

Unlike the other railway companies worldwide, Taiwan High Speed Rail Corporation (THSRC) started a new company without any high speed railway operation experiences. As Taiwan High Speed Rail is the first and only high speed rail line in Taiwan and there are no local high speed train operation experts, the international and national co-operation for high speed train driver training is essential to the success of THSRC.

In order to quickly build up the high speed train operating capability, instead of recruiting and training enough local high speed train drivers, THSRC adopted an innovative strategy by recruiting and training the experienced foreign high speed train drivers first ready for start-up revenue service, and then recruiting and training the local high speed train drivers to work with them to get their knowledge and experiences and finally taking over the train driver works from foreign drivers. Moreover, to reach the utmost goal of localization for high speed train driver training and supervising, the training and coaching of local successors by foreign instructors was also arranged.

The training program for experienced foreign high speed train drivers and local high speed train drivers is different. The complete training period for local train drivers is about 1326 hours (8 months), yet the experienced foreign high speed train drivers receive only 316 hours (2 months) of system differential training. Both training contents include theoretical training, practical training and OJT.

The foreign instructors were recruited from high speed railway companies worldwide. English ability is the basic requirement and the other characteristics are: minimum 5 years of high speed train driver experience for the past 10 years and no safety violation record. They received the Contractor training first, then joined Testing & Commissioning and finally led the development of training program, training materials and driving manuals for training both foreign and local high speed train drivers.

After training and qualification by THSRC, the experienced foreign high speed train drivers get the driving license issued by Ministry of Transportation and Communication (MOTC), yet the local drivers have to pass the theoretical and practical examinations held by MOTC before getting the driving license.

International and National Co-operation for high speed train driver training is a workable solution for the railway company with similar background like THSRC. Through the process, THSRC has built up its own operation capability within 7 years. However, to make it success, the support from the government has to be solved first, then the standard language for communication, documentation and training as well as tailor made training program, training materials and driving manuals suitable for local environment have to be applied, and finally an effective succession plan to transfer the knowledge and experience from foreign to local successors has to be developed.

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