

News story: First new trains in £500 million northern investment unveiled by Northern Powerhouse minister

- 98 state-of-the-art trains will be rolled out on the Northern Rail network over the coming months
- £500 million investment will lead to the total removal of the Pacer trains from the Northern network
- unveiling marks the next stage in multi-billion pound government investment in the north to improve everyday passenger journeys

Northern Powerhouse minister Jake Berry has unveiled the first brand new trains set to transform journeys across the north, as part of a £500 million investment for Northern Rail passengers, on a visit to Liverpool yesterday (4 October 2018).

A total of 98 brand new diesel and electric trains will be rolled out across the Northern network, which spans the North West, North East, Yorkshire and the Humber and parts of the East Midlands, over the coming months. Replacing outdated Pacer trains, their introduction is in addition to the refurbishment and modernisation of all other trains on the network.

Promotional video regarding Northern investment

On a visit to the Edge Hill depot in the city, the Northern Powerhouse minister joined Northern CEO David Brown to mark the unveiling of the state-of-the-art trains, which is an important milestone in the government's ongoing multi-billion pound investment in the north that will make journeys quicker, more reliable and more comfortable.

Northern Powerhouse Minister, Jake Berry said:

These spacious, comfortable and modern new trains are a clear demonstration of both the government and train operators commitment to the Northern Powerhouse and putting passengers at the heart of everything we do.

We are investing in the biggest modernisation of our rail network since Victorian times, ensuring people receive the faster, more reliable and more frequent services they deserve.

Over the next few months we will see these brand new, state-of-the-art trains replace the out-dated Pacer trains, providing more seats and better journeys for passengers across the Northern Powerhouse.

Northern's Managing Director, David Brown said:

I was lucky enough to see the trains in production in Spain earlier in the year, but it's even better to see them here in Liverpool – just weeks away from entering passenger service.

The quality of what has been delivered is a real landmark for Northern and our customers, and to be able to demonstrate that quality to colleagues and stakeholders today is an incredibly proud moment for me.

Now it only remains for us to share these fantastic new trains with our customers, so that they can experience the comfort and the benefits all the new on-board features bring.

The new Class 195 diesel trans and 331 electric trains have been built by CAF in Spain. They were delivered to Northern in the summer and have been going through testing since then.

The government has [previously announced that Northern and TransPennine Express services will benefit from 500 new carriages, room for 40,000 extra passengers and more than 2,000 extra services a week](#), with all trains new or refurbished.

In addition, the government is investing £13 billion through to 2020 to transform transport across the north – the biggest investment any government has ever made and, between 2019 and 2024, will invest around £3 billion further in upgrading the Transpennine route between Manchester, Leeds and York to deliver faster, more frequent and more reliable journeys with more seats.

[Press release: UK deepens defence cooperation with Germany](#)

Gavin Williamson, alongside his German counterpart Ursula von der Leyen, signed a Joint Vision Statement today deepening the already strong UK-German relationship and increasing defence cooperation across a range of areas, from tackling violent extremism to building new military capabilities.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

Although we are preparing to leave the EU, our commitment to European security is resolute.

The statement signed today strengthens UK-German ties and bolsters the defence of two key NATO partners. This is an alliance we both hold dear.

The Defence Secretary also attended a demonstration from UK and German personnel who form part of the combined river crossing capability in Minden – a capability vital to NATO operations. The visit comes after the announcement that the British Army will be permanently based in the country beyond 2020.

The events in Germany followed a meeting of NATO Defence Ministers in Brussels, in which Mr. Williamson stood shoulder-to-shoulder with Allies in condemnation of reckless and indiscriminate Russian cyber-attacks.

At NATO HQ, he discussed the importance of the alliance being ready to respond not only to the threats from the East but also from the South. He announced that the British Army would be deepening cooperation with partners through linking 1 Div HQ, which leads overseas military capacity building, to NATO's emerging Defence Capacity Building initiatives.

He also attended NATO's Nuclear Planning Group (NPG), consulting with counterparts to ensure the alliance has the necessary tools and procedures in place to respond to a nuclear crisis.

News story: Defence Minister reaffirms UK commitment to the Gulf

Gulf security is our security, Defence Minister Mark Lancaster reaffirmed whilst visiting Iraq, Bahrain and Oman. As part of the five-day visit, the minister also officially opened the UK-Oman joint exercise, Saif Sareea 3, alongside Oman's Minister Responsible for Defence Affairs, His Excellency Sayyid Badr bin Saud bin Harub Al Busaidi.

Defence Minister Mark Lancaster said:

The security of the Gulf is of the utmost importance to not only regional stability, but to the world's economic stability.

