

THE LONDON UNDERGROUND UNIFORM

by Kim Rennie

PART 5

(All photos Kim Rennie unless stated otherwise)

THE DIVISIONS DIVIDED

The uniform styles, grading and organisational structure of LU would be changed forever by the events of 18 November 1987 at King's Cross. Among the many findings and conclusions that followed the investigation into the fire were that clear reporting lines did not exist in LU, there was a separation between ticket office and other station grades, and there was no local accountability for safety standards. Because of this, in 1988 the Passenger Services Directorate (as the Railway Operating Department had become) was reorganised. The old Divisions, which grouped individual lines into pairs, and which had existed in one form or other since before 1933, were abolished and replaced by each line having its own separate management team under a Line General Manager (the Circle and Hammersmith & City lines were paired, and the small East London Line was overseen by the Jubilee Line).

March 1988 saw an experimental uniform trialled amongst around 30 ticket office staff which consisted of white shirts or blouses with red & blue stripes, blue ties or cravats with a "repeating roundel" design (presumably as then issued to Station Foremen) and pullovers like those provided for train grades. In the event, the idea of a distinctive appearance for such grades was made irrelevant by subsequent changes.

In late-1988, three new managerial grades were created to replace the position of Group Manager. Each had 'landlord' responsibility for a specific area and were the 'employing manager' of between 40 to 140 staff (hence the term 'Centurion Manager'). Stations now came under Group Station Managers (GSMs), train staff depots under Train Crew Managers (TCMs), and signal cabins, regulating rooms and signalling control centres (SCCs) under Service Control Managers (SCMs). The GSM, TCM and SCM roles were not uniformed at first, but some staff continued to wear that of their previous grade, at least to start with. The Senior Travelling Ticket Inspector grade was effectively replaced by a new Duty Revenue Control Manager position who reported to a Revenue Control Manager.

The massive increase in managers is amply demonstrated by the author's then location of Acton Town. Here, the old Group Manager position looked after station staff, plus staff at the other stations on the Group (Chiswick Park and Ealing Common), also the District and Piccadilly Line train crews and their Station Managers, and the shunters in Acton Works, and the shunters in Ealing Common depot, and finally the Test Train Crews. This one single person was replaced by one Group Station Manager and three Train Crew Managers (plus support staff).



The fabric LUL roundel patch as featured on certain uniform items from 1987.



A small embroidered LUL roundel used on top coats in the 1990s. The symbol was carried on a flap which could be tucked away when off-duty.



Another embroidered roundel, in a larger size, displayed on the top pocket of blazers.

A further reorganisation occurred in early-1989, with new 'Duty Manager' positions introduced. Duty Station Managers (DSM) reported to GSMs, Duty Crew Managers (DCM – originally shown as Duty

Crew Supervisors) reported to TCMs, and Duty Train Managers (DTM) reported to SCMs. The Area Manager role was not directly replaced but had some of their tasks and responsibilities transferred to the DTMs and GSMs. So ended the Group Manager, Station Manager, Station Manager (Running) and Area Manager grades. In addition, Traffic Managers were renamed as Duty Operations Managers (DOM). Finally, the Railway Instructors were regraded from supervisory to managerial in 1990.

All the new Duty Manager grades were issued with a modified version of the Area Manager uniform. The main change was to the cap, where the black braid was removed from the peak and the hatband and chinstrap changed from black to mid-blue; and to shirts, which were now white with a blue stripe instead of plain white. This was an unpopular change and many staff continued to wear their previous white shirts or bought their own.

A uniform was later provided for the Centurion grades. This was a two-button suit in mid-blue with faint red and white pinstripes and worn with a plain white shirt. An optional uniform cap was, perhaps surprisingly, included. This was mid-blue, with a mid-blue oak leaf & acorn pattern hatband edged with gold piping. The badge was of the standard Duty Manager pattern. The Centurion caps were very rarely worn except at occasional special events like depot open days and 'Steam on the Met'. A more casual blue blazer/grey slacks combination was also available in later years.

A common style of tie or cravat for all staff was also put into place. These were dark blue with a series of red & blue stripes repeated diagonally and a LUL roundel near the bottom. Supervisory and Duty Manager grades had additional stripes in white ('silver'), and Centurion grades additional stripes in yellow ('gold'). In later years the name of the individual line was added to the designs, or the title 'Network Services' used for various 'non-aligned' grades.

