
FORS winner of WhatVan? 'Risk Management' Award

2016: Growth and development

Without doubt, 2016 was another landmark year for FORS, with membership up by a very gratifying 22 per cent.

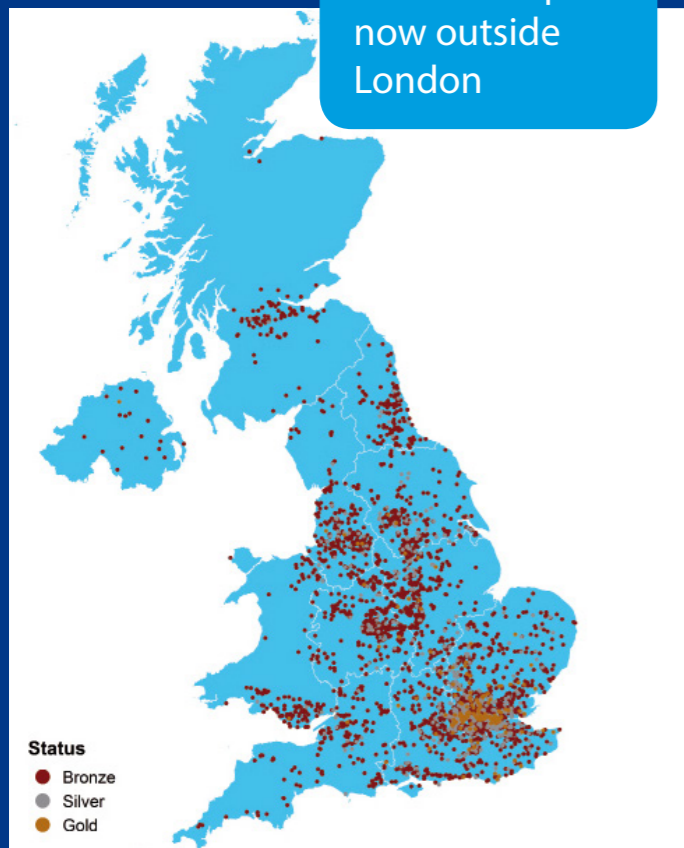
Progress is important, but it must always be meaningful progress. This made careful and accurate self-measurement an important aspect of ensuring 2016 targets were met and improvements made.

Throughout this process, we are always mindful that FORS accreditation requires an investment from operators. The growing number of members is therefore the clearest indication yet that this investment is seen as increasingly worthwhile by the transport community.

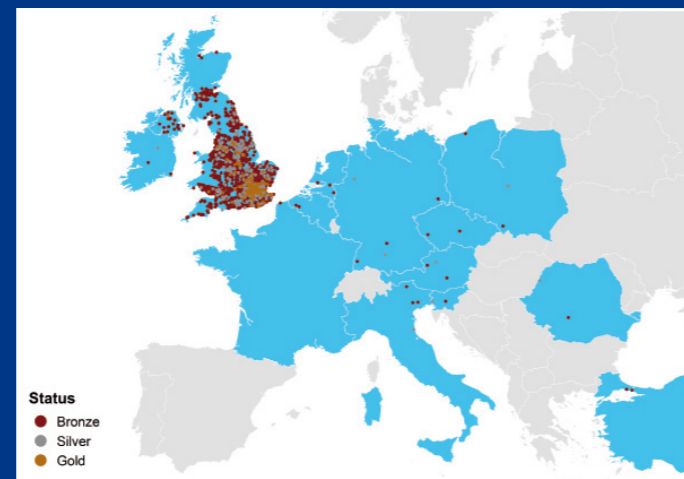
The growing benefits to operators of their involvement with FORS is reported on pages 22-23. Not only in the critical area of safety, but also in lowered fuel consumption. These were undoubtedly underlying factors behind the growth of FORS in 2016. Additionally, there was an increasing awareness among major UK companies contracting external transport services, of the need for provably better and safer operations.

It is worth recalling that, initially, FORS was introduced by Transport for London (TfL) as it sought ways to make the nation's capital a cleaner, safer environment at street level. The massive growth of high-level infrastructure projects across London proved fertile ground for planting those

74%
of FORS membership now outside London



FORS members United Kingdom – 2016



FORS members Europe – 2016

initial seeds, and alongside other initiatives such as CLOCS, the FORS Standard has taken root and flourished.

