

Secretary of State launches state-of-the-art train to be used on Thameslink route

The Secretary of State for Transport, Patrick McLoughlin, today launched Siemens' new state-of-the-art passenger train, the Class 700 Desiro City, which is set to transform journeys for millions of passengers across London and beyond.

Three fully-assembled cars for the new Class 700 train were unveiled for the first time by Siemens, alongside Cross London Trains and new operator Govia Thameslink Railway Limited, at Innotrans 2014 in Berlin. The trains will form the main rolling stock fleet for the Government sponsored £6.5bn Thameslink Programme, a series of fleet and infrastructure improvements on the north-south rail link across London.

The new electric Class 700 train will offer a much improved travel experience for passengers and, alongside the wider infrastructure improvements being delivered by Network Rail as part of the Thameslink Programme, will boost capacity and reliability on one of Europe's busiest stretches of railway.

The first units, approximately 25% lighter than previous generations and up to 50% more energy efficient, will run on the Thameslink Bedford to Brighton service through central London in spring 2016 and on Peterborough and Cambridge Great Northern services a year later. By the end of 2018, when the Thameslink Programme is complete, the two services will join at St Pancras International, and run through central London every two to three minutes at the busiest times. This equates to 24 trains per hour in each direction between St Pancras International and London Blackfriars..

Siemens plc, Rail Systems Division

Communications and Government Affairs, Euston House,
Eversholt Street, London, NW1 1AD

The trains will run on a newly-upgraded network, featuring a state-of-the-art signaling system and rebuilt stations at London Bridge and Blackfriars. The Thameslink network also provides an interchange with London's new Crossrail line, due to open in 2018, via an expanded and upgraded station at Farringdon.

Many components for the Thameslink trains will be manufactured in the UK including for example at Siemens' site in Hebburn, near Newcastle, creating around 300 local jobs. The Thameslink Programme will create around 8000 jobs in total, including up to 2000 in support of the new trains, across the UK supply chain.

The Desiro City train has also recently been chosen to provide additional capacity on the South West Trains franchise for passengers travelling into London Waterloo, the UK's busiest station, as part of a £210m deal. The 150 new carriages will create capacity for more than 24,000 additional peak-time passengers every day, and will start running from 2017.

Transport Secretary Patrick McLoughlin said: "A world-class rail network needs world-class trains, and it is fantastic to see the spacious and energy-efficient new carriages that passengers will soon be able to use.

"As part of our long-term economic plan, we are investing record amounts in transforming the rail network, providing more seats, better connections and improved journeys. The Thameslink Programme is central to this. These trains will provide real benefits to passengers when they come into operation."

Dr. Jochen Eickholt, CEO Siemens-Division Rail Systems, said:

"Over 80 million Euros has been invested by Siemens in the design and development of the Class 700. This represents an investment in innovative rail design, leading technology and an improved passenger experience. We are delighted to have developed this train of the future and are thrilled that this has been recognised by both the Secretary of State and the international rail technology community".

Andy Pitt, Executive Chairman, Cross London Trains, said:

"Cross London Trains is delighted to have financed these Class 700 trains and it is fantastic to see the state-of-the-art train showcased at such an industry leading event".

Charles Horton, Chief Executive Officer of Govia Thameslink Railway Limited (GTR), which operates Thameslink and Great Northern services, said:

“The Class 700 will completely transform the travelling experience of our passengers, unlocking the potential of the Thameslink Programme to increase capacity and address the heavy crowding many experience on a daily basis.

“Acting as delivery agent for the Government, we will introduce this new fleet, with trains arriving first on Thameslink in 2016 and then on Great Northern a year later. When the two routes join in 2018 there will be fabulous new connections across the south east.”

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Contact for journalists:

Siemens plc, Rail Systems	DfT	Govia Thameslink Railway Limited
Emma Whitaker Senior PR & Government Affairs Manager Mobile: +44 79212 46942 Email:emma.whitaker@siemens.com Steven Coventry PR & Government Affairs Manager Mobile: 07808 824407 Email:steven.coventry@siemens.com	Ellie Dwyer Press Officer Tel: +44 0207 944 3123 Email: Elea- nor.dwyer@dft.gsi.gov.uk	Roger Perkins Head of Communications Tel: +44 207 427 2086 Email: rog- er.perkins@gtrailway.com

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About Innotrans

InnoTrans is the world's largest trade fair for transport technology and provides a platform for the international railway industry to showcase leading developments in the sector. This year's conference will be attended by over 220 transport technology firms and is located in Berlin, the focus of Germany's technology industry and the home of Siemens.

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

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

Siemens plc, Rail Systems Division

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.

Cross London Trains (XLT)

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

Govia Thameslink Railway Limited

Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) began running Thameslink (Bedford to Brighton, Sutton and Wimbledon) and Great Northern (London to Peterborough, Cambridge and King's Lynn) rail services on Sunday 14 September. A small number of services and stations currently operated by Southeastern will transfer to GTR in December 2014 and in July 2015 the Southern and Gatwick Express routes will be incorporated into the franchise. GTR will then be the largest rail franchise in the UK in terms of passenger numbers, trains, revenue and staff: GTR will carry about 273 million passenger journeys per year, employ around 6,500 people and generate annual passenger revenues of approximately £1.3bn. www.gtrailway.com

Thameslink Programme overview

The government-sponsored £6.5bn Thameslink Programme will transform north-south travel through London.

When complete in 2018 it will give passengers:

- New spacious trains running every 2 to 3 minutes through central London in the peak
- Improved connections and better options to more destinations on an expanded Thameslink network including Cambridge and Peterborough
- Robust new track and signalling systems offer more reliable journeys
- A completely rebuilt London Bridge station with more space and great facilities

Find out more at ThameslinkProgramme.co.uk

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