



West Midlands Trains supporting drive for more engineers

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West Midlands Trains supports Year of Engineering

West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway are getting behind a government drive to encourage more young people to get into engineering.

The engineering industry estimates it will need 186,000 skilled recruits each year to 2024. The company behind the two train operators, West Midlands Trains, plans to invest £70 million in its train maintenance facilities, including a new depot at Duddleston, Birmingham. The extra facilities will be needed to support £700 million worth of new trains on order for the two networks.

West Midlands Trains also plans to recruit and train 900 apprentices across its two businesses over the next eight years, including in engineering. The company already runs an industry leading engineering trailblazer apprenticeship scheme in partnership with the National Training Academy for Rail (NTAR) in Northampton and Birmingham Metropolitan College (BMet).

West Midlands Trains' engineering director, Neil Bamford, said "The Year of Engineering is a great initiative. Rail travel has never been more popular and investment is at record levels. With demand predicted to grow even higher we will need more engineers to create and maintain extra trains and infrastructure. That's why I would encourage any young person to take a good look building a career in engineering."

For more information about the Year of Engineering go to www.yearofengineering.gov.uk

Ends

Notes to editors

For further information on West Midlands Trains, London Northwestern Railway or West Midlands Railway call our **newsroom** on **03300 955150**.

About West Midlands Trains

West Midlands Trains Ltd. will be running the West Midlands rail franchise from 10 December 2017 until 2025/6. Abellio has a 70.1% share of the company, East Japan Railway Company (JRE) and Mitsui & Co., Ltd. (Mitsui) own the remaining 29.9% in a 50:50 split.

About Abellio

Abellio is the international passenger transport subsidiary of the Dutch national railway company, Nederlandse Spoorwegen. Every day our people provide rail, bus and tram services to 1.7m customers across the UK, Germany and in the Netherlands. In the UK we operate buses through Abellio London,

as well as ScotRail and Greater Anglia train services, and Merseyrail in a joint venture with Serco. In Germany we operate Abellio Deutschland, serving communities in North Rhine Westfalia, Saxony, Lower Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, Hesse and Thuringia. Our role in transport extends beyond the journey from a-to-b. With our international heritage and our policy of sharing best practice, not just amongst ourselves, but across the wider transport industry, we provide thought leadership and truly innovative ideas which make a positive contribution to the communities we serve. For more information on Abellio visit www.abellio.com

About Mitsui

Mitsui is one of the most diversified and comprehensive trading, investment and service enterprises in the world with 139 offices in 66 countries as of March, 2017. Utilising our global operating locations, network and information resources, we are multilaterally pursuing business that ranges from product sales, worldwide logistics and financing, through to the development of major international infrastructure and other projects in the following fields: Iron & Steel Products, Mineral & Metal Resources, Infrastructure Projects, Integrated Transportation Systems, Chemicals, Energy, Food Resources, Food Products & Services, Consumer Services, IT & Communication, and Corporate Development Business. Mitsui is actively taking on challenges for global business innovation around the world. For more information, visit www.mitsui.com.

About JR East

East Japan Railway Company (JR East) was established in 1987, when Japanese National Railways was divided as part of a package of railway reforms. JR East's railway business covers a 7,500 km (approx. 4,660 miles) network in the eastern part of the Japanese main island, including Tokyo Metropolitan area, and provides transportation services, comprising urban, suburban and high speed operations, for 17 million passengers on a daily basis. JR East also undertakes non-transport commercial activities, which account for more than 30% of the total revenue of JR East Group. JR East contributes to passengers and communities it serves by delivering high degrees of punctuality, reliability and comfort and also continues to pursue higher levels of safety and service quality through technical innovation. For more information, visit www.jreast.co.jp/e.

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