

PRESS RELEASE



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Groupe Eurotunnel opens first privately funded training centre for the railway industry near Calais

Today, Thursday 2 February 2012, marks the official inauguration of the new *Centre International de formation ferroviaire de la Côte d'Opale (CIFFCO¹)*, at Coquelles in the Pas-de-Calais. CIFFCO is a Groupe Eurotunnel subsidiary specialising in railway skills training. This is the first time that a privately owned transport group has provided a training centre for all European railway operators, infrastructure managers and their subcontractors which is capable of training technicians to work on the French national rail network and also those of other neighbouring countries.

CIFFCO, which is certificated by the Etablissement public de sécurité ferroviaire (EPSF)² delivers programmes for 15 different railway jobs. The centre is open to students who have obtained basic level qualifications for ground working activities and to holders of driving diplomas. The course catalogue for CIFFCO is accessible at: www.ciffco.com.

CIFFCO, which has 20 employees, has been established from the experience and success gained at Eurotunnel over the past 18 years. It has a main building with a floor space of 1100m², 8 lecture rooms, including one for IT, a 135 seat auditorium and 8, state of the art, mobile simulators. The centre can accommodate several hundred trainees each year and up to a total of 10,000 training days.

The EPSF has recently conferred the training of its own French main-line driver examiners to CIFFCO and in future ALSTOM will also send the new drivers from its *Centre d'essais ferroviaire* (Railway trials centre) to the site.

Groupe Eurotunnel has made an initial investment of €3million to set up and equip CIFFCO.

Jacques Gounon, Chairman and Chief Executive of Group Eurotunnel stated: *"The unique CIFFCO structure is equipped with the latest training tools and technology and has been designed to tackle the increasing demands of the railway sector. From its base in the Nord-Pas-de-Calais, it brings an additional strength to the region and its centre for railway excellence, in which Eurotunnel has always played a leading role."*

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¹ The Opal Coast International Railway Training Centre

² French Railway Safety Agency