

### **Celebration as work begins on Thameslink trains in Hebburn**

Production of high-tech electrical components and assemblies for new Thameslink trains started in Hebburn today, marked by celebrations attended by Transport Minister Baroness Kramer, South Tyneside Metropolitan Borough Council chief executive Martin Swales and The Mayor of South Tyneside, Fay Cunningham.

High-tech components at the heart of over 1,100 carriages destined for the prestigious Thameslink rolling stock project will be manufactured at Siemens' Hebburn factory, creating up to 300 jobs in the region over the duration of the project.

Across the UK, Siemens will generate up to 2,000 jobs under the Thameslink rolling stock project in component manufacturing, assembly of parts, the construction of the new depots, and subsequent train maintenance.

Work has begun at the Hebburn site on components for the Siemens Class 700 electric trains that will form the Thameslink fleet. The first components to be manufactured are cable harnesses, followed by drivers' instruments and control desks, electrical cabinets, ceiling containers and coupler boxes which will all be produced at the South Tyneside facility over the next three to four years.

The Hebburn plant has also been revamped, including reconfiguration of the shop floor and facilities to accommodate the significant production volumes of the Thameslink contract. Additional warehouse storage and car parking has been created on site with improved security, egress and access.

The rolling stock project is part of the Government sponsored £6.5bn Thameslink Programme that will create a further 6,000 jobs and transform north-south travel through

London. The first trains are expected to run on the Thameslink north-south route between Bedford and Brighton from 2016, and will deliver more capacity on the route and provide more frequent and reliable transport connections with the capital.

**Transport minister Baroness Kramer said:** “The start of production at Hebburn is great news for the region, as well as being a major milestone in the Thameslink project, which is generating more than 8,000 jobs nationwide and will transform travel through central London when it completes in 2018.

“The North East is a real hub of rail industry expertise and through our investment in the Thameslink Programme, we are helping to boost that industry, creating hundreds of local jobs, building skills for the future and securing the UK’s long-term economic growth.”

**Des Young, Asset Services Director at Siemens in Hebburn, said:**

“This is an important day for the Hebburn site, South Tyneside and the North East more widely. Thameslink isn’t just connecting London to the rest of the country - it’s also creating and protecting high tech jobs in the region, allowing us to compete both in the domestic and global rail equipment supply business.

“We hope that Thameslink is just the beginning of the specialist manufacturing to be undertaken in Hebburn. We are confident that the work conducted for Thameslink here will show that the North East has the skills, capacity and high-tech facilities to support major rail projects in the UK and overseas.”

**Iain Smith, Thameslink Programme Director for Siemens Rail Systems, said:**

“I am delighted to see work commence in Hebburn on this important project making high tech components for the Thameslink fleet. The work that will be done in Hebburn will compliment the work of a wide range of UK and European suppliers involved in the project. These trains will play a crucial role in modernising our transport network. The Class 700 Desiro City trains have been designed with British commuters in mind and will improve reliability, energy efficiency, passenger access and comfort. We believe this will change commuting for the better.”

**ENDS**

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**About Siemens**

Siemens was established in the United Kingdom 170 years ago and now employs 13,760 people in the UK. Last year's revenues were £3.36 billion\*. As the world's largest engineering company, Siemens provides innovative solutions to help tackle the world's major challenges across the key sectors of energy, industry, infrastructure & cities and healthcare. Siemens has offices and factories throughout the UK, with its headquarters in Frimley, Surrey. The company's global headquarters is in Munich, Germany. For more information, visit [www.siemens.co.uk](http://www.siemens.co.uk)

\* Data includes intercompany revenue. Data may not be comparable with revenue reported in annual or interim reports

**Siemens Rail Systems Division** provides expertise and technology in the full range of rail vehicles – from heavy rail to metros to trams and light-rail vehicles. In the UK, the Division employs around 750 people and maintains over 360 Siemens passenger trains for First TransPennine Express, South West Trains, Heathrow Express, Greater Anglia Franchise (Abellio), Northern Rail, London Midland and ScotRail. In addition to manufacturing the new trains for Thameslink, the company will also be supplying Eurostar with its new high speed fleet of trains.

**Thameslink Programme overview**

The Thameslink Programme will create a new high capacity, high frequency service of longer trains across central London. It will also link together new routes, in particular the East Coast Mainline with the Thameslink route at St Pancras International. The first phase is finished providing longer platforms on the Midland Mainline north Thameslink route (Bedford to St Pancras International) and new stations at Blackfriars and Farringdon so that 50% longer 12-carriage trains can now run between Bedford and Brighton. The final phase is to rebuild London Bridge and its surrounding rail track to unblock this bottleneck and usher in a new high frequency service of new 12 and 8 carriage trains of up to 24 trains per hour in each direction between London Blackfriars and St Pancras International.

**About the Class 700 train**

The Class 700 train has been developed to offer a metro-style service, with a spacious and airy design to maximise capacity and significantly increase passenger comfort levels on the Thameslink routes. The trains will be maintained at Three Bridges (Crawley) and Hornsey

(London Borough of Haringey). They will be introduced into service from early 2016 with the full 24 trains per hour peak service coming into effect at the end of 2018.

**Cross London Trains (XLT)**

Cross London Trains is a consortium comprising Siemens Project Ventures GmbH, Innisfree Limited and 3i Infrastructure plc. XLT is procuring, financing the new train fleet and leasing it to the operator of the Thameslink franchise.