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Bombardier awarded contract for Overground trains

Posted 20/03/13

Transport for London has awarded Bombardier an £88.5m contract to supply 57 new train carriages needed to deliver the London Overground Capacity Improvement Programme.

The new vehicles will allow the existing fleet of 57 4-car Class 378 Capitalstars to be extended to 5-car units, increasing train capacity by a quarter. The contract notice, in the Official Journal of the European Union, makes no mention of two additional 5-car sets which have previously been discussed by TfL (TB 9027).

According to the OJEU notice, Bombardier was the only rolling stock firm to submit an offer to supply the new trains. With the need to run new vehicles with the existing Bombardier carriages, it was always likely to secure this latest business.

However TfL appears to have gone to considerable lengths to ensure the order complies with European procurement rules. The new carriages will be supplied under a variation to an existing rolling stock contract and the OJEU contract notice sets out a lengthy justification for sticking with the same manufacturer.

"It would be impossible for a supplier other than Bombardier to supply vehicles which can integrate into the existing 4-car Class 378 trains without access to the certain intellectual property rights owned by Bombardier, in particular in relation to the software-based Train Management System." The notice adds: "Bombardier's proprietary TMS system performs control and supervision of the trains subsystems (including propulsion, brakes, doors, passenger information screens and CCTV, lighting, HVAC and fire detection and high voltage and auxiliary power distribution) distributed throughout the entire train."

At the TfL board meeting on 6 February members granted approval to enter into a lease agreement ending in 2027 for additional Overground rolling stock. The new trains will be built at Bombardier's Litchurch Lane train building centre in Derby. They are expected to enter service in 2014 and 2015.

Capitalstars: Class 378 fleet will expand with 57 additional carriages now on order



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