

## Meet the Team

### **Gary Plant CEng MIMechE MCSD**

*Managing Director*

A Chartered Engineer with over 28 years' experience of vendor management, Gary was the lead architect of both the Link-up and Proof schemes from their inception in the 1990s. Link-up was created as British Rail's Supplier Qualification process and went on to be the UK's most successful scheme of its type. From 1997 the scheme was operated by Achilles Information Limited on behalf of virtually the entire UK rail network.

The Proof audit scheme was added post-privatisation to provide Network Rail with an additional layer of assurance in areas of the rail industry where significant risk was present. Proof became a de-facto standard in the UK Railways following demonstrable improvements in safety and contractor performance.

Gary's career has enabled him to play a major role in shaping supply chain processes in Engineering, Quality, Safety and Procurement environments. As Managing Director of Achilles Information Limited, Gary was responsible for Supplier Assessment schemes in the Rail, Utilities, Oil & Gas, Pharmaceutical and Public Sectors. Now, as Managing Director of Altius, he has assembled a team he believes is the best in its field.

### **Charles Smith MCIPS**

*Commercial Director*

A supply chain management professional for over 30 years, Charles has specialised in vendor appraisal, assessment, development, and performance monitoring. Prior to the privatisation of the rail industry, Charles was the British Railways Board's Supplier Quality Manager and co-founder of the rail industry's Link-up supplier assessment scheme, which remains the most successful scheme of its type in the UK.

Following transfer of this scheme from BRB to Achilles, Charles became a Director of Achilles Group through a period of significant growth and development for the Group, expanding their services in vendor assessment and audit globally across a number of industry sectors.

The depth and breadth of this hands-on experience has latterly resulted in Charles being in demand for both training and consultancy assignments in the UK and abroad (including currently for the Rail Safety and Standards Board), and also writing scripts and training materials for professional CIPS qualifications, including "Managing Risk in the Supply Chain".



## **Amanda Chamen LLB (Hons), Dip NEBOSH**

*Health, Safety, Quality and Environment Manager*

Amanda is a Law graduate with more than 10 years' experience of working in the vendor assessment environment, in particular in the field of auditing. She also holds a NEBOSH Diploma.

Amanda played a leading part in the management, delivery and development of Proof, the international audit scheme for the UK Rail Industry. She held primary responsibility for the ongoing monitoring and assessment of the internal and third party audit resource, which delivered over a thousand Proof audits each year. This included review of audit reports, monitoring and assessment of auditors during the course of their work, and maintaining auditor competency matrices.

Amanda is Altius's HSQE Manager, primarily working on the development and implementation of Altius's Quality, Health & Safety and Environment systems. Altius currently holds certification to ISO 9001: 2008. Amanda is dedicated to the ongoing enhancement of the assessment process, improving efficiency for vendors and ensuring a consistent and robust process for our clients.

## **Neal Chamen BA(Hons), MA, MCSD**

*Business Solutions Director*

During 15 years of working in vendor assessment, Neal has gained experience of all aspects of the field. Starting off as an administrator working on the British Rail Link-up scheme in 1995, he moved on to become a Customer Account Manager when Link-up was taken over by Achilles, before taking the plunge into software development.

Since 1998, Neal has created software that has been used in vendor assessment schemes in a wide range of different sectors and countries, as a Senior Developer for Achilles and latterly in bringing all of his experience to bear on developing the core of the Altius vendor assessment software. He attained Microsoft Certified Solutions Developer (MCSD) status in 2001.

Neal now combines his work as a software developer with a number of other roles, including managing the operations team, working with clients to develop new software and reporting solutions to meet their needs, and maintaining the integrity of Altius's databases.

## **Len Simmons BSc (Hons)**

*Technical Development Manager*

Holding a BSc Honours degree in Computer Science, Len has more than 15 years' experience in software development and in managing the development of innovative, leading-edge software solutions. Eleven of those years have been spent developing solutions specifically in the vendor assessment field.

Len was part of Achilles' Senior IT Management Team, responsible for developing new software and improving existing solutions. He took a lead role in defining the Achilles Group's systems architecture and also helped to define the company's technology strategy. Len moved on from focusing on the Link-up and Proof services in the UK rail sector to overseeing the implementation of similar vendor assessment services in different sectors around the world, including in Ireland, South America and the USA.

Len is now Altius's Technical Development Manager. He is responsible for the ongoing design and development of Altius's software systems, including designing and developing new software solutions. He also manages Altius's IT infrastructure.

