

Knorr-Bremse and Hitachi Rail agree long-term maintenance cooperation for UK Intercity fleet

January 13, 2021



Knorr-Bremse, the global market leader for braking systems and other systems for rail and commercial vehicles, will this quarter start supplying a new generation of brake pads and discs for Hitachi intercity Class 800/801/802 trains serving UK intercity routes.

The transition to the new friction technology will see all the trains equipped with the new brake pads and discs; optimising the vehicles' braking systems performance as well as minimising maintenance time and life-cycle costs.

"For many years now, Knorr-Bremse and Hitachi have cooperated closely and in a spirit of mutual trust to deliver intercity trains with outstanding performance and reliability," comments Mark Cleobury, Member of the Management Board of Knorr-Bremse Rail Vehicle Systems.

He added: "We are therefore delighted that, working with Hitachi, we have been able to develop an optimised solution that will support increased train availability through enhanced performance."

The specialist service organisation of Knorr-Bremse, RailServices, will start supplying Hitachi Rail with the

new generation of brake pads and discs in the first quarter of 2021. The multi-million Euro, four-year contract, has the option to be extended for an additional four years.”

Hitachi Rail has long-term maintenance contracts, ensuring it will be maintaining and servicing trains in the UK for several decades. Supporting the Hitachi Rail maintenance regime, the innovative Knorr-Bremse braking system equipment for the Class 800 series trains has been designed to facilitate longer maintenance intervals and reduce maintenance time.

Local presence as a key deciding factor

The strong local presence of, and support provided by Knorr-Bremse in the UK, was a key deciding factor in Hitachi choosing Knorr-Bremse as a strategic partner.

Paul Goodhand, Managing Director of Knorr-Bremse Rail UK said: “Our four UK facilities provide a strong local presence for our customers at Hitachi Rail Systems UK. With our state-of-the-art local RailServices support logistics we can guarantee both reliable original parts delivery as well as rapid and efficient brake system overhaul including technical support and advice.

“We have worked with Hitachi successfully for many years now, supporting them with brake control, air-supply and friction technology. We now look forward to supporting them over the next four years by bringing them the benefits of the latest generation of Knorr-Bremse disc and pad technology.”

Initially, Hitachi Rail had awarded Knorr-Bremse the contract for the supply and commissioning of the braking systems for the Class 800 trains as part of the UK’s high-speed programme in 2013. Since their entry into service in 2017, the trains have been providing mainline services, running with a top speed of up to 200 km/h, across major routes in the UK.

With over six-hundred seats per train, they have boosted transportation capacity by some 18 percent compared to the fleets they replaced. This latest collaboration between Hitachi and Knorr-Bremse highlights and reinforces the successful long-term working partnership between the two companies.

Photo credit: Hitachi

2/2 percent compared to the fleets they replaced. This latest collaboration between Hitachi and Knorr-Bremse highlights and reinforces the successful long-term working partnership between the two companies.