



Depot Stores Management

The Challenge

Northern Rail operates a combination of rural and longer distance services throughout the North West, North East, Yorkshire and Humberside. These regions are supported by a fleet size of 287 units and 4,700 employees.

Northern Rail approached Unipart Rail to support them in the project to re-open Allerton depot in September 2011 with a planned opening date of December 2011. The vision for the depot was to deliver 'Best in practice for operational efficiency'.

Unipart Rail's role was to design, set up and manage the depot stores operation to support the maintenance of the 156 fleet, within a tight timetable.

The Solution

A designated project team of experts managed the design and implementation of the new depot stores facility. The project scope was agreed and prompt progress was critical due to the 12 week time frame. The key features of the solution included:

- Optimised stores design and layout based on Lean principles
- Recruitment of suitably qualified staff that were trained in Unipart's Lean tools and techniques
- Inventory forecast planning and management
- Inventory profiling using Unipart software
- Installation of software interfaced with Northern Rail's systems
- Establishment of service level agreements for availability and stock optimisation
- Lineside delivery of kitting and exam materials which has impacted positively on the efficiency of the maintenance regimes
- A product database for easy identification of parts that supports maintenance and the 'new' stores team



“Unipart Rail responded enthusiastically to the challenge and made maximum use of the time available to ensure the depot stores were staffed, organised, equipped and in an overall state of readiness to supply the train parts needed on the day of opening. This was achieved by the sheer hard work, enthusiasm and determination of the entire Unipart project team”.

Stuart Draper, Engineering Director



The Result

An environment where stores and maintenance employees work together to deliver world class levels of performance has been created through the delivery of a World Class depot stores facility operational in less than 3 months with standard processes and visual controls to manage the day to day operations delivering:

- **97% Availability of materials supplied to the maintenance teams**
- **98% Stock accuracy**
- **50% Reduction in defects in service**
- **Lean Capability that has continued to implement improvements in their own area and work to support the maintenance team**

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