

ERIC COMBAULT PROFILE



Eric COMBAULT

Team and Department Manager – Electricity Division
Test and Measurement Laboratory – RATP



Eric Combault has worked in the Electricity Division of the **Test and Measurement Laboratory** since 2012. He is the **MLI Team Manager** (Infrastructure and Laboratory Measurement).

He manages a team of five who perform a range of tests. His team conducts various measurements in the laboratory or on railway infrastructures. This is the case, for example, when a new line is opened and the insulation to earth is measured.

Eric's days are divided into managing his team, planning, organising, and prioritising new test requests conducted in the laboratory or on all types of infrastructures (railway, tertiary). He is also responsible for technology monitoring and new service development.

How is a test request managed?

Eric contacts the customer to gain an understanding of the situation and purpose of the request. A proposal is put together and sent to the customer. Meanwhile, his team is notified of the request and the tests that need to be planned and conducted.

Once the customer has accepted the proposal, the testing teams are set up and the schedule established. Special attention is always paid to preparing the tests and every detail is considered to handle any contingencies that could arise in the field.

Eric and his team handle different equipment to perform these tests. From simple voltage measurements using a voltmeter, track insulation measurements, power measurements on transformers using recorders that can analyse voltage and current, etc., to thermographic measurements using a thermal camera.

Are site measurements essential?

"Yes, this is the essence of our work"

Having an on-site presence also gives Eric the opportunity to spend important time with the customer and teams, to get acquainted with the environment, and to identify any defects that might affect the viability of a test, such as a very rusty rail that may prevent a voltage measurement being taken.

Eric is fully aware of the on-site aspect as an opportunity to establish new relationships via assignments in Europe to organise and conduct tests.



YOUR CAREER IN FOUR STAGES

2004

Entered ESTACA (aeronautic and automobile construction engineering school) to prepare for a degree in engineering

2009

Full-year internship at DGII ME (formerly IGLE)

April 2012

Applied to the LEM as a Team Manager

July 2012

Hired by the LEM as a Team Manager

Three words that describe your job?

Technique

Contingency

Sharing

What makes you most proud in your job?

"Knowing that the measurements I perform indirectly help to ensure metros, RERs and trains run safely".

What is your best memory of an assignment for Eurailtest?

"With Alstom. They had installed an underground power supply for tramways in Sydney.

However, the local authority, the transport organiser, asked them what would happen in the event of flooding or if the circuit breakers failed.

We were therefore asked to simulate the flooding of a track bed equipped with an underground power supply. The aim was to reproduce real-life conditions (water salinity) to measure the electrical potential between the surface of the water and the running rail, with a voltage of 750 V on the power rail.

The difficulty with this assignment was to reproduce the salinity of the water, measure the voltage on the surface, and the correct distance to the power rail. It involved a great deal of experimentation and proved a challenge ensuring the safety of everyone involved and the installation itself".

A QUOTE OR WORD TO ROUND OFF THIS INTERVIEW?

"One should allow for unforeseen events, because taking a necessary step back is always rewarding."

