

NEWS RELEASE

New managing director for Merseyrail

Patrick Verwer, Merseyrail's Dutch managing director, announced today that he will be leaving the company on 1 November to take up a new role leading a NedRailways team which is exploring future UK railway industry opportunities. Patrick will be based in London.

He will be succeeded at Merseyrail by another Dutchman, Bart Schmeink, who will take up his post in Liverpool on 1 November.

Patrick Verwer said: "I have been in Liverpool and involved in Merseyrail right from the very start in 2002. I led the team that won the bid and subsequently I and 1150 Merseyrail colleagues have been able to deliver what we promised. I am proud that Merseyrail is now consistently one of the very best train companies in the UK".

"In my time here I feel I have become more of a Liverpoolian than a Dutchman and I will miss Merseyrail, the city and the people enormously. I have had a great 5 years but it is time for me and my family to move on and I look forward to my new challenge although I will still be a regular visitor to Liverpool, not least for football reasons!"

Bart Schmeink has a background in railway infrastructure management as he was previously managing director of Prorail's maintenance division (the Dutch equivalent of Network Rail) and before that was also in charge of all rail traffic control centres in the Netherlands for a number of years.

He is familiar with the UK and the UK rail industry through his work for one of Merseyrail's parent companies NedRailways working on various bids for UK rail franchises.

Bart Schmeink said: "I feel that I already know Merseyrail quite well as its good reputation has spread, even to Holland! I have also been a regular visitor to the city and have of course travelled around the region by Merseyrail."

"Also, I look forward to becoming part of a real football city. I am a Feyenoord supporter and so is my young son who is the proud owner of a Dirk Kuyt football shirt which he wears virtually night and day".

"Patrick has achieved a great deal over the last 4 years or so and I'm hoping to continue where he left off. Plenty of good work has been done but there is also a lot still left to do and I am determined to make Merseyrail even better than it is today".

Notes to Editors:

- *Merseyrail carries approx 100.000 passengers per weekday*
- *Merseyrail is one of the most intensively used networks in the UK with 780 trains per weekday*
- *88% of passengers rate Merseyrail "satisfied or good" in the National Passenger Survey of Spring 2007 (National average: 79%)*

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