

Superfast on-board browsing thanks to 5G Wi-Fi on SWR services

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The first series of rail-5G poles are being installed along over 70 kilometres of railway between Basingstoke and Earlsfield, as part of project by [evo-rail](#) and [South Western Railway](#), in partnership with [Network Rail](#).

The project will see superfast on-board Wi-Fi deployed on SWR trains between Basingstoke and Earlsfield and is a first for the UK mainland.

Christian Neill, customer experience director for South Western Railway, said: "South Western Railway is committed to providing a modern customer experience for the digital age and rolling out new superfast internet, at 50 times the current average speeds, is an integral part of our plan to do that.

"Following a successful pilot on Isle of Wight's Island Line, we are excited to deliver this industry-leading standard of internet connectivity for our customers, which will provide superfast and reliable Wi-Fi for 70km of railway between Basingstoke and Earlsfield."

It will be the first railway line in the mainland UK to deploy the industry-leading rail-5G technology for

customer use. With over 100 trains already fitted to accommodate the solution, the technology will cover 70 kilometres of the SWR network.

Evo-rail, a telecoms company part of FirstGroup, has developed rail-5G as the first multi-gigabit internet solution built for the railways, with the technology enabling the delivery of superfast continuous internet.

Simon Holmes, managing director, evo-rail, said: "Improving services for passengers through superfast and reliable connectivity – especially on-board Wi-Fi services – will be the keystone in rail becoming the transport mode of choice.

"Our solution can dramatically improve connectivity on passenger trains and the technology allows passengers to have constant, uninterrupted and consistent internet 50 times the average speed of today's mobile connection.

"We are very excited for this milestone of our project with South Western Railway and Network Rail and look forward to bringing the solution to customers travelling between Earlsfield and Basingstoke."

With rail-5G, passengers will be able to enjoy unprecedented levels of connectivity, similar to what they are used to at home or in the office, allowing them to stream videos, make video calls, download large files, and much more.

The solution has undergone a large-scale pilot on SWR's Island Line on the Isle of Wight. The successful trial proved that the rail-5G solution can consistently deliver one gigabit per second (Gbps) throughput to a moving train, so now the technology is being rolled out to other parts of the SWR network

Rail-5G has been developed and designed as a specialist solution for the railways. As well as exceeding all the standards and regulations set in Europe and the UK for trackside and train installations, it has been designed to be quick to install, sustainable, and deliver a return on investment for train operators.

The solution delivers near perfect, consistent coverage, creating opportunities for operators to commercialise overage, and providing rail customers with unsurpassed levels of connectivity.

The technology uses poles and antennas to create a radio network, accessible to both the trains' operational systems and customers on board.

Full deployment is likely to complete and launch for customer use in early 2023. Once fully operational, customers will have access to rail-5G and will be able to enjoy superfast and reliable onboard Wi-Fi throughout their journeys.