Our commitment to our international responsibilities in the region is unwavering. Saif Sareea is far more than just a bilateral military exercise, it is a demonstration of our commitment and will leave behind a legacy for decades to come.

The official opening of Exercise Saif Sereea 3 signals the start of the UK's largest military exercise in 17 years, which will see over 5,500 UK troops train alongside Omani counterparts. It is the largest and the most complex of a series of events which will see the UK Armed Forces work with every single one of our Gulf partner nations in a combination of engagements on land, sea, and in the air over the coming months.

Mr Lancaster also visited Duqm port, opening the Joint Logistics Support Base, which will support UK forces operating and exercising in Oman and the region, including Queen Elizabeth Class carrier operations from 2021.

In Bahrain, the minister met the Crown Prince, His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa; building on the strong and close UK-Bahraini relationship and discussing the shared threats faced in the region. He also met Rear Admiral Paul J. Schlise, Deputy Commander U.S 5th Fleet and the Combined Maritime Forces, reviewing the operational challenges in the Gulf including current maritime threats facing the UK and partners. He also visited the recently opened UK Naval Support Facilities at Mina Salman port, home to just over 300 British military personnel.

In Iraq, Mr Lancaster met Iraqi Defence Minister Erfan al-Hiyali, discussing the close cooperation between the UK and Iraq in the fight against Daesh as well as confirming that the UK will be contributing 10% of the total personnel to the NATO Mission in Iraq to help build a strong security service. He also met UK troops who are currently deployed as part of the 79-member Global Coalition, commending their efforts in training nearly 80,000 Iraqi Security Force members in battle winning infantry, engineering, and combat medical techniques as well as providing courses on countering IEDs and other critical skills.

News story: UK aid arrives: Vital relief lands in Indonesia

The A400M Atlas touched down at the international relief centre at Balikpapan, which is the humanitarian operational hub for the affected region, at 1302 local time (0602BST).

On board were 1,280 much-needed shelter kits and 288 hygiene kits, as part of the £3 million pledged by the Department for International Development (DFID) to the relief effort. The aircraft was also carrying 3 tonnes of Indonesian supplies, in addition to the 17.5 tonnes of UK aid.

A DFID aid flight also departed for Balikpapan, Indonesia, from the UK last night, carrying vital supplies to support the earthquake and tsunami relief efforts.

UK aid being unloaded at the international relief centre at Balikpapan. Crown copyright.

The UK aid package includes much-needed air cargo handling equipment. This includes a forklift truck and conveyor belt that will rapidly increase the rate that humanitarian aid can be transferred off flights and distributed to

affected communities. Other equipment includes transport trucks and a lighting tower generator. This will speed up the delivery of aid to those that need it most by facilitating a greater turnaround of aid-carrying flights at Balikpapan Airport.

The UK has responded to information from the Indonesian government about the needs of the residents. There is a DFID team of humanitarian experts in Indonesia coordinating the response.

In addition, the UK Government has also announced it will match pound-for-pound the first £2 million raised by the generous British public to the Indonesia Tsunami Appeal launched yesterday by the Disasters Emergency Committee.

UK aid being unloaded at the international relief centre at Balikpapan. Crown copyright.

World news story: British Embassy in Argentina announces finalists of Falkland Islands Regional Student Competition

The British Embassy in Argentina announces the 10 finalists of the Regional Student Competition 2018/2019 which offers a one week trip to visit the Falkland Islands. The best 10 videos were chosen and can be seen here.

<https://youtu.be/jkA2bPj8F48>

The winner of the competition will be announced on Wednesday 10 October.

This regional competition, organised by the Government of the Falkland Islands and the British Embassies in Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay offers winners the chance to visit the Falklands for a week with all the costs covered. To participate, contestants should send a one minute video answering the question: "Why would I like to meet my neighbours from the Falkland Islands?" in English.

List of 10 finalists:

1. Nicolás Aguiar – Universidad Nacional de Rosario
2. Dylan Bloker – Universidad del Salvador
3. Jesica Denise Lichtensztein – Universidad Tecnológica Nacional (UTN)
4. Ricardo Etcheverry Romero – Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA)
5. Matias Florin – Universidad Torcuato Di Tella
6. Penelope Newberry – Universidad de Buenos Aires (UBA)

7. María Magdalena Ramírez – Universidad Torcuato Di Tella
8. Matias Emmanuel Romero – Instituto Salesiano de Estudios Superiores
9. Sofía Morin San Román – Universidad Torcuato Di Tella
10. Ivan Sassano – Universidad Nacional de San Martín

Further Information

See finalists from [Brazil](#), [Chile](#) and [Uruguay](#).