Building the base

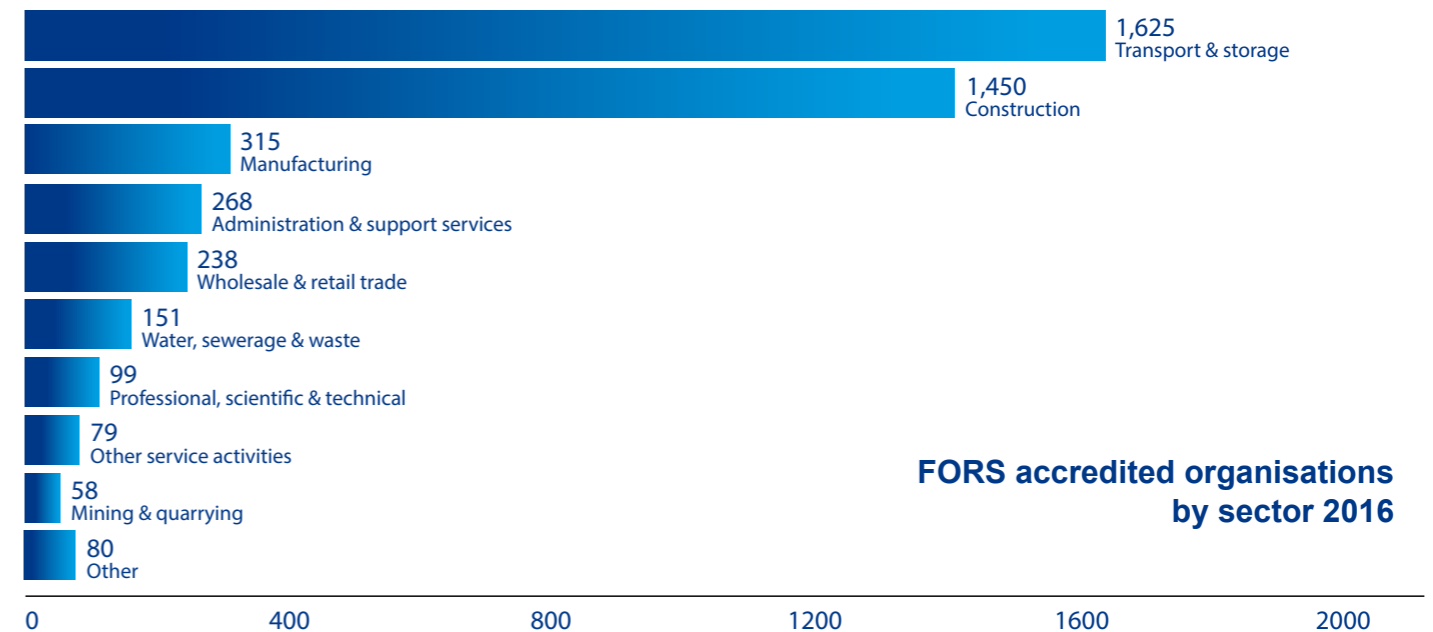
Today though, under the leadership of the FORS Community Partnership (pages 26-27), that London-centric start-up has been significantly overtaken by growth across the rest of the UK. In 2016, almost three-quarters of members were based outside London, not only in other major conurbations, but across even the more rural areas of the country.

In part, this expansion has been powered by the FORS Community Partnership's efforts to deliver the FORS story across the UK and within the transport community's individual sectors. More importantly however, it is a result of the visionary approach of the growing number of FORS accredited operators themselves. Operators who see clearly that the future of their businesses, and indeed their industry, lies in an ever-higher standard – the FORS Standard.

2017 looks increasingly exciting. A year of consolidation and further growth, and you can read a little of our plans on pages 28-29.



22%
increase in overall membership during the course of 2016



FORS accredited organisations by sector 2016

2016: An increasing regional presence

For many of us closely involved with FORS, the strong growth in our regional presence was one of the most encouraging aspects of 2016. It pointed the way forward for further development and growth, through the wider application of the FORS Standard in both urban and rural areas across the UK.

As a clear indicator of our intent in this regard, in 2016 FORS created the role of FORS Manager – Northern Ireland, with a clear remit to spread the word across the province. FORS had already started to engage with the appropriate government departments in Northern Ireland, both to explain FORS and highlight how it could be introduced to procurement to improve safety in public authority supply chains.



Ian Vincent, FORS Compliance Manager demonstrates HGV blind spots to Chris Hazzard, Minister for Infrastructure of Northern Ireland at the 2016 Ciclovía event in Belfast

Backing these efforts, the FORS presence and objectives were further introduced through FORS sponsorship of the 'Innovation' category at the prestigious 2016 Export and Freight Awards – an event attended by hundreds of the most influential individuals in Northern Ireland transport across the board.

In addition, FORS participated in the 2016 Ciclovía event in Belfast. This was a 'traffic-free streets' cycling opportunity for the general public, in which we ran an Exchanging Places event with Deighan Transport and Chris Hazzard, Minister for Infrastructure of Northern Ireland. This was a particularly appropriate pairing as, in 2016, Deighan Transport had become the first FORS Gold member in Northern Ireland.

In the North East

Elsewhere in the UK, the North East Combined Authority (NECA) continued throughout 2016 to support and encourage FORS growth in the region. John Bourn, Senior Specialist Transport Planner for NECA, also carried on with his invaluable work as the representative for the region on the FORS Governance and Standards Advisory Group.

In addition, working with NECA, FORS:

- Arranged and promoted 20 FORS Practitioner workshops in the North East
- Provided a Local Authority Transport Manager-specific FORS Going for Bronze workshop and ongoing advice
- Was promoted positively in quarterly Freight Quality Partnership meetings
- Monitored and reported on progress of the scheme in the North East
- Engaged the road safety charity 'See Me, Save Me' to further promote FORS in the region. ■



2016: Training updates

During 2016, FORS Professional was introduced to provide the best training on the market, helping drivers and management achieve the highest levels of performance in safety, efficiency and environmental best practice. FORS training continues to be free to members, maintaining its position as a core benefit of FORS membership.

It is a clear indication of the success of the FORS training programme that in early October, we had trained a further 114 new FORS Practitioners, bringing the overall total within the scheme to 500. A series of nine manager/supervisor-level workshops help operators develop policies and implement best practice relating to fuel and emissions, safety, fines and charges and performance management. Together these workshops constitute the FORS Practitioner qualification.

Building on its training roll-out in 2015, from a purely London-based offering, to centres in Corby, Manchester, Rotherham, North East England and Bristol, during 2016 courses were added in Wakefield, Newcastle, Dudley, Bellshill (Scotland) and Nottingham. A reflection of the vastly expanded range of FORS membership across the UK.

Driver training

In addition to FORS Practitioner workshops, a comprehensive suite of new driver courses and eLearning modules were introduced during the year. These now include van drivers, under Van Smart training, as well as an O Licence Awareness course – both have been well received by members throughout the country.

