

DB Cargo UK and Groupe CAT launch new international services for Toyota

February 23, 2022



New international rail freight services have commenced from Toton in Nottinghamshire to Valenciennes in Northern France for the global automotive manufacturer, Toyota.

This follows the construction of a new, £2.6 million automotive transfer facility at DB Cargo UK's strategic site in the East Midlands and £3 million investment by Groupe CAT in its specialist wagon fleet.

Following a series of successful trial runs, fully loaded trains carrying approximately 260 vehicles are now operating twice a week between the two locations - a movement which used to take five days by road now takes just 24 hours by train and reduces carbon emissions by 2,300 tonnes every year.

On the outbound journey, the new generation of hybrid Corollas manufactured at Toyota's Derby plant are being exported to France. Toyota Aygo, Yaris and the new Yaris+ vehicles are being imported on the return leg, to ensure full utilisation of the new services.

DB Cargo UK's Chief Sales Officer Roger Neary said the commencement of the services was a significant milestone after months of collaboration and construction by all parties involved.

“Freight belongs on Rail and this is a really exciting collaboration between DB Cargo UK, Groupe CAT & Toyota. It’s a win-win-win for all those involved and will see us deliver an efficient and environmentally-friendly rail logistics solution for one of the world’s biggest automotive manufacturers,” he added.

“Not only that, it has also seen us breathe new life back into a previously disused area of our strategic Toton site.”

Steve Reynolds, Managing Director of Groupe CAT’s subsidiary STVA UK, said: “This project is the culmination of four years’ work from conception through to implementation. It is a very exciting project for Groupe CAT, requiring resources from road, rail and terminals both here in the UK and in Europe too. To facilitate the project, we have signed a long-term lease with DB Cargo UK for the Toton rail terminal and have invested more than £3 million to refurbish our wagons.”



Photo credit: Nigel Wordsworth

DB Cargo UK is currently the country’s leading transporter of finished vehicles by rail, much of which is conducted working in partnership with wagon owner & logistics specialist Groupe CAT.

It’s £2.6 million investment has seen the construction of a new vehicle storage compound spanning some 4.25 acres, along with associated loading and unloading facilities.

The work was undertaken by Britcon (UK) Ltd and involved the import of some 11,000 tonnes of

construction material.

Over 800 metres of new track has been laid alongside the extensive storage facility and 1100 metres of road has either been newly constructed or widened to accommodate the car transporters now taking the Toyota vehicles to and from site.

Some 900 metres of security fencing has been constructed, five miles of white lines painted on the tarmacadam surface and several miles worth of cabling laid to accommodate the necessary on-site CCTV and lighting.

Construction started in late September 2021 and was completed earlier this month.

Roger Neary said: “Each train will carry the equivalent load of around 29 road transporters. The rail solution will not only reduce congestion on the UK’s Road network but will also generate significantly less CO2 emissions than if they were taken by road.”

Steve Reynolds added: “We have taken the opportunity to redesign key aspects of the wagons to ensure they could deliver the next generation of cars and match Toyota’s quality expectations. Without this investment and innovation, it would not have been possible to deliver the targeted environmental and lead-time benefits. We should also recognise publicly the excellent support and contribution to this project from Eurotunnel, Border Force and the DFT, who have all really worked hard to make this project happen.”

Photo credit: DB Cargo