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Successful upgrades for Hornsey depot ahead of introduction of Class 700

New systems will improve signalling and personnel safety

Siemens, working closely with infrastructure provider Network Rail and train operating company Govia Thameslink Railway, has completed the latest upgrades to its Hornsey traincare facility, constructing a fully integrated depot signalling system and an innovative depot personnel protection system (DPPS) to create optimum levels of safety for those working on site.

Five years in the planning, the developments took place over the recent Spring Bank Holiday weekend (May) within a live operational rail environment and without disruption to existing depot functionality.

The new signalling system, which has replaced hand-signalling, will ensure a safer, more controlled and efficient movement of vehicles in and out of the depot, as well as being less labour intensive.

The DPPS will provide performance monitoring software, allowing maintenance supervisors to remotely monitor the status of roads and plan maintenance tasks and train operations more effectively. The system will help to separate staff and train movements as well as provide detailed records of all activity.

Simon Linnemans, Hornsey Project Director, at Siemens, said: “These latest upgrades mark a major milestone in the Hornsey depot project, part of the wider Thameslink programme. We are delighted that the work will help to increase the depot’s operational efficiency and safety. I congratulate the delivery team on meeting the challenge over a holiday weekend and thank them for their continued dedication and effort.”

Wendy Robertson, GTR's Depots and Infrastructure Delivery Manager, said: "The work involved more than the physical changes to the depot; GTR has had to establish new ways of working for the depot and for drivers, a task which involved many different teams from across the company."

Simon Blanchflower, Network Rail's Thameslink Programme major programme director, said: "The signalling commissioning of the new depot at Hornsey is another step towards the completion of the Thameslink Programme, part of Network Rail's railway upgrade plan.

The new depot also benefits from increased stabling capacity; an integrated systems control room; new roads equipped with CET (controlled emission toilets) facilities, which are easily accessible for cleaners, drivers and maintenance personnel; a new maintenance facility building; and two train-washes which use reclaimed water, reducing environmental impact. Modification to the existing wheel lathe has been carried out which will enable quicker and more correct configuration of the wheel profile and also to cater for the new Class 700 fleet.

Hornsey traincare facility is one of two new hi-tech rail depots being built by Siemens, following a combined investment of over £300 million, and is planned to open in summer 2016 following handover to train operator Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR). It is part of Siemens' wider investment in the UK through the Thameslink Programme. The new depot at Hornsey will enable more trains to be maintained and serve the increased capacity of trains, including the new Class 700 fleet which is being built by Siemens.

GTR is shortly starting to operate the new Class 700 trains on the Bedford-Brighton Thameslink route with trains stabled at the second depot, in Three Bridges. GTR will then begin running the trains on the East Coast Mainline from the Hornsey depot next year, between Peterborough and Cambridge and London King's Cross before, in 2018, they join up with the Thameslink route at St Pancras International to provide seamless journeys to London Bridge, East Croydon, Gatwick Airport and beyond.

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Media contacts

Silke Thomson-Pottebohm, Siemens

Tel: 07808 822780

Email: silke.thomson-pottebohm@siemens.com

Roger Perkins, Govia Thameslink Railway
Tel: 0203 750 2031
Email: press.office@tgrailway.com

Vienn Chan, MHP Communications
Direct dial: 020 3128 8219
Mobile: 07885 447 481
Email: Siemens@mhpc.com

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