With TfL funding, FORS continues to offer Safe Urban Driving (SUD) training for truck and public service vehicle (PSV) drivers. The courses, available across the country, involve both a theory module in the classroom and a practical module where participants 'saddle-up' and get a cyclist's view of the road. Again through funding from TfL, FORS also offers Driver CPC accredited Staying Legal courses. These keep drivers on the right side of the law with a focus on operator licensing requirements, especially those impacted by driver behaviours.

The popular Van Smart driver training, consists of a 3.5 hour theory module and a 3.5 hour 'on-your-bike' practical module. Much like the SUD training, the theory module aims to equip drivers with the skill set required to become safer, more diligent and defensive drivers. ■

12,039
Total SUD trained drivers

171
Practitioner and 'Going for Bronze' workshops

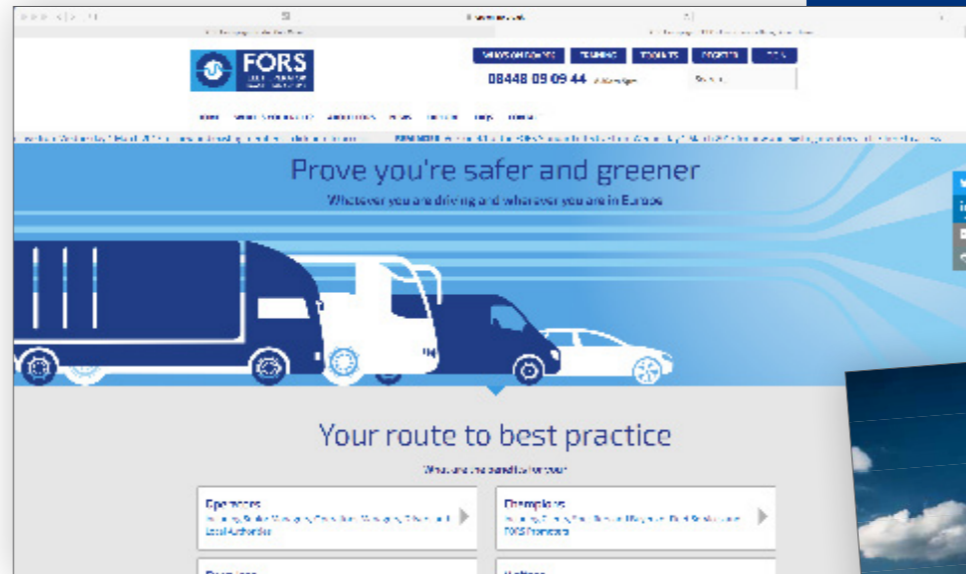
2,692
Manager workshop places filled

231
Staying Legal courses

30,120
eLearning modules completed

2016: Spreading the word

Clear, factual communication remains at the very heart of FORS and its aspirations for the future. Central to this has been the consistency of our messages and the ability to present them across an ever-increasing spread of media channels.



Numbers up...

 **86%** more...
Twitter followers

 **70%** more...
LinkedIn followers

 **12%** more...
eNews recipients

 **125%** more...
Events attended

 **34%** more...
Website hits

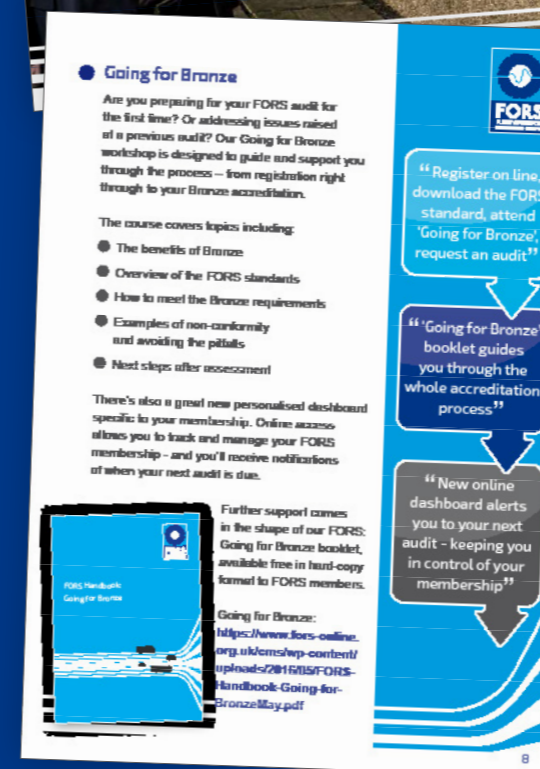
 **120%** longer...
Web visit times

In 2016, we saw major developments in all key areas. Not least among these was the massive increase in visits of some 34 per cent to our re-launched website. Alongside this, the average duration of these visits jumped by well over 100 per cent. The new design and added interactive member services will account for a good part of those increases, but they do not explain it all. It has to be seen in the wider context of the activity and growth in associated areas.

Among these, was the marked increase of the FORS presence at industry exhibitions and conferences. In 2016 these were more than doubled over the preceding year, up to 36 over the year. Added to this was the inaugural FORS Members' Conference (see pages 16-18).

Such diversification across industry events also allowed us to utilise our Twitter profile more fully in 2016, with FORS followers increasing by some 86 per cent. Appropriate messaging and professional content have been at the forefront of developing this following, and we anticipate continuing growth as we go forward.

We also made strong advances in 2016 with our LinkedIn community, seeing numbers rise by ▶



a very pleasing 70 per cent. Our own FORS eNews community also grew by almost 12 per cent – a significant achievement in its own right.

In 2016, FORS Professional became the new umbrella branding for all FORS training. Our comprehensive package of essential training incorporates content to help operators meet the FORS Standard, improve knowledge and professional standards within the fleet industry and address today's safety and efficiency challenges.