All these new uniforms were of course also produced in female versions, the women's hat being of a so-called 'bowler'-style like that used by some police forces. All grades were issued a dark grey leather belt which carried a buckle featuring the LU roundel.

One uniform oddity at this time involved those Station Managers who had resisted or refused transfer into the managerial structure as DSMs. A temporary agreement was made that they could remain on supervisory terms & conditions and be used to cover Station Inspector duties. Obviously, they could not be issued DSM uniforms, as they were not Duty Managers, yet equally the offer of a new Station Inspector-type uniform would have been regarded as a downgrade and an insult. Thus, incongruously, they carried on wearing the dark blue issue, complete with yellow-braided caps and 'gold' supervisory badges (sometimes even of the 1934-pattern), and this continued for quite some time. "Only on London Underground" as one might say ...



The first-generation of line/grade badges, as provided for managers-only in the late-1980s. Line affiliation was indicated by the colour of the insert – in this case the District Line.



The second-generation of line/grade badges, and issued to all staff c1990, but with the employee's name omitted for those below manager level.

Developed alongside were the range of pin-on name/grade badges issued to staff. The first examples were worn by the Centurion and higher managers only. The badges were rectangular

and made of white plastic. The top part had a red & blue horizontal stripe and an offset LUL roundel. The lower part had a recess into which was fitted a separate insert carrying the person's name and grade in upper-case. The inserts were colour-coded in the appropriate line colour. In the case of 'non-aligned' senior managers and directors, 'silver' and even 'gold' inserts were used. When it was decided to roll out the name/grade badge concept to lower grades, a revised design was used. The top of the badge carried a stripe in the appropriate line colour with the line name reversed-out in white, below which was a centred LUL roundel. The insert was now white to match the rest of the badge and carried either name and grade, or grade only. These badges were some of the first instances of the line name appearing with a lower-case letter 'l'. Both types of badge were made by Thomas Fattorini. Due to the means of production, an almost infinite number of grade/name badge variations could have been produced over the years, but the following 'generic' (i.e. grade-only) inserts have been recorded:

Coloured stripe	Grade insert
Bakerloo line	BOOKING OFFICE
Central line	DUTY CREW MANAGER
Circle and Hammersmith line (yellow) ¹	GUARD
District line	INFORMATION ASSISTANT ³
East London line ²	LEADING RAILMAN
Jubilee line	LINE CONTROLLER
Metropolitan line	PASSENGER SERVICES TRAINEE ⁴
Northern line	REGULATING ROOM SUPERVISOR ⁵
Piccadilly line	SENIOR SIGNALMAN
Victoria line	SENIOR SIGNALWOMAN
	SIGNALMAN
<i>Note the use lower case 'l' on all Line names listed here, as this is how they were shown on the badges themselves.</i>	SIGNALWOMAN
	STATION FOREMAN
	STATION FOREWOMAN
	STATION INSPECTOR
	STATION STAFF
	TEST TRAIN CREW
	TICKET EXAMINER ⁶
	TRAIN CHECKER ⁷
	TRAIN OPERATOR

¹ Badge later replaced by a revised design with an offset LUL roundel and both a yellow Circle Line stripe and pink Hammersmith & City Line stripe.

² Stripe altered from maroon to orange in 1990 following changes on the Underground map.

³ A non-uniformed grade within Line Controller offices.

⁴ The then-current name for the role previously known as Signal Box Boy, Railway Operating Apprentice and Junior Trainee (Railways).

⁵ Formerly Senior Train Regulator.

⁶ A new lower grade in Revenue Control introduced in 1989 that worked alongside the existing TTIs.

