

Alstom's Voyager Fleet celebrate 20 years of Inter-City service in UK

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Alstom, Britain's leading train manufacturer and maintenance provider, has celebrated 20 years of the highly successful 'Voyager' and 'SuperVoyager' Inter-City fleets.

Alstom, together with rolling stock owner Beacon Rail, and train operators, Avanti West Coast and CrossCountry marked two decades of reliable, high speed operation at a special event at the train's home depot, Alstom's Central Rivers facility in Staffordshire, UK.

The Class 220 and Class 221's were manufactured by Bombardier, acquired by Alstom in January 2021, and entered service from 2001.

Operating at speeds of up to 200 km/hour, they have clocked up over 380 million miles of service, equivalent to 843 times to the moon and back.

Delivering reliable, comfortable services for Avanti West Coast and CrossCountry, Alstom's Voyager Fleet can be found across the length and breadth of Britain's Inter-City network from Aberdeen to Penzance, London to Llandudno.

With innovations ahead designed to achieve greater sustainability, such as hybrid diesel/battery operation and intelligent engine stop/start, they are set for many more years of service on Britain's railways.

Peter Broadley, Managing Director, Services for Alstom UK & Ireland said: "Twenty years of reliable, 200 km/hour operation across Britain is a very significant milestone.

"We are delighted to celebrate Voyager 20 with our friends from Beacon Rail, CrossCountry and Avanti West Coast and look forward to future innovations to achieve even greater sustainability."

Rob Dee, Beacon Rail said: "The Voyager fleet is an integral part of Beacon's portfolio, consisting of close to 2,000 items of rolling stock operating in 17 countries across Europe.

"Since taking ownership of the Voyagers in 2017 Beacon has worked closely with our customers Avanti West Coast and CrossCountry as well as Alstom to ensure the Voyagers offer a high level of safety, reliability, availability and comfort to the travelling public.

"Beacon has also commissioned industry colleagues to develop a hybrid battery solution for the fleet. The hybrid will significantly reduce emissions in built-up areas whilst maintaining Voyager's high-speed, go-anywhere capability."

Tom Joyner, Managing Director at CrossCountry said: "The Voyager fleet has provided a sterling service for countless passengers over the past twenty years. There are some innovative projects in the pipeline, which will ensure the Voyagers continue to form a key part of our fleet and we are looking forward to working with colleagues from Alstom and Beacon Rail on these in the months ahead."

Gus Dunster, Executive Director Operations & Safety, Avanti West Coast said: "The Super Voyager has played a key role in the transformation of the West Coast Main Line -being integral to a high frequency timetable and helping to put Shrewsbury and Blackpool back on the map.

"The recent £8.3m investment in the fleet has given the trains a new lease of life and they will continue to serve our customers with great distinction."

In total 34 Class 220s and 24 Class 221s are in service with CrossCountry operating across multiple mainline routes all serving Birmingham; 20 Class 221's are in service with Avanti West Coast operating tilting, high speed services along the West Coast Mainline.

All 78 units are owned by Beacon Rail, and maintained by Alstom at its Central Rivers depot, with heavy component overhaul taking place at Alstom's Crewe and Ilford facilities.

Photo credit: Alstom