Fresh, meaningful communication at all relevant levels has been a watchword throughout 2016 for us, and there is little doubt that this has played its part in the overall success story of FORS. ■



Opposite page: new website
This page - left: pages from the FORS Benefits booklet
This page - above: member testimonial advert

2016: Inaugural FORS Members' Conference

2016 saw our first ever FORS Members' Conference. With over 350 delegates in attendance and 25 specialist providers exhibiting for their benefit, the event, held at the National Conference Centre in Solihull, was a resounding success.



After welcoming members and paying tribute to the advances made in the year, the conference chairman, Steve Agg, Chairman of the FORS Governance and Standards Advisory Group (GSAG) made clear in his opening remarks that FORS is not a standard simply for the capital, or even just the South East of the country. It is open to UK and non-UK fleet operators, with members right across the UK and in Europe already.

This point was picked up by Derek Rees, who fronts the new, industry-led team pushing CLOCS out across the UK in a bid to collaboratively reduce construction-related road risk. He reiterated that neither FORS nor CLOCS are London-centric standards, but ones that apply nationwide.

He said, "In 2013 there were no less than 11 separate safety standards that applied to commercial vehicle safety, no wonder it was confusing. The industry was calling for a sense of order and organisation, and 85 per cent of operators were demanding a single standard. FORS was the answer, with CLOCS a central pillar."

This need for ever-wider adherence to FORS principles was further emphasised by Dr Jon Lamonte, CEO of Transport for Greater Manchester. He underlined the growing importance of the 'Connected North', across which 95 per cent of goods are already transported by road, with further significant increases expected. A key part of his strategy is enhanced training for cyclists and drivers,

improving the confidence of cyclists and the awareness among drivers of vulnerable road users.

Safety was also at the centre of a presentation made by Julie Madoui, Head of Fleet and Transport at Skanska UK. She told delegates, "Make no mistake, there is a real cost from doing nothing in this arena. The reputational damage that can result from not getting your safety and environmental standards up to the mark are enormous, and recovering lost trust is potentially impossible."

She went on to remind delegates, "In 2014/15 there were 35 fatalities in the UK construction sector. That's 35 too many, but in the same period, there were 1,775 recorded deaths on the roads. In any other industry this would be regarded as wholly unacceptable."

On a commercial note, Madoui then related the acceptance and implementation of standards to her company's bottom line gains. She told the conference, "The hard work brings more good news than just the reduction in accident and injury. We've saved over £400,000 a year from a cut in our insurance premiums, and another £50,000 per annum on a reduction in penalty charges. Add to that a cut in fuel consumption of 16 per cent from the driver training programmes, and it's a no-brainer."

In a sector with such potential for things to go wrong, what needs to be done if they do? This was a question expertly answered by John Lawrence, an independent fleet risk specialist.

His message was clear, "The police will lead investigations into collisions on public roads, and the HSE (Health and Safety Executive) will be ▶



Conference cont'd

Previous page (L-R):

Steve Agg - FORS; Derek Rees - CLOCS;
Dr Jon Lamonte - Trans. for Grt Manchester;
Julie Madoui - Skanska UK

This page (L-R):

John Lawrence - fleet risk specialist;
John Hix - FORS; Ian Vincent - FORS



responsible for looking at incidents on site, or at the workplace. If it's unclear, both agencies could be involved." Lawrence warned, "You need to be prepared, have a trained appointed person, and be ready to cooperate fully with either of these agencies. They understand that it's a time of crisis for you, but they have a low tolerance level of incompetence, or poor understanding of the processes. After all, they are well-known and clearly laid down."

In the case of any road death the police will treat it as an unlawful killing and they can apply procedures from ACPO (Association of Chief Police Officers) murder incident manual. The HSE have similar powers as HMRC (Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs), and can remove computers, mobiles and PDAs.

Lawrence urged his listeners to take all possible steps to be ready. He said, "You need to look at how you are managing your business, and ask yourself if you could cope with this. There could be a wide range of data collected, from drivers' hours and maintenance records, to HR and payroll. In all matters, cooperation is key to achieving the best outcome."

A clear policy for handling such a process should be in place and communicated to those who may need to know, not simply written and filed. With fines for any breaches of 'duty of care' recently increased to anywhere between £50 and £10 million, and the possibility of a two-year custodial sentence for any individual deemed culpable,

John Lawrence's words were closely followed by all in the conference.

All in all it was a packed and deeply interesting conference. From the FORS team, Director, John Hix, took the delegates through the updated FORS Standard (version 4.0), telling everybody, "Operators can be confident that we are monitoring all the relevant changes in legislation that apply to them. Keeping track of it all would be a significant burden on any individual operator who was not a FORS member". A powerful and persuasive thought, and one that is increasingly understood across all sectors of road transport.

On a related tack, Ian Vincent, FORS Compliance Manager, talked people through 'The Science of Compliance' – a session generally considered to be 'worth the entry money' in its own right! He rightly made the point that compliance monitoring needed to be a tough process if it was to have any value. He noted that if a standard can be easily debased, manipulated or circumvented, its reputation and worth quickly vanish. Vincent outlined changes to the terms and conditions in FORS Standard version 4.0, including the application of penalties of suspension, termination or downgrading if false information is provided at a FORS audit.

We have tried here to give just a flavour of the conference and some of the topics covered. It would be impossible to encapsulate every presentation in what was agreed by all attendees to have been a first class conference, filled with thought-provoking and informative addresses and debate.

For those seeking more detail, a downloadable document is available on the FORS website. ■

FORS: Standard v4.0

With the introduction in 2016 of the new FORS Standard (version 4.0) at the inaugural FORS Members' Conference, the organisation demonstrated its continuing ability to deliver best practice for operators, particularly FORS Gold members.