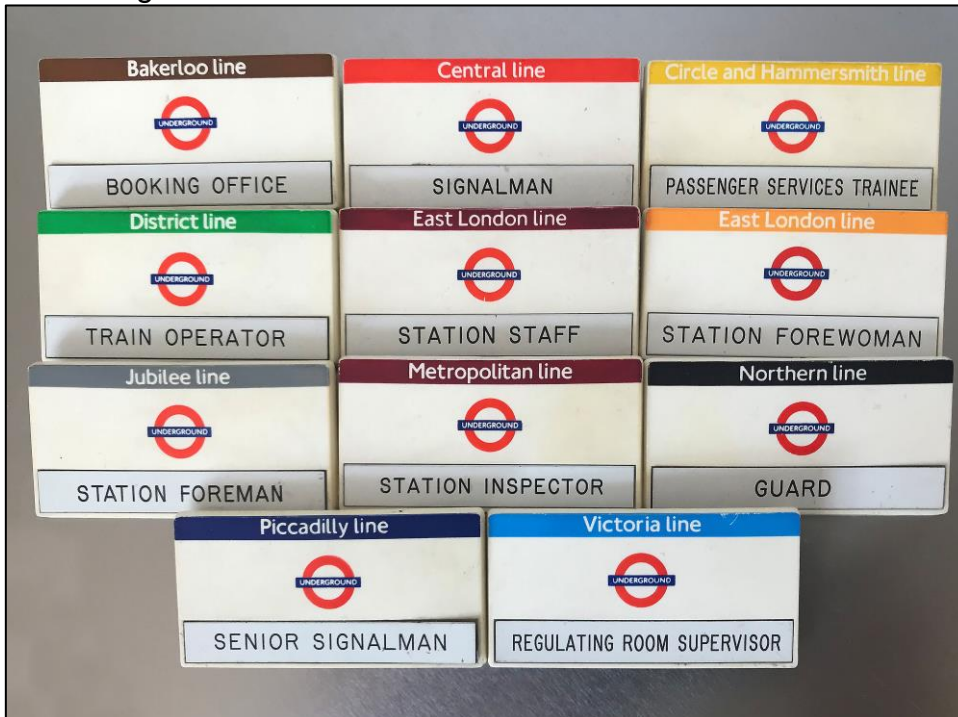
⁷ A medically-restricted role that recorded the timings and passenger loadings of trains.

It should be noted that white rectangular pin-on badges bearing name and grade had been introduced a few years earlier at the Railway Training Centre. These had enabled Instructors to be distinguished from other supervisors indoors when not wearing caps.

ACTION STATIONS – A FALSE DAWN

In February 1989, vacancies for a new grade of Station Services Manager were advertised. These staff would combine ticket office duties, cash accounting, station operation, passenger assistance, contractor liaison and supervisory duties and would effectively replace the Station Foreman, Station Inspector and Booking Clerk grades. The pilot scheme was to be trialled on the Metropolitan Line between Harrow-on-the-Hill and Amersham/Chesham/Watford. The SSM position was graded at three levels as 1, 2, and 3 depending on the size of the station, with '3' being the highest (for Harrow-on-the-Hill and Area Relief staff). The scheme was branded under the title 'Action Stations' and scheduled to go live from May 1989.

Other new grades associated with it were Customer Services Manager and Assistant Customer Services Manager. Interviews and assessments were held, and staff provisionally-appointed to the new positions on higher rates of pay in preparation for the launch. And then, at the eleventh hour, for reasons never explained, the whole plan was scrapped. A series of reflective silver stripes, with red or blue lining and a roundel, and bearing the new titles, had been devised and would presumably have been carried across the top of a uniform breast pocket as with the existing Station Foreman/Forewomen grades, but never made it beyond the concept stage. However, the idea of combining station and ticket office roles had not died ...



The complete series of line/grade badges as introduced for all staff in the early-1990s. Included here are the two versions for the East London Line.

meaning a reduction in GSM positions. The ticket office uniformed Relief Clerk (which had been allowed to cover Station Manager), and the non-uniformed Booking Clerk, Leave Cover Clerk and Chief Clerk roles were all abolished, and the personnel absorbed into the new station grading structure at comparable levels.



Above:

Some line/grade combinations could only be produced for certain lines - e.g. those for Guards, who were by now confined to the Central and Northern lines.

The second-generation badge lettered 'Circle and Hammersmith line' on a yellow stripe was soon replaced by this non-standard design bearing both yellow and pink line colours. The badge was slightly wider leading to the grade or name/grade insert never fitting neatly.

An example of the third-generation issue from 1992, with most of the badge covered in a translucent coating which discoloured badly over time. The red and blue stripes seen here were used on badges issued to 'non-aligned' staff.

