

Roll-out of driver training on Greater Anglia's new trains heads west

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Greater Anglia is now training driver instructors on its new Alstom-built trains on the London Liverpool Street to Cambridge line, as preparations continue for the introduction of new trains on its West Anglia services.

Once driver instructors have been trained, they will start training over 250 drivers, ahead of new trains being introduced on the route later this year.

Driver instructors have already spent time learning about the complexities of the various on-board systems from training materials and full cab simulators.

Now they have started training on the actual trains themselves, using the on-train systems to deal with the day-to-day operation of the train, as well as looking at a number of emergency and fault scenarios.

They get the chance to be “hands-on”, operating the train both in sidings and out on the network, undertaking ‘practical handling’ where they get used to driving the train, enabling them to gain the expert experience needed to train all the drivers.

The first of the company's 133 new electric commuter trains, built by Alstom – formerly Bombardier – in Derby, were introduced in November 2020 on the London to Southend Victoria route, before extending to select Braintree and Southminster services in December.

While testing continues to allow the trains to start in service between Colchester and Clacton later this year, training has just started on the West Anglia route, which runs between London Liverpool Street and Cambridge via Bishop's Stortford.

Andrew Goodrum, Greater Anglia's business readiness director, said: "The start of training for our driving instructor colleagues who work on the West Anglia route is the next stage in our new trains introduction programme.

"Feedback from our instructors has been overwhelmingly positive – they see these new trains as a huge step-up and are proud to be playing a key role in getting them into passenger service.

"We're looking forward to introducing these brand-new trains to the West Anglia route later this year, giving more of our customers all the mod-cons they expect from a railway in the 2020s."

Greater Anglia has ordered 133 Alstom-built electric commuter trains. They have five carriages and come with air conditioning, Wi-Fi, plug and USB sockets at each pair of seats, a modern passenger information system as well as spaces for bicycles and an accessible area.

Photo credit: Greater Anglia