The FORS Standard is a living document: it must keep pace with current and emerging best practice. At the same time FORS has to ensure it is not such a fast-moving target that members have difficulty knowing just what to aim at. So, in line with the principles of the UK Accreditation Service, FORS adopted a two-year cycle for updating the Standard and accompanying documents.

Within the overall set-up of FORS, the Governance and Standards Advisory Group (GSAG) has responsibility for the Standard and its requirements. The last major revision (version 3.0) was in October 2014, so in spring of 2016 GSAG established a sub-group, led by CILT, to review and update the Standard.

Three main principles were applied:

- To make the requirements clearer and more digestible
- To introduce wider environmental requirements
- To implement a more robust enforcement approach

Work started in March 2016 and final sign-off was accomplished in early September. The new Standard was then launched officially at the 9 November conference.

We do not attempt to offer a comprehensive view of the changes and their respective impacts here, but as one of the most significant events of 2016, we felt it valuable to offer a few indications of the key changes.

Making life easier

To make the FORS Standard easier to digest for members and would-be members, FORS took the decision to break down a hitherto bulky document into individual, smaller and more accessible files. These are:

- Rules and procedures – how the scheme is run and how the audits work
- Guidance on demonstrating the requirements of the FORS Standard – what must be demonstrated at audit to meet the requirements
- The FORS Standard – Bronze, Silver and Gold requirements
- Terms and conditions – an important document detailing key obligations

Driver licencing

In keeping with technological developments and best practice, the requirement at Silver to verify licences via the DVLA, is moved to Bronze. ▶



This now requires 'Fleet operators to ensure that licences and qualifications of all drivers (including agency drivers) are checked using a risk-based verification system that directly accesses the DVLA database...'

The old Silver requirement stated, 'Frequency of licence checks should be against an approved risk scale', indicating a recommended activity. In the new Standard this now says 'shall', making it mandatory.

Reversing alarms

Audible warning systems are a new inclusion in the Standard requiring reversing alarms to be fitted and working on vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gvw. While reversing alarms are not mandated in law, they are increasingly fitted as standard equipment on vehicles, so are now added to the Standard as a firm requirement.

Environmental changes

For some time there has been a requirement at Gold to appoint an Emissions Champion and we have now added specific environmental requirements that need to be evidenced at audit.

Engine idling

In today's tough commercial environment, most commercial vehicle operators have 'got it' when it comes to minimising engine idling.

It helps them to make good fuel savings, be a better community neighbour and guard air quality – and, in the days of telematics, it has become far simpler to monitor. Thus, at Bronze, FORS has introduced a requirement to ensure operators have both a policy and procedures in place to reduce engine idling. To assist with this, a valuable toolkit is available for members on FORS online at: www.fors.site/anti-idling

Performance data

At Silver we asked members to report fuel use and CO₂ emissions – CO₂ is relatively easy as there is a straight-line relationship between it and fuel.

Alongside this, we have now updated reporting requirements to include NO_x and particulates. Unfortunately, there is no similar straight-line relationship between fuel use and NO_x and particulates. Some members already have tools to help calculate this, but, for those who don't, there is a simple tool available on FORS online that can provide you with what you need.

It is based on standard DEFRA conversion factors, average mpg from the FORS Performance Management System and national average fleet profiles for HGVs and LGVs.

Noise assessment

FORS Gold now requires assessment of the impact of noise created by a member's operation and a review of how this can be mitigated.

Members are not expected to invest in expensive sound measuring equipment. Rather, the requirement is that members undertake simple assessments of where their biggest noise impacts might be and detail actions being taken to reduce them if needed.

There is good information on the DfT website for retail and construction deliveries, and TfL has also done a lot of good work on retiming deliveries and managing noise.

Modal shift and alternative vehicles

Gold accreditation now requires an assessment to be made about modal shift opportunities, and FORS recommends that such an assessment includes alternative fuelled vehicles.

There is no suggestion of a mandatory requirement to adopt alternative modes and fuels. However, what should be demonstrated is clear proof of an investigation of whether or not these could be right for your operation. ►

Other changes

Road risk

Under Silver, members are now required to have a nominated person responsible for the management of road risk within their business. This means monitoring and assessing the risk of incidents on the road and producing meaningful mitigations to reduce this risk.

Training

For Bronze members, there is a new training requirement, 'Professional Development', to help identify training needs and development plans for all staff. There is also a requirement for refresher training to be undertaken.

At Silver, the most significant change is in 'Vulnerable road user safety training'. FORS now provides classroom-based learning as an alternative to one-on-one computer-based learning.

At Gold, under a new 'Professional Development' requirement, the FORS focus is to demonstrate members have targeted training programmes for all staff and are aware of training needs based on individual performance.

Progression

Silver and Gold members now need a minimum of 30 calendar days validity on current Bronze accreditation or re-accreditation at the point of applying for progression. Previously, this had been just 15 days.

Whole fleet accreditation

There are changes in the supporting guidance on whole fleet accreditation (WFA). FORS' intention here is to bring this more in line with multi-operating centre accreditation (MOCA).

Members now need 20 per cent of operating centres self-audited per year, with 100 per cent of audit reports being quality checked by FORS, and with all auditors undertaking a witnessed audit each year. ■

CONFERENCE QUESTIONS on the new Standard included:

Q In the new Standard, what additional equipment do I have to have fitted over and above what was in the old Standard in order to maintain my accreditation?

A At Bronze there are no further requirements to have equipment fitted. At Silver you must have reversing alarms fitted to all vehicles over 3.5 tonnes gvw.

Q Do I really have to provide a copy of The Highway Code to all of my drivers?

