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Network Rail launches global contracts push

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Network Rail has embarked on a campaign to win international business in a move that could see it go head to head with global consulting firms.

Simon Kirby, Network Rail's managing director of investment projects who is spearheading the infraco's new standalone projects business launched last month (TB 8426), is one of the directors of a new Network Rail subsidiary - Network Rail Consulting Ltd - which was incorporated on 16 May 2012.

Last year Kirby announced that Network Rail intended to go after overseas business in a move that would see Britain's state backed railway owner and operator follow other European rail operators that are rapidly developing new revenue streams outside their home territories (TB 7733).

With the founding of Network Rail Consulting Ltd, the infraco is now almost ready to start pitching for business. A recruitment campaign seeking bid and project managers for the new company has been launched with successful candidates required to lead and manage the preparation of expressions of interest, unsolicited bids and bids in response to specific invitations to tender. The roles, which offer salaries of between £75K and £90K, also involve developing bid strategies and taking part in pitches to clients.

The consulting business will focus on four key areas - strategic advisory and planning services, asset management, infrastructure projects, and operations/maintenance.

Last year Kirby said Network Rail was likely to be interested in overseas projects relating to British built infrastructure where there is no existing client and it could provide expertise otherwise unavailable. But it remains to be seen if the new company will pursue opportunities of interest to other consulting organisations and whether Network Rail directors will place limits on what business bid managers are allowed to pursue.

Kirby's fellow directors at Network Rail Consulting Ltd, which was incorporated earlier this month by Eversheds, are Network Rail group finance director Patrick Butcher and Nigel Ash, the former chief executive of MVA Consultancy and managing director of transport at Jacobs Consultancy who Network Rail appointed director of infrastructure consulting in October 2011. Ash has extensive transport project experience in Europe as well as Brazil, Chile, China, Kenya, Kuwait, Qatar, Russia, South Africa and Uganda.

Simon Kirby: NR projects boss is one of three directors for new Network Rail Consulting Ltd



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