

ESCALATING TEAMWORK BRINGS COST SAVINGS

A new procurement strategy for escalator renewals should lead to lower costs throughout an escalator's lifespan.

The tender process to renew two escalators at Charing Cross is the first to use a new way of working that could bring savings across several areas of TfL.

Currently, there are many different types of escalators in use around the LU network, and in some cases we have only a handful of each model, which makes sourcing parts very costly.

But thanks to great team work between LU, Crossrail and Tube Lines, which has pooled the best expertise and ideas from each organisation, that looks set to change over the coming years.

The main reason behind the change was cost.

Lee Gladstone, Head of Delivery – Lifts and Escalator Programmes, said: "The Escalator Strategy Review is designed to completely change the way we approach escalator procurement and specification, maintenance and management. This, coupled with work

under CMO's Maintenance Capability Programme, aims to significantly reduce the whole life cost of each escalator.

"It started with a benchmarking exercise comparing how LU sources and maintains escalators with other metros around the world. We found we were out of step with current thinking, and it was costing us money.

"TfL as a whole was also looking at where it could reduce costs of lifts and escalators across the organisation. It was obvious to look at the work carried out by Crossrail as well as LU, as there would be overall savings if the two modes could align their specifications. With Tube Lines coming into the TfL fold as well, it made sense to get everyone on board."

Traditionally, LU has operated almost tailor-made escalators, but sourcing complete escalators and parts has become harder and more expensive as the market has changed. It was time to change our thinking – opting for more readily available escalators and parts that are already in our suppliers' portfolios.

By far the most important strand of the Escalator Strategy Review is to ensure suppliers' standard products are appropriate for the heavily demanding LU environment. The

engineering team was set a challenging exercise – to work with suppliers to find out what products they have and how we could use them more effectively. The engagement was led by Mechanical Design Engineer Paul Cooke and Electrical Design Engineer Diane White, who both earned gold *Thanks to You* awards for their hard work.

Paul said: "There was a lot of information for us to digest on what our suppliers could do as standard. We spent many months working on the specification document, regularly consulting with Crossrail and Tube Lines."

Diane added: "It's satisfying that this document was used in the tender for the Charing Cross escalators. It opens the door for this type of escalator to be installed."

Alan Groves, Engineer at Crossrail, said: "It makes perfect sense to work together on this major change and it's great to see that the good work carried out by Crossrail has benefited this new TfL specification. Future teams will be able to order compliant escalators as standard, rather than costly bespoke models."

Kevin Seaborne, Principal Engineer – Lifts and Escalators, said: "Everyone involved in this specification document has achieved something to be really proud of. The new document sets out a very different process, based around standard products supplied by the original equipment manufacturers. If this becomes a TfL-wide document, it could be adopted across LU, Tube Lines and Crossrail from 2011, and could lead to a 40-50 per cent reduction in the capital costs of new or replacement escalators."



On the up: (from left) Paul Cooke, Alan Groves, Diane White and Kevin Seaborne have been instrumental in developing the new escalator specification.