A Yes, this is a requirement of D2 Driving standards in FORS Bronze. FORS would expect to see a register or some other record of issuing a copy of the current Highway Code to the drivers. It would accept either a copy or electronic version, but would expect the company to demonstrate any electronic version they issue. The Highway Code is available for free on the website at www.gov.uk/guidance/the-highway-code. You can also get at least a 20 per cent discount as a FORS member if you want to buy hard copies.

Q You said that SUD now lasts for five years. Does that start from now or is my historic training now extended?

A Yes, your historic training will be extended by two years.

Q My Practitioner Certificate says it's valid for five years and that's coming to an end. Do I have to do it all again?

A No, in 2017 there will be a one-day refresher course available.

Why: does FORS have the industry's attention?

There are many reasons for the increased time and attention paid to FORS during 2016. For example: the enhanced FORS Standard introduced during the year; the fast-growing, nationwide uptake of the FORS Standard – now representing well over 70 per cent of total membership; and the developing and evermore popular training courses.



In any assessment of a scheme such as FORS, of course, membership numbers are always a major indicator that the direction of travel is right. It is rewarding to note therefore, that in 2016 alone, FORS membership rose by some 22 per cent.

As encouraging as these figures are, perhaps more meaningful than any of them are the reactions of those people paying hard-earned money to adopt, apply and extend their use of the FORS Standard.

Among our many stakeholders, it is the transport operators who are at the very forefront of our work. It is their adoption of the FORS Standard that maintains the impetus behind the whole operation. In a highly competitive industry, they have recognised the commercial and social benefits that derive, not only to them, but their fellow road users, and, ultimately, the wider UK community and economy. ■

“FORS Silver membership is reward for our hard work in establishing and maintaining a fleet of trucks that's bringing higher levels of safety on the road and increased productivity to our business.”

Neville Tilley, Neville Tilley Transport,
500th FORS Silver member

“New customers have come on board because they recognise the value of the FORS accreditation, and we know that as a Northern Ireland operator, we can travel around the UK and be at a nationwide high standard. FORS is more than a route to compliance, it shows dedication to best practice.”

Seamus Deighan, owner of Deighan Transport,
FORS Gold member

“The FORS Practitioner workshops have been invaluable in providing the knowledge and training to our management team to control and develop our existing logistical management systems, in line with current and forthcoming legislation.”

James Lewis, SHEQ Director at Brogan Group,
FORS Gold Member

“We operate large vehicles and crane equipment and many of our deliveries take place in urban, heavily populated and congested areas including inner city London. Since joining FORS, we are operating more safely, we are having less impact on the environment and in doing so we have reduced costs.”

Managing Director, Joost Baker, Containerlift, FORS Gold member

“Our new FORS Gold accreditation is the result of a sustained effort in improving our fleet operations. Significant benefits have been achieved with regard to both fuel efficiency and a reduction in vehicle accidents.”

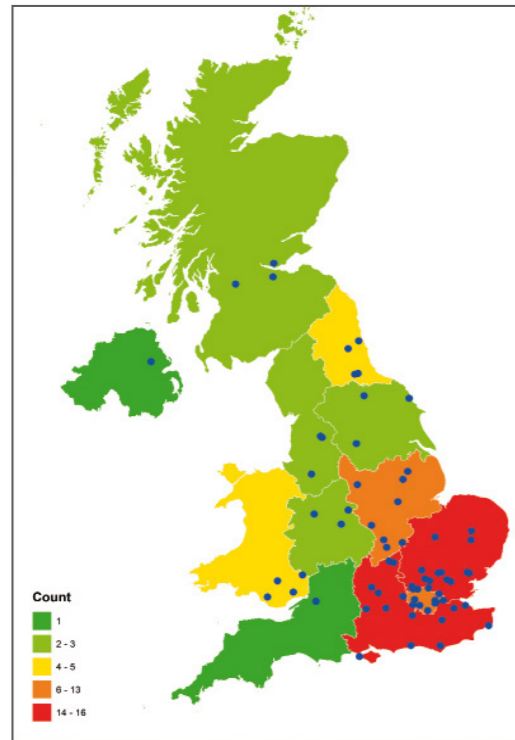
Kevin Griffiths, Compliance and SHEQ Manager, Lowery Limited,
150th FORS Gold member

“We will continuously use what FORS has taught us to help reduce our carbon footprint and make the roads safer for everyone that uses them. We have also managed to make a significant saving by reducing our fuel usage and improving our MPG.”

Melanie Ward, Transport Manager and Fuel & Emissions Champion at F.R Shadbolt & Sons Ltd., FORS Gold member

How: does FORS work?

2016 was a year of advances for the professional and competent team of helpline staff, trainers, auditors, programme managers, technical, development and support staff from AECOM, CILT and Fleet Source who form the FORS Community Partnership team.



Location of auditors within the UK in 2016

Auditing

Auditing remained key in 2016 to ensuring the high ideals enshrined in the FORS Standard were achieved in practice. Members must be able to prove that they adhere at all times to the mandatory and rigorous requirements set out in the Standard, and it was pleasing to see an overall pass rate of 80 per cent. To help keep pace with this, there was a rise both in the number of auditors appointed in the UK and Europe. Speed of response to audit requests was also improved during 2016, as was the time taken from booking to actual auditing.

Helpline

Set against the rising numbers of members, 2016 was another busy year for the FORS Helpline. In the course of the year over 20,000 telephone enquiries and almost 15,000 e-mail communications from FORS members were received and dealt with.

On top of this, the team handled the distribution of over 53,000 warning signage stickers for display on members' fleets.

