

HS2 awards contract to supply track switches and crossings to voestalpine

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The HS2 logo, consisting of the letters "HS2" in a large, white, sans-serif font, centered on a solid dark blue rectangular background.

HS2 Ltd has awarded a contract to deliver track switches and crossings for Phase One and 2a of the UK's new high speed railway to voestalpine Turnout Technology UK Ltd.

The contract includes the design, manufacture and delivery of around 180 switches and crossings which will be installed between London and the connection with the west coast mainline at Crewe.

Designed to operate smoothly, reliably and safely at speeds of up to 360km/h and diverging speeds up to 230km/h, the switches and crossings will be a vital and highly specialist part of the HS2 track systems.

The contract also includes around 77 rail expansion devices for track on viaducts and bridges – and around 70 lower-speed switches and crossings for the depots at Washwood Heath and Calvert.

In order to reduce long term costs and improve performance, the rail and the switches and crossings will be predominantly set onto concrete slabs instead of the ballast commonly used on the UK rail network. This approach – known as slab track – is commonly used on metro systems and some international high-speed rail lines, and will allow for a higher frequency of service and less maintenance.

HS2 Ltd's Procurement & Supply Chain Director, Andrew Cubitt said: "Switches and crossings play a vital role in the high-speed rail systems that will underpin the whole HS2 project. The switches, crossings and rail expansions devices will be fitted with state-of-the-art monitoring systems for a safe and easy to maintain operational railway.

"voestalpine has a strong track record delivering complex and specialist railway equipment to railways across the world and I look forward to welcoming them to the team."

Franz Kainersdorfer CEO of voestalpine Metal Engineering Division, said: "I am delighted that HS2 has trusted voestalpine Turnout Technology UK to participate in such an important project for the country. Utilising the wealth of experience voestalpine Railway Systems has gained from delivering high speed railways across the world, I am confident the project will be a resounding success."

HS2 Ltd is running a separate procurement process to award four Track Systems contracts for the design and installation of the track and coordination of construction logistics. This will also include integration and installation of the switches and crossings.

The contracts covering design and supply of equipment - are worth around £210m. The initial duration of the Technical Support Contract is 20 years.