

EMR and Hitachi Rail working with businesses in Burton upon Trent and Ripley

December 8, 2021



A new train fleet for the East Midlands has provided East Midlands Railways (EMR) and Hitachi Rail with the opportunity to support jobs in Burton upon Trent and Ripley.

The support comes in the form of contracts being awarded to businesses in the region to help build new Aurora trains.

Mors Smitt manufactures automatic warning systems (AWS) / train protection & warning systems (TPWS) and automatic power control (APC) systems at its factory in Burton upon Trent. The business, which has 65 staff, was just one of several UK companies chosen to supply products for the Aurora project.

Mark Scott, product development director for RTPE group, said: "Mors Smitt are excited to be involved in the deployment of Aurora into East Midlands Railways. Not only are the AWS/TPWS and APC products designed and manufactured in the Midlands here in Burton upon Trent but we also insist on utilising Midlands-based suppliers where possible.

"A truly local effort that genuinely contributes to sustainability of the system engineering team and

systems manufacturing team here in Burton.”

Meanwhile another Midlands company, Ripley’s Forbo Flooring Systems, was also chosen to supply parts for the Aurora fleet.

Its flooring product was developed for the rail sector and has been designed to be easy to clean, hardwearing, cope with the heavy footfall of passenger numbers, and be simple to maintain.

Bob Summers, international key account manager UK & Ireland at Forbo Flooring Systems, said: “We are absolutely delighted to be working on the Aurora contract.

“The fleet will be benefiting from Forbo carpet that has been specially digitally printed, giving the designers the widest possible scope to create an interior fitting for this project.”

The Aurora fleet, set to come into operation in 2023, is designed to offer significant advances on EMR’S existing fleet, with passengers benefiting from more seats and modern interiors.

The trains will have the ability to run on overhead electric lines and will include features such as air conditioning, free WiFi throughout, plug sockets and better passenger information screens.

Lisa Angus, transitions and projects director at East Midlands Railway, said: “It is great that the production of our Aurora Fleet is able to support UK businesses locally – helping to maintain and create jobs.

“These local specialist companies will help turn our new trains into something special which I’m sure our passengers will love to travel on.”

Amy Webb, head of EMR programme at Hitachi Rail said: “Mors Smitt and Forbo are valued members of Hitachi Rail’s extensive UK supply chain so it’s great to see that our partnership with EMR is already delivering tangible benefits for the Midlands.

“Supporting job creation, while also encouraging innovation, is precisely why Hitachi Rail prioritises UK suppliers.

“The new Aurora fleet is currently being manufactured at Hitachi Rail’s UK factory. As one of the UK’s major train manufacturers and maintainers, Hitachi Rail prioritises UK suppliers whenever possible. This approach has resulted in Hitachi Rail spending over £1.8 billion with UK suppliers in just eight years.”