Compliance monitoring

Despite these rising numbers and significant achievements, 2016 was not a year for complacency within FORS. Though now in our second full year, we are still only at the start of the campaign. Our objective remains to ensure FORS and the FORS Standard become ever more synonymous with the highest levels of operating quality, no longer simply in the original London area, but across the UK.

Monitoring compliance remains key to ensuring the FORS Standard is upheld, and during 2016 the Compliance Team was able to take on a further member of staff for this key role. ▶

The FORS Helpline handled over 20,000 telephone enquiries and almost 15,000 e-mail communications in 2016

An emphasis on compliance and enforcement helps reinforce the fact that those operators not meeting the Standard will be held to task. It sets FORS apart as a truly independent and robust accreditation scheme.

Taking action

The Compliance Team deals with all suspected breaches of the Standard. These can emanate from such sources as the Transport for London Work Related Road Risk team, their On Street Enforcement team, the Police, DVSA, information from the Traffic Commissioners and members of the public. Increasingly, this now includes the fast-growing information posted on social media websites. The latter source has seen a number of complaints of drivers, in FORS accredited company vehicles, committing offences including illegal mobile phone use and smoking in the vehicle.

FORS Terms and Conditions set out clearly the conditions under which organisations can have accreditation suspended or terminated, and the conditions under which they may be re-admitted to the scheme. Over the course of 2016, the FORS Compliance Team investigated over 650 possible breaches of the FORS Standard, the vast majority being resolved with minor corrective action.

Two organisations were suspended in 2016. One member chose to withdraw from membership of FORS whilst the company underwent restructuring. The second came to our attention following a police roadside stop, which was swiftly followed by a conviction in court for offences including operating without the required goods licence, no abnormal load movement permit, and vehicle overweight and exceeding its permitted width. FORS suspended the company for five weeks and an enhanced audit was undertaken and passed. The member was then reinstated in line with the terms and conditions. ■

“The FORS auditor really is the face of FORS. We look to maintain rigorous quality standards and absolute impartiality at all times. It is a delight to work with so many operators dedicated to improving their fleets' performance.”

Alan Harvey, FORS Head of Auditing



Who: is in the team behind FORS?

The FORS Community Partnership (FCP) is comprised of three leading organisations in the transport sector. It is supported by the FORS Governance and Standards Advisory Group (GSAG), whose chairman is nominated by the FCP. GSAG champions the development of the scheme and provides highly experienced members to oversee the Standard and operational compliance. Together they provide the direction, governance and reporting that makes FORS the respected and successful operation it has become.

AECOM is a specialist transport consultancy that, within the FCP, manages the concession and development of members' benefits, as well as FORS Online, marketing and communications and the FORS Helpline.

The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) has responsibility for running GSAG, the FORS governance group, along with leading the regular review of the FORS Standard and providing workshop and training programmes.

Fleet Source delivers and manages the FORS audit process, is responsible for quality assurance of other certification bodies and for FORS workshop management and delivery.

FORS Executive Group

On 7 October 2016, the GSAG gave approval for an Executive Group to sit above it and ensure matters concerning the FORS Standard and related accreditation requirements with a commercial impact on delivery of the scheme, are considered and endorsed in an impartial environment. The Executive Group will meet annually to recommend on:

- FORS annual subscriptions and audit fees
- The scope of accreditation, insofar as it impacts audit numbers required to achieve accreditation
- The value proposition of the scheme

The Executive Group consists of:

- Vince Dignam (Chairman) – City of London
- Julie Madoui – Skanska
- Peter Binham – Transport for London
- John Bourn – North East Combined Authority
- Gordon Sutherland – Tideway

GSAG – an active course in 2016, following its foundation in 2015.

A report by Chairman of the GSAG, Steve Agg.

The Governance and Standards Advisory Group is an independent, industry-led group responsible for maintaining the relevance, integrity and credibility of FORS. Made up of fleet operators from across various sectors of the industry, along with specifier representatives, they work with the scheme administrators to ensure these objectives are met.

2016 was a busy year with the FORS Standard being revised and version 4.0 published at the end of September 2016. All changes were subject to discussion and approval by GSAG and my thanks go to those members who put in much time and effort to reach the best possible outcomes.

With all decisions being the responsibility of the whole group, some detailed work was undertaken by sub-groups who reviewed specific issues and reported back. A range of topics were covered in 2016 and I am always encouraged by the number of GSAG members willing to volunteer to get stuck in.

A key role for GSAG is ensuring member compliance with the FORS Standard, as this goes to the heart of the integrity and the credibility of the Standard. As the final arbiter for compliance standards, GSAG is active in the compliance role and is not shy when it comes to the imposition of disciplinary action when required.

2016 has been a successful year for FORS, and the GSAG members are happy to continue to play their part in ensuring this continues. ■

O'DONOVAN
WASTE DISPOSAL

Jacqui O'Donovan
O'Donovan



Vince Dignam
City of London



Peter Binham
Transport for London



Jerry McLaughlin
Mineral Products Association



Ian Cooper
DHL



Gordon MacDonald
DVSA



Garry Lewis
Tarmac



Andy Wilson
TNT



Fidelma Byrne
Highways England

Carl Lomas
Institute of Couriers



Ray Govier
Hanson UK



John Bourn
North East Combined Authority

Travis Perkins plc

Ron Searle
Travis Perkins Plc



Nigel Barretto
Veolia



Richard Banks
Transport for Greater Manchester



Ian Chisholm
SOE/IRTE



John Taylor
CPT



Neil Cox
HS2



Julie Madoui
Skanska



2017: Objectives and plans

After a dynamic and successful 2016, 2017 is already shaping up to be a year of intense activity and further achievement for FORS: achievement made possible only by the support and belief in the scheme by our ever-expanding community of members.

