

Sentinel card cost

There will be an increase in the cost of a Sentinel card from April 2017. This increase is caused by the continuing rise in costs to operate and simultaneously develop the Sentinel system.

Primary Sponsors are responsible for paying for the Sentinel smartcards. **As of April 2017 this cost is has now increased to £33 per user per year. This excludes the additional £7 per year contribution for the National Skills Academy for Rail.**

This is paid on a quarterly basis via invoice, in arrears. The first invoice received for the new amount will be in the first quarter of the next financial year. The smartcards are designed to last up to five years and you do not need to order one each time a competence is awarded, however if a card is lost, stolen or damaged then you will need to order a replacement card for which you will be charged.

Sentinel is designed to support the rail industry in driving safety improvements and this will continue to develop over time with investment. The benefits that Sentinel has demonstrated since 2013 include:

- Improved data quality.
- Identified risk fatigue and individuals who have double-shifted.
- Increased mobile technology functionality, such as swiping in and off the infrastructure, recording safety briefs / key events, and recoding the use of competences.

In addition to this, the entire rail industry is facing an exciting period of growth as the government continue to invest in Network Rail's national rail infrastructure. The government has recently announced a strengthening of the agenda for skills and therefore the need to attract talent, improve diversity and develop advanced technical and leadership skills has never been greater. This skills gap challenges every aspect of our industry: leadership, management, technical, operations and maintenance. To meet these challenges, recent discussions between the Rail Delivery Group, Network Rail and the National Skills Academy for Rail (NSAR) have concluded that NSAR should play a greater role to link government policy with rail people and skills planning. It has been estimated that the cost to rail employers of not meeting the skills challenge will be £316M by the end of Control Period 6.

Previously, NSAR has been funded on a membership model with contributions directly from industry stakeholders. It has now been agreed that contributions to NSAR will come from Network Rail and London Underground, and their suppliers, through Sentinel. NSAR capability will include:

- Delivery of Rail Industry Skills strategy.
- Development of the case for investment in rail skills at national, regional, social, economic and company level.
- Skills intelligence (forecasting, workforce planning, benchmarking) for companies, government and regulators.
- Skills programmes (benchmarking graduate, apprenticeship and new skills areas) and support for training centres.
- Support for Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for skills and training.
- Encouraging new talent by improving industry awareness, career routes and employment opportunities.
- Optimised training capacity through an industry wider virtual network to meet emerging skills and development needs.