



Eversholt Rail and Alstom invest a further £1 million in Breeze hydrogen train programme

Widnes, 22 July 2020 - Eversholt Rail and Alstom today announce a bold plan to fast-track the hydrogen train industry in the UK with a further £1 million (over €1 million) investment in British hydrogen trains, creating an entirely new class of train, the first-ever 600 series.

Taking the Breeze hydrogen train plan to the next level, this major investment means that the Breeze will be ready for early deployment in the UK to meet the Government's need to decarbonise the rail industry. This investment from Alstom and Eversholt Rail in the UK hydrogen train will underpin other initiatives in the hydrogen sector and will support any subsequent national hydrogen strategy.

Breeze trains will be built at Alstom's Widnes Transport Technology Centre, which is fast becoming the UK's premier centre for train modernisation. Widnes will also become Alstom's worldwide centre of excellence for hydrogen conversion when this project is in series production, creating over 200 high quality engineering jobs in the North West, crucial for the Prime Minister's levelling-up agenda.

When powered by green hydrogen, these trains offer true zero-emission mobility, not just zero emission at point of use. The only emission from a hydrogen train is water; it produces no harmful particulate or gaseous emissions.

Hydrogen trains are ideally suited to regional rail services on routes that are not currently electrified. Alstom has already proven that hydrogen trains are a cost-effective and environmentally friendly solution with the success of the Coradia iLint in Germany. This new investment will ensure that Breeze trains are ready for swift deployment in the UK wherever electrification with overhead wires might be impractical or visually intrusive.

The pioneering of a hydrogen train fleet is a notable step in the path towards decarbonising the UK railway. As Breeze will be the first UK train fleet to use the Class 6xx category, it will bear the classification '600'. Both Eversholt Rail and Alstom are delighted with this recognition.

“It’s time to jump-start the UK hydrogen revolution. With the Government looking to invest in green technologies, Alstom and Eversholt Rail have deepened our already extensive commitment to this job-creating technology with a further million-pound investment. This bold move to back the Government’s ambitions on hydrogen means we are the only game in town if you want a shovel ready British hydrogen train. The Breeze is good to go, wherever the Government commits to upgrading Britain’s railway with hydrogen trains,” said Nick Crossfield, Managing Director, UK & Ireland

Mary Kenny, CEO of Eversholt Rail, said *“Eversholt Rail has a proud record of innovation in key rolling stock technologies and this further investment in the Breeze programme demonstrates our commitment to providing timely, cost-effective solutions to the identified need for hydrogen trains to support the decarbonisation of the UK railway”*.

About Alstom

Leading the way to greener and smarter mobility worldwide, Alstom develops and markets integrated systems that provide the sustainable foundations for the future of transportation. Alstom offers a complete range of equipment and services, from high-speed trains, metros, trams and e-buses to integrated systems, customised services, infrastructure, signalling and digital mobility solutions. Alstom recorded sales of €8.2 billion and booked orders of €9.9 billion in the 2019/20 fiscal year. Headquartered in France, Alstom is present in over 60 countries and employs 38,900 people.

About Eversholt Rail

Eversholt Rail owns UK passenger and freight rolling stock and has more than 25 years’ experience in the rail industry. Eversholt Rail has invested more than £3bn in new trains since privatisation and continually invests in existing fleets to maintain quality and reliability to deliver a better passenger experience. Eversholt Rail has a proud history of innovation and plays an integral role in the growth and modernisation of the UK rail sector by introducing new products and technologies into the market.

About the Breeze train

Breeze is a train powered by hydrogen. It brings hydrogen train technology, proven in passenger service on Alstom’s Coradia iLint trains in Germany, to the UK. To make it, Alstom will rebuild Eversholt Rail’s Class 321 electric trains to use hydrogen power. Alstom will do the work at our Widnes facility in the Liverpool City Region. First fleet production would create more than 200 jobs. When more trains are ordered, this number would grow. The Breeze hydrogen trains will be replacements for the UK’s regional diesels that operate across the country and the first trains could be in service in 2024.

About the Class 600

All UK trains have a class number, made of three digits, with the first of the three digits explaining the type of train it is. The Breeze is the first ever hydrogen train for the UK, which requires a new ‘class’, beginning with a 6. The 600 series will be reserved for alternative traction like hydrogen, and as the Breeze is the first of this type, it will have the first number, 600.

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