To underpin the objectives and plans we have for the year ahead, we have made the decision to keep fees for the annual subscriptions and for audits at 2016 levels. We believe this is the right thing to do, delivering real value to members as they strive to raise standards across their industries. In addition, we will look to improve the fee structure further, and look at ways to help encourage smaller companies progress to Silver and Gold. We believe these smaller firms have their own important part to play in the overall ambition for FORS, and will give them every support we can.

First milestone achieved

Already, in January this year, the 600th FORS Practitioner was awarded, a significant milestone for the scheme, and a reflection of the still fast-growing profile of FORS across the country. In late 2016 we launched 'FORS Professional', the banner under which all the FORS approved training will be delivered and we are scheduling an extra five series of funded FORS Practitioner workshops this year. It means FORS will be delivering a total of 20 sets of Practitioner workshops across the UK in 2017, including new venues in Wales and Scotland. We are updating and adding to the eLearning modules too, keeping the package of online training fresh and relevant. ▶



“ Our mission remains to manage, deliver and develop the FORS Standard as the single standard for safety and environmental best practice in fleet operations across the UK. ”

“ To underpin the objectives and plans we have for the year ahead, we have made the decision to keep fees for subscriptions and for audits at 2016 levels. ”



Throughout the year, FORS will maintain a high truck industry profile at major events such as the CV Show, the Motor Transport Awards and our own members' Conference. Alongside these, in both the van and bus and coach sectors, further significant marketing, advertising and communication campaigns will help boost awareness and growth of FORS in these important sectors. In the passenger transport sector especially, in conjunction with industry stakeholders, we will look to develop a suite of FORS benefits specifically for the bus and coach sector. It is also our intention to issue invitations for companies to help us develop and implement a fleet performance management tool and licence checking service.

Focussing on specifiers

An important focus during 2017 will also be on managing and maintaining positive dialogue with existing and potential public and private sector specifiers. New tools are being developed to help them implement and manage requirements throughout their own supply chains. These will include flexible contract terms, a local authority 'dashboard' showing FORS accreditation and progression information in their region, as well as a search tool to make it easier for specifiers to see which FORS members are in their supply chain.

Lastly, but by no means least, throughout 2017 the FORS Compliance Team will continue to monitor members' adherence to the FORS Standard. They will rigorously investigate instances where there appear to be lapses, and will take robust but fair action where necessary.

Our mission remains to manage, deliver and develop the FORS Standard as the single standard for safety and environmental best practice in fleet operations across the UK. 2017 will be another important year in which we expect to make sustainable progress across all fronts. ■

“ ...in conjunction with industry stakeholders, we will look to develop a suite of FORS benefits specifically for the bus and coach sector. ”

Frequently asked questions – and their answers!

Q Why should I join FORS?

A FORS can help you stand out from the crowd, proving, to current and prospective customers, you are an operator that works to standards above the legal minimum. Additionally, accreditation of the scheme gives you access to a range of exclusive benefits offering real competitive advantage.

Q What's in it for me?

A FORS members enjoy access to: guidance and toolkits; a performance management system; a range of training for both managers and drivers; regular news and bulletins; and offers and discounts from approved FORS Associates.

In addition, FORS accreditation offers access to major development projects where FORS is specified as the quality standard for fleet operations. FORS accreditation demonstrates you run a quality operation, giving your clients confidence that you operate safely and efficiently, helping you win new business and maintain existing business.

Q Where do I sign up?

A Go to www.fors-online.org.uk and click the 'Register' button at the top of the page to start your FORS journey.

Q What do I do if I need help?

A Guidance documents are available on our website, though if you cannot find the answer to your question here, please contact the FORS helpline on 08448 09 09 44 Alternatively, email to enquiries@fors-online.org.uk.

Q What is the standard I have to meet?

A The FORS Standard has been developed and approved by the FORS Governance and Standards Advisory Group. It is developed to align with other standards such as CLOCS and WRRR and is reviewed and updated on a two-year cycle.

The FORS Standard itself includes the requirements for Bronze, Silver and Gold accreditation levels. The requirements focus on operations, management, vehicles and drivers. The FORS Standard is available on the website and has a guidance document to accompany it.

Q Why did the standard change in 2016?

A To keep up-to-date with changes in technology and best practice, the FORS Standard is reviewed, updated and approved on a two-year cycle by the FORS Governance and Standards Advisory Group.

Q What is the cost?

A The FORS fee is made up of the annual subscription fee, based on total fleet size of the company, plus an audit fee based on the number of operating centres accredited. Your total fleet is deemed to be the overall number of commercial vehicles operated across your entire company, not simply vehicles in operating centres you wish to be FORS accredited.

Q What are the next steps after we register?

A After you register you will be sent an invoice for your registration fee. You then have 90 days to undertake and pass your audit.

Q What training is available to members?

A FORS Professional is a comprehensive package of essential training for managers and drivers, delivering cutting-edge content to help operators achieve the FORS Standard.

All FORS Professional training meets FORS, CLOCS and TfL's Work Related Road Risk (WRRR) requirements. FORS Professional also supports operators with JAUPT approved driver training, delivered by qualified professionals, leading to improved driving standards.

FORS Professional represents the best training on the market. Through investment in FORS Professional, drivers and managers can help their companies improve fleet performance with respect to safety, efficiency and its impact on the environment.

Q I am not an operator, but can I still join FORS?

A Yes you can still join FORS if you are not an operator. You can register as either a FORS Champion or a FORS Supplier. FORS Champions represent organisations that includes FORS as a contractual or procurement requirement in their supply chain, or that promote FORS. A FORS Supplier is an organisation that provides products or services associated with the FORS Standard.

“ FORS accreditation offers access to major development projects where FORS is specified as the quality standard for fleet operations. ”



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