THE COMPANY PLAN – THE NEW DAWN?

London Underground's Company Plan was published in November 1991. Among its many radical proposals were the merger of the ticket office and general station roles, which then consisted of 13 principal and 19 subsidiary grades. These changes, which were effective from the end of 1992, merged the Station Foreman and Station Inspector roles into a new Station Supervisor position (subdivided into four levels – SS1, SS2, SS3 and SSMF [Multi-Functional]).

Meanwhile, Leading Railman was retitled Station Assistant. The plan reduced the number of Station Groups from 59 to 47,



Previous Page: (Lower)

By the mid-1990s, a fourth-generation design had appeared which dispensed with the separate name/grade insert and had more radiused corners. The separate Circle & Hammersmith Line management had by now merged with the Metropolitan Line team, thus producing this 'double-stripe' design.

The fifth design of badge incorporated a white border. The common management of the Central and Waterloo & City lines from 1994 resulted in another 'double stripe' combination.

The line stripes were discontinued c.2000 as an economy measure, producing the style of badge as used today. Un-named badges have at times been issued to staff in training, in this case for a prospective Customer Services Assistant.

It is unclear whether the red-edged Station Foreman hatband or the silver-edged Station Inspector hatband was now deemed the correct issue for Station Supervisors as both types could be seen in use. A printed copy of the 119-page plan was given to each employee following a mandatory face-to-face briefing from their 'employing manager'. The cover featured a radiant Underground roundel half-visible on the horizon and the slogan "A new dawn for the heart of London", but there were many staff who thought that the sun was setting, not rising.

Following the full implantation of the Company Plan and its associated grade restructuring, the 1987-series of cap badges were now allocated as follows:

1993 – THE 'THIRD SERIES' – POST-COMPANY PLAN

ROUNDEL BADGE					
Peak	Cap	Badge	Chinstrap	Hatband	Grade(s)
Cloth peak	Mid-blue	White metal roundel	Black cord	Mid-blue edged red	Station Assistant Guard Signal Operator Train Operator Automatic Train Operator ¹
SUPERVISORY BADGE					
Peak	Cap	Badge	Chinstrap	Hatband	Grade(s)
Cloth peak	Mid-blue	White metal supervisory	Black cord	Mid-blue oak leaf & acorn pattern edged silver	Station Supervisor
Cloth peak	Mid-blue	Yellow metal supervisory	Black cord	Blue & yellow vertical stripes	Ticket Examiner ² Travelling Ticket Inspector ²
DUTY MANAGER BADGE					
Peak	Cap	Badge	Chinstrap	Hatband	Grade(s)
Cloth peak	Mid-blue	Woven	Light blue cord	Mid-blue oak leaf & acorn pattern edged light blue	Duty Crew Manager ³ Duty Station Manager Duty Train Manager ³ Duty Revenue Control Manager Duty Line Manager

					Duty Line Control Manager Duty Operations Manager Railway Instructor Senior Instructor	
Cloth peak	Mid-blue ⁴	Woven	Light blue cord	Mid-blue leaf & acorn pattern gold	oak edged	Train Crew Manager Group Station Manager Revenue Control Manager Service Control Manager
¹ Grade later merged with Train Operator ² Grades later merged and renamed Revenue Protection Official and then Revenue Control Inspector. ³ Grades merged and renamed Duty Manager (Trains) in 1997. ⁴ The Centurion uniform suit was mid-blue with red and white pinstripes.						

The early metal badges had the fastening lugs widely-spaced to fit onto to the old dark blue caps, later ones had the gap narrowed to fit the new mid-blue replacements. The traditional cotter pin/lugs form of attachment was then replaced by a vertical 'slide' which was deemed safer should an employee be struck on this part of their head. Some badges were lettered 'TKS' on the reverse indicating they were manufactured by masonic regalia supplier Toye, Kenning & Spencer.



The abortive 'Action Stations' scheme of 1989 led to various grade title stripes being manufactured and designed to be carried on the top pocket of a blazer or jacket.

Further experimental grade title stripes, including one for Revenue staff using the blue & yellow colours used on their hatbands.

