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5 minutes with... Adeline Ginn, Founder of Women in Rail

"There are many fantastic women in rail and it is imperative to the future of our industry that they are shown as role models."

Today's rail industry is more diverse than ever before, but still in the UK only 16% of the workforce is only made up of women, numbers paralleled around the globe. Today, SmartRail World reporter, **Sarah Wright** talks to someone who is actively trying to change this and help excel the industry forward, **Adeline Ginn**, founder of **Women in Rail**. Founded in 2012, Women in Rail was created with the aim of improving diversity, offering support to women in the sector and devising initiatives to encourage young people to choose a career in rail. Alongside her work with Women in Rail, Ginn works for **Angel Trains**, a British train leasing company. Since 1994 the company has invested over £3.5 billion in rolling stock and refurbishment making them the UK's second largest private investor in the industry, after Network Rail. Working as a General Counsel, Ginn faces the challenges of rail daily and shares with us what it is to work on the legalities of the industry.



SW: How did you get into the rail industry?

Adeline Ginn (AG): I have always had an interest in transport which is one of the reasons I did a Master of Laws in Air, Maritime and Space Law at McGill University in Canada and published a couple of papers on the subject of transport law. After the Bar, I joined a law firm which sent me to the Airbus industry on secondment, to work with the Associate General Counsel (the chief lawyer of a company's legal department). It was this experience that influenced my decision to work as an in-house lawyer. I loved the idea of being part of a team and following projects through from beginning to end.

[Angel Trains](#) was my first interview and I have never looked back. The legal landscape of the industry has changed tremendously over the last few years which means the legal work remains fascinating and, perhaps more importantly, I love the railway industry: it is a close-knit caring community full of passionate people.

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SW: What do you like most about your job?

AG: I have never done the same piece of work twice in my role at Angel Trains, and I have been here for 17 years now! There is a new challenge to face every day. I feel privileged to be working alongside highly skilled professionals across several different disciplines, from engineering to finance via commercial and operational. The passion and care people have for the railway always impresses me.

Working for Women in Rail is also very important to me. I love being able to help make a difference and give something back!

SW: What's the biggest challenge in your role?

AG: I have to work hard to manage expectations. Most work is fast paced and has to be completed within strict timelines. Meaning I have to prioritise the work load and communicate such priorities to my team, our external advisers and the business. On top of this, I have such big ambitions and dreams for [Women in Rail](#), but sometimes I just can't find the time to do everything I want to do!

SW: Back in June Women in Rail announced 'the 20 Most Inspirational Women in Rail', how does it feel to have reached this milestone moment?

AG: It feels incredible to showcase the female talent that is in the railway sector, to people within our industry and outside it. There are many fantastic women in rail and it is imperative to the future of our industry that they are shown as role models. [Research](#) has shown that by the age of seven, most girls have already switched off from engineering, considering it too dirty and messy, and a study by the University of Surrey shows that parents of boys are 10% more likely than parents of girls to value engineering as a career choice. We must appeal to new generations and change the misrepresentations and misunderstanding that people, whether parents or children, women or men, have of the railway. The best way to do this is to showcase the talent that we already have.

SW: What will be some of the biggest differences between rail now and in 10 years' time?

AG: We will have more women across a wide range of roles and grades within the industry. Women in Rail are working hard, with stakeholders across the industry to make that happen. The Department for Transport for example, has pledged that the number of women starting work in the transport sector should match men by the end of the next decade. But we must continue to drive change to get there!

SW: And lastly, what is your favorite rail journey?



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AG: Believe it or not, it's my commute. It reinforces what the railway is about: connecting people to their jobs and homes. I also know the hard work train operating companies put into ensuring the journey runs as smoothly as possible. I wish that was well known.

SW: Adeline, thank you for your time, it has been great to talk to you!

