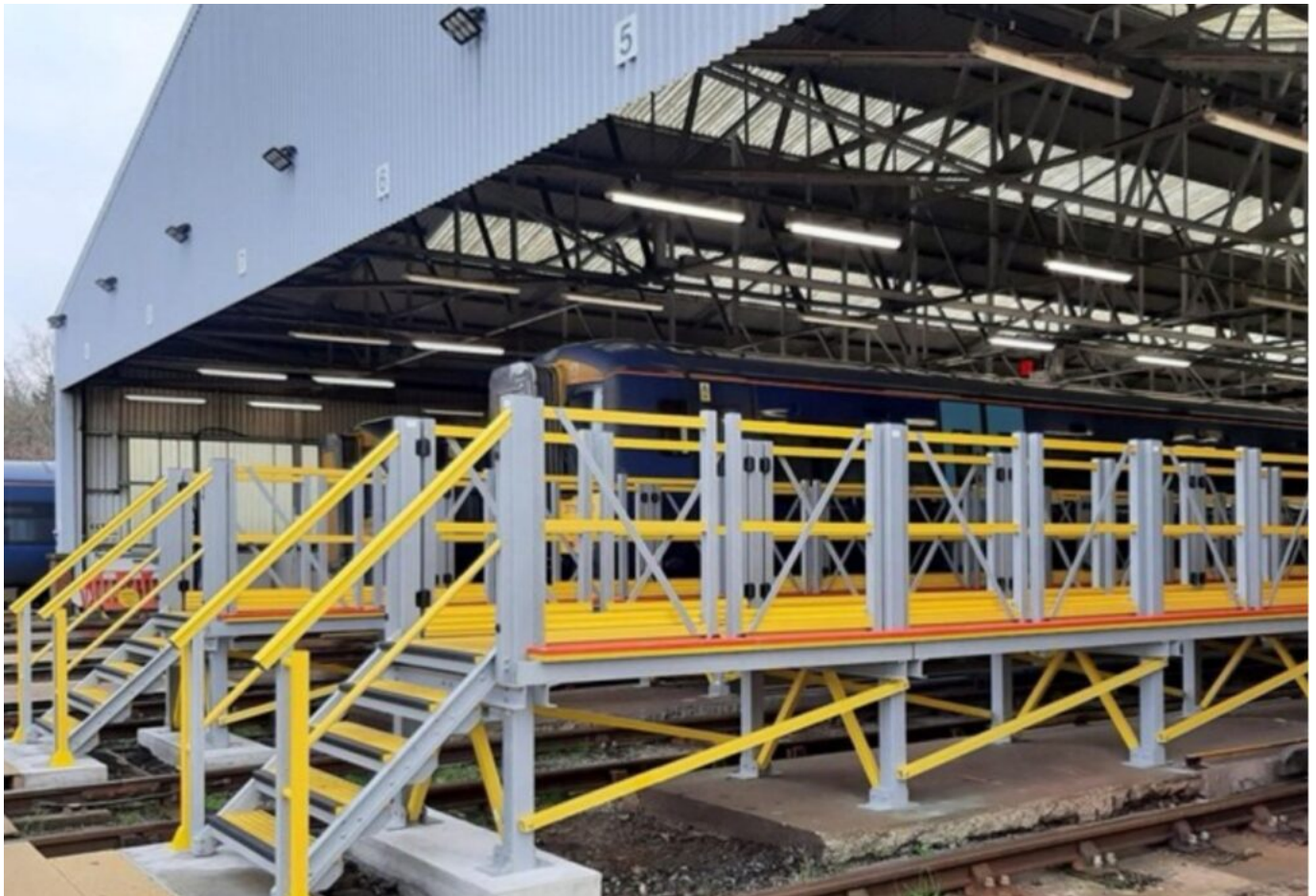


# Southeastern invests £1.5m to develop new 'Centre of Excellence' for train cleaning

February 22, 2024



**Southeastern** has unveiled its first Centre of Excellence for Train Presentation.

The £1.5million investment has created a dedicated interior repair and heavy cleaning operation within the existing Grove Park depot in south east London.

Two 12-carriage platform level walkways have been installed, which markedly improves access to the train for cleaning. This makes it much easier and quicker to clean trains as the heavy equipment doesn't need to be lifted in and out from ground level by the cleaning team. Almost 28 hours per week will be freed up during heavy and overnight cleans by using the easy access walkways.

In addition, another one of the six berthing roads in the main cleaning shed has been fitted with new power isolation, taking the total up to three. This extra road delivers more capacity for safer cleaning within the shed. There have also been significant drainage improvements to stay within water discharge limits.

Southeastern operates one of the largest fleets in the country, with just under 400 trains. Keeping this many trains clean and tidy, while also providing nearly 1,800 services per day is extremely complex.

Around a quarter of all train cleaning takes place at the Grove Park site, which adds up to just under 10,000 vehicle cleans per week.

Trains have been cleaned at Grove Park since 1959 but operations have now been reorganised so that even more trains can get their cleaning done there, while the essential maintenance needed to keep the trains moving can be carried out at Southeastern's other depots including Ashford, Gillingham, Ramsgate and Slade Green.

There will also be a renewed focus on the training at Grove Park with a more centralised approach to ensure quality. All new entrants into the train presentation team will be developed to set the highest standards. The skills, expertise and best practices from the centre will be rolled out across the operator's other cleaning locations.

Southeastern's Engineering Director, Mark Johnson said: "We are working to build a better, more reliable, and sustainable railway and providing clean trains in good condition is a key part of that goal. Our first train presentation Centre of Excellence is going to help set new standards, improve customer satisfaction and ultimately, deliver better journeys.

"We also know the importance of having clean, accessible toilets on our trains and I'm really pleased our Mobile Interior Standards Team (MIST) will operate from the centre. They can be deployed rapidly wherever they are needed to fix any problems with our toilets.

"Combined, this new investment and new approach will, over time, help to improve the cleanliness and appearance of our trains right across South East London, Kent and East Sussex."