

INDUSTRY INTERVIEW

The Wright Way



Editor Dave Gregory talks to Chris Wright the new National Operations Director of the RHA Rescue and Recovery Group.

BIG changes have been taking place in the Rescue and Recovery Sector of the Road Haulage Association. The whole operation has been moved to the RHA Peterborough office under the direct control of Chris Wright. Chris is the National Operations Director.

Chris explained: "The vehicle recovery industry has some real challenges in the next two years and the Association felt that some important direct skills were needed to help steer the industry through this important period."

Chris is just the man to do that for although he has progressed through the RHA ranks to being a director, he spent more than 16 years in the vehicle recovery industry prior to his RHA days. Chris started life as a patrolman with the RAC after an apprenticeship in motor engineering. He rose through the ranks at the RAC and over a period of time controlled several departments before his career took him to Peterborough and the RHA.

He has worked with RAC

contractors and had helped set up the 24-hour call centre at the RAC, so he is in touch with the unique requirements of the rescue and recovery sector.

Chris has already built a formidable team to work with the Rescue and Recovery Group committee under the chairmanship of Richard Goddard.

Elizabeth Boyle will be in charge of the group's administration and financial affairs. Mike Desborough will be in charge of the helpline which will be in operation very soon with a dedicated direct number. Mike is a retired officer and well equipped for the job.

Chris Seaton has been given the job of recruitment and communication. Chris will be looking after the website and will also be compiling a monthly newsletter. The field manager is Nick Dyer. He will be visiting members on a regular basis and also organising regular meetings and seminars.

These four will report directly to Chris Wright. The policy unit will still be based at Weybridge where the chief executive Roger King has his office. It will be

this department together with Chris Wright who will be lobbying the Home Office for a better deal on statutory charges and any other pressing matters.

So, what makes the Chris Wright and his team think they can influence the Home Office where all other efforts have drawn a blank?

"The RHA is a Statutory Objector and is legally entitled to be consulted on all matters to do with our road network," said Chris. "We get reams of information on a daily basis from government and local authorities, from weight limits to major developments within the Highways Agency."

The RHA also employ a firm of government lobbyists which is a major requirement for getting a voice in parliament.

Chris Wright is a consummate professional. He also has a passion for the vehicle recovery industry.

"I have an affinity with the recovery industry," continues Chris. "Spending 16 years in the industry gave me a sound knowledge of the infrastructure of the industry. I want to work

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CHRIS WRIGHT

National Operations Director
RHA Rescue and Recovery Group



The RHA team (from left to right) Mike Desborough, Elizabeth Boyle, Nick Dyer and Chris Seaton.

alongside the other trade associations. I know Gary Satchwell from AVRO very well and have a great respect for him but with the best will in the world, the RHA have the right support to tackle problems at the highest levels, and that is what we are going to do.”

There will be some cynics who will say, ‘Well why haven’t you done so to date?’ The chair-

man of the Rescue and Recovery Group, Richard Goddard has been agitating amongst the RHA ranks for some months for specialist support for his group and he is delighted with the new appointment.

“Chris Wright is the man for the job,” says Richard. “I am very impressed with the work he has done already. This industry will be left behind if it does not

get the right representation at such an important time. There is a lot of work to be done in a short matter of time and I am confident that Chris and his team with the support of our chief executive Roger King, will get us the best deal possible regarding statutory charges and in our negotiations with the Highways Agency.”

There will be a series of briefing meetings on a regional basis to enable the RHA to meet as many operators over the next six months as possible. A strong recruitment campaign for new members is also being planned.

“We need to tell prospective members what we have to offer,” said Chris Wright. “As well as a new hotline (which will be a genuine support tool), we have legal and insurance support mechanisms for our members, but we have much more planned. There will be many commercial benefits available for our members. Our monthly newsletter will highlight changes in legislation and keeping members informed on a proactive basis.”

One department in Peterbor-

ough scrutinises forth-coming legislations such as the forthcoming changes in tachograph legislations (did you know that the distance before tachographs need to be used in the recovery sector is about to come down from 100 miles to 50 miles?).

We have said many times in the pages of Professional Recovery magazine that the industry has moved on, but it needs to continue to modernise! The RHA Rescue and Recovery Group now have a chance to make a difference with a streamlined, modern department equipped for the job. But, we will leave the last word to the new Director of Operations, Chris Wright.

He told me: “I am very serious about this job, David. I intend to drive the RHA Rescue and Recovery Group forward and get the very best deal for our operators. We will get the job done!”

Chris said it with such conviction that I believe him.

● See the next issue for a more in depth interview with Chris Wright.