

Physical challenge

The IRTE's Skills Challenge was officially launched at Euro Bus Expo 2010. John Challen was there to find out more about the competition for bus and coach operators' technicians

The Skills Challenge competition will see technicians from up to 12 bus and coach operators competing for a number of awards. As well as prizes for the highest scoring electrical, mechanical and bodywork engineer, there are further trophies to highlight the operator with the best team of technicians.

SOE chief executive Nick Jones explains: "The IRTE



Nick Jones, SOE chief executive

Skills Challenge represents the IRTE's key aims – to support, recognise and reward competence. Engineering professionals are an essential part of society and none more so than those technicians working on buses."

And it isn't just the chief executive who was impressed by the Skills Challenge. "The Skills Challenge will show the industry that the public are travelling on vehicles that are maintained by a highly skilled and motivated workforce," says Richard Harrington, chief engineer at Go-Ahead London, one of the participating operators.

"I believe those technicians that put themselves forward will gain confidence and respect from this challenge," he points out.

www.soe.org.uk/irteskills

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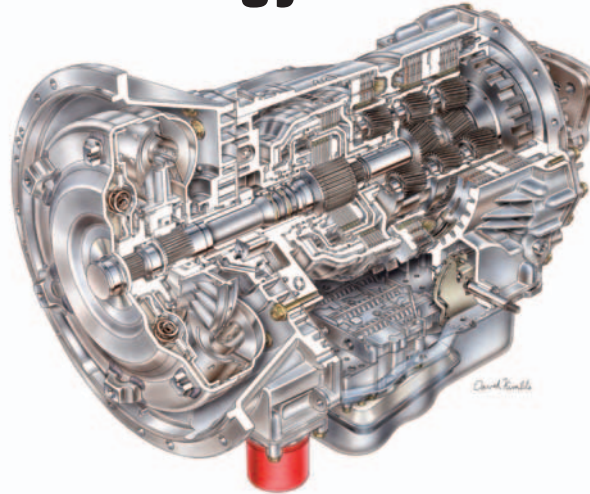
Allison Transmission works with many bus fleets operating around the UK to help deliver reliable, safe and smooth journeys for passengers. As a result, being a key part of the IRTE's Skills Challenge was a natural step, states the company's UK area manager Riccardo Sardelli.

"The bus market is key to Allison," says Sardelli. "We are delighted to be involved in this competition, as we share the IRTE's commitment to developing the skills of technicians and encouraging their professional development."

Allison agrees with the IRTE stance that increasing skills has never been so important, particularly when operators are being pressured to deliver improved fuel economy and durability. The company also

believes that proper care of the bus transmission can act as a big factor in reducing costs.

"Fleets with engineers and technicians trained to the highest levels are best equipped to take advantage of the vehicle's transmission," says



Sardelli. "This includes knowledge of Allison's control systems, such as WTECH III and the newer 4th Gen, and 4th Gen with Prognostics. It is important that operators are familiar with all three, in order to service and maintain them correctly."

About us

Allison Transmission is a leading supplier of fully automatic transmissions to the global city bus market, into which 14,000 transmissions were sold in 2009. Allison is sponsoring the award for the Top Scoring Mechanical Technician and will therefore play a central role in the technician evaluation. Teams of three technicians will be set theory and practical tests relating to the maintenance, diagnostics and operation of an Allison Transmission.

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