



## Unipart Rail Service Centres Support Network Rail

### **When over 200 relays were damaged in a flood, Unipart Rail sprang into action to support Network Rail**

Following the flood damage to Portsmouth Harbour Signal Box at the end of 2006, Unipart Rail helped to avert a potential disaster for the rail network. The support of the dedicated Unipart Rail territory team proved invaluable.

With Portsmouth rail movements at a standstill, and Train Operating Companies preparing to deal with the knock-on effects to the schedules, Network Rail needed urgent assistance with the re-servicing / replacement of 172 water-damaged relays.

The relays represented a challenge for the Relay Cells at both of Unipart Rail's Crewe and York Service Centres, at least three days work. Unipart Rail's Dave Penfold responded to Network Rail for assistance and went to assess the work. On arrival at the site the problems deepened, Dave discovered there were 212 relays requiring re-servicing, all of which were different types, a number of which were the AEI style and not normally re-serviced, and many were strategic material which could not be replaced from stock. Dave quickly identified the relay types and divided them between the Crewe and York Service Centres to ensure a rapid repair time.

Despite the limited time available for transporting the relays and scheduling the servicing, Unipart Rail committed to completing the work within two days. During the early hours of the morning, Dave left his home in Brighton to deliver the relays to Crewe and York. On his return journey he diverted to Cambridge signal box, where he had identified a stock of 59 re-serviced relays which could be used to ensure the Portsmouth signal box could be up and running within the agreed timescale.



The York relays were returned to Dave in Brighton during the night and hand delivered to Portsmouth by Dave the following morning together with those he had collected from Cambridge.

The Crewe Team worked into the night and into the following day on the largest batch of relays. On the discovery of a disconnected coil in one of the relays, Dave had to draw on his close relationship with the engineers and with his knowledge of the territories, Dave was able to locate a replacement relay at a Network Rail depot in nearby Barnham. Further checks on the last batch of relays at Crewe revealed 5 other relays with the same coil fault – just three hours before the despatch deadline. It was necessary to have the faulty coils re-wound, and ESL Electromech of Runcorn undertook the work with urgency.


Network Rail, impressed with the high level of communication and efforts of the Unipart Rail team, have expressed thanks for the exceptional service they experienced, enabling the restoration of train services back to normal 24 hours earlier than originally expected.

Network Rails Area Signal Engineer (Wessex) Trevor Marsh commented: “On behalf of myself and the local maintenance delivery staff I would like to thank you and all your staff for an excellent service and helping us on the Wessex area achieve normal running at Portsmouth within a week of the incident occurring. I hope we do not have to experience a similar circumstance again but it is reassuring that if we do I can feel confident that your organisation will do all it can to achieve an end result.”

**The people involved were awarded a Unipart Mark in Action for the commitment and dedication to ensuring the needs of Network Rail were met. Mark in Action awards demonstrate the companies’ commitment to recognising the contributions of its employees in delivering exceptional performance.**

## **Unipart Rail offer unique solutions where spares or replacements are not available**

Unipart Rail were happy to offer a unique solution to Network Rail for the re-servicing of three CC093 relays from Gillingham, as no replacements or spares were available in the UK. Initially, Unipart Rail planned to provide a team to undertake the re-servicing process through the night on-site at Gillingham. To prepare for this Unipart Rail engineers met with the local engineers to plan the work that needed to be undertaken. On arrival at the site, a decision was quickly made that it would be too risky to undertake the work on-site, the team could not be prepared for all eventualities and would be better equipped back at the Service Centre during a 27 hour possession over a weekend.



The Network Rail S&T faulting team disconnected and removed the relays from the infrastructure at 2.30am, handing them over to the Unipart Rail territory team for the re-servicing to be completed. The relays were returned to site nine hours ahead of schedule.

The efforts of the Unipart Rail territory team coupled with the commitment from their colleagues at the Service Centre, enabled Network Rail to complete the possession in good time, allowing the trains to be running normally on Monday morning for the busy commuter period.

**Unipart Rail's territory team was originally formed to meet the needs of the local Network Rail engineers, providing technical support, product knowledge and customer liaison. The team works closely with Network Rail's engineers to understand their needs and to support, manage and drive forward their work programmes, ensuring that the impacts on the infrastructure and train running remains unaffected.**