(Both photos: Steve Smith)

Additional Duty Manager roles were created on certain lines when revised methods of Command & Control were introduced. The Bakerloo Line had Duty Line Control Managers, and the East London Line had Duty Line Managers (originally Duty Manager – Stations & Trains). All wore the standard Duty Manager uniform. The same uniform was worn in Baker Street Signalling Control Centre, Neasden Train Movements Room and from 1999 in Stratford Market Depot Control Tower.

When the Underground Ticketing System Operations & Command Centre merged with the Head Controllers' Office in 1993 to form the Network Control Centre (NCC) this was designated a uniformed control room. There were several exceptions to the usual uniform standards though. The basic grade of NCC Operator wore a Duty Manager uniform but with a Centurion plain white shirt, whilst the NCC Duty Manager (which was the grade title) was given a Centurion suit. Both grades

had ties bearing a 'gold' stripe. This deviation from the norm was reputedly at the behest of Managing Director Denis Tunnicliffe, in order to give the new NCC a higher status and profile but caused discontent amongst some other staff in equivalent grades. Plain white shirts were also worn by Railway Instructors, who had a distinctive blue tie with a single red/blue diagonal stripe and lettered 'Railway Training Centre' in white.

The new management structures had removed the once rigid divide between operating and engineering, and uniforms were now worn by a far wider range of people – e.g. the Duty Depot Managers (once the Depot Foreman), Engineering Works Controllers and Power Control Room Operators; all of whom received the Duty Manager issue.

Once the new uniform had settled-in various changes were made after the benefit of experience. The unpopular "Roadsweeper" train crew blouson was replaced by the same blazer-style jacket as issued to Station Supervisors. Later, the blazers were produced with a larger roundel logo on the top pocket (there had already been a small LU tag there). Waistcoats were extended as an option for Duty Managers as well as Revenue staff, and special caps made available for Rastafarians. All uniform items were now required to have an LU logo, allegedly for taxation purposes, and which normally took the form of a discreet roundel tag or embroidery. Towards the end of the uniform's currency, the shirts of all grades were standardised as plain white to save money.

Some grade titles were altered to render them gender-neutral. This had first started in 1981 when Motorman was renamed Train Driver. A more recent change led to Signaller (and Signallerwoman) becoming Signal Operator (Train Regulator was now Senior Signal Operator). Strangely, the word 'Manager' was never regarded as sexist, was deemed as applying to females as well as males, and still is.

During the decade, Station Assistant was retitled Customer Service Assistant and reflected a change in responsibilities from purely railway operations to a more 'customer-focused' ticket hall and gateline role. In 1997, the Duty Crew Managers and Duty Train Managers were combined to form a new Duty Manager (Trains) position which worked at train crew depots and also performed an incident response role. Reorganisation at Ashfield House led to Railway Instructors becoming Training Specialists. None of these developments affected the existing uniforms.

The name/grade badges were also subject to change. In 1992, the size was altered slightly, and apart from the name insert, the badge was given a translucent coating. These new badges wore badly and often discoloured, with the white areas becoming yellowish. As well as a coloured stripe in the appropriate line colour(s), a double red/blue stripe lettered 'Network Services' was used for 'non-aligned' staff. Around 1996 the badges were changed to a single-piece design with the employee name applied directly to the front and the corners made more radiused.

The badges of the Waterloo & City Line carried a red Central Line stripe and a teal Waterloo & City Line stripe as both were under common management. Although no employee could be employed by two separate Line General Managers, a batch of badges issued at Earl's Court SCC incorrectly carried both green District Line and blue Piccadilly Line stripes. As new badges had to be issued every time staff moved lines, the identity colour was later dropped and badges made plain white, which they remain today. All-white badges had also been used by senior managers and directors earlier and had carried a large centred LUL roundel.

By the end of the 1990s the 'Third Series' uniform range had developed into one of the most popular and best-regarded designs for many years. The end of the use of dark blue serge had done away with the 'undertaker' look and the common mid-blue colour for all grades helped reduce the 'them and us' culture. On the other hand, there was still enough differentiation to maintain status and hierarchy, and the badges continued to be developments from previous designs. Train staff had regained conventional jackets, and waistcoats were available again to certain grades. What could possibly go wrong?

To be continued ...