

# ONLINE

VTG RAIL UK NEWSLETTER No.45



Clare Soper, Operations Director, UK Supply Chain Cement Distribution for Heidelberg Materials UK and Marc Hurn, Managing Director of VTG Rail UK, inspect the first of the JPA wagons being retrofitted with iWagon technology at Heidelberg Materials' Ribblesdale Cement Works at Clitheroe.

## World's first iWagons enter service

The first 31 operational freight wagons equipped with iWagon technology are now operational across the UK rail network with Heidelberg Materials UK. This milestone marks a significant step forward in rail freight innovation, with Heidelberg becoming the first company worldwide to adopt this advanced solution from VTG Rail UK.

The rollout began in April, with engineers from Yellow Rail retrofitting 17 JPA wagons at Heidelberg's Ribblesdale Cement Works in Clitheroe, followed by an additional 14 wagons at the company's Padeswood Works in North Wales in June.

In addition to retrofitting its existing fleet, Heidelberg Materials has placed an order for 35 new-build JPA wagons from VTG Rail UK. These wagons will also feature iWagon technology, ensuring that Heidelberg's entire fleet is equipped with this advanced system.

Several other major UK operators - including Breedon Group, Tarmac, and Alvalde British Aluminium - have already placed orders for iWagon technology, underlining growing industry momentum for smarter, safer, and more efficient rail freight.

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# Welcome

Marc Hurn, Managing Director, VTG Rail UK.



We are in an exciting period of opportunity for rail freight in the UK. The landscape is changing with digital offerings and innovations moving forward at lightning speed.

To ensure our continued success we will keep ahead of the curve in offering our customers digital solutions that give them an advantage against their competitors. This is why our investment and innovations to create iWagon and iMaintenance will continue to catapult VTG as the number one choice for wagons.

In the fast-moving world of logistics and the supply chain our customers rightly expect a quick pace of delivery and excellent service, and we are committed to consistently achieving this.

We won't stand still. All businesses need to adapt to changing markets, to be dynamic and flexible in order to provide a sustainable future for our colleagues and

our customers. We will continue to react to evolving market, global and government policy landscapes and drive a successful path through them to forge our way ahead.

At VTG Rail UK we have successfully steered through many periods of change, from new processes of working, closer collaboration with our colleagues in Germany and welcoming new senior leaders.

It is our people that make this happen. We have a close-knit team of colleagues who are passionate about what we do, many of whom have been experts in their field for decades. Alongside this we are nurturing new and emerging talent who bring fresh ideas to their roles.

In this issue you can read more about how iWagon is continuing to shape the rail freight industry and how our iMaintenance offering will improve rail freight with condition-based monitoring.

On that note, we will be showcasing the iWagon technology in eye-catching style at this year's Next Generation Line-Up Exhibition, taking place at Locomotion in Shildon, County Durham, from 24 September to 01 October.

We have commissioned a specially branded wagon to be transformed with distinctive iWagon livery, highlighting the benefits that it is bringing to the industry as the UK's first digital freight wagon. Keep an eye on our social media channels for photos and videos.

In other news, we welcome three key appointments to our team, Matt Hannant as Head of Sales and Marketing, Rizwan Shaik as our Standards and

Reliability Engineer and Claire Parmar-Fleming, our HR and Office Administrator.

There's also the opportunity to learn more about Lewis Bryan, our Sales and Marketing Co-ordinator, who joined us two years ago. He is an excellent example of how we are spotting and nurturing young talent. He has strived and become an integral part of our team, and I know he will continue to achieve great results for our company.

Finally, I would like to thank Mark Pumphrey, who retired earlier this year from his role with us as Asset Manager. Mark worked in the rail industry for 30 years, the last 15 of which was spent with us here at VTG. I wish Mark a very happy retirement.



VTG Rail UK and Mendip Rail were proud to have been named finalists in the Freight & Logistics Achievement of the Year category at this year's National Rail Awards.

Being shortlisted recognised our contribution to the future of sustainable rail freight through the successful delivery of 203 new hopper wagons - a major milestone that will modernise and enhance efficiency across the sector for years to come.

We were delighted to be recognised alongside such strong competition. Reaching the finals was a real achievement and a testament to the hard work, innovation, and collaboration of everyone involved.

Congratulations once again to this year's winners and all the finalists.

## Contact the VTG Rail UK team...

If you would like to discuss anything in this newsletter, the work of VTG Rail UK or to speak with a member of our team, please contact us at: [marketing@vtg.com](mailto:marketing@vtg.com) | [www.uk.vtg.com](http://www.uk.vtg.com) | 0121 421 9180

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# iWagon technology rolls out with Heidelberg

The first operational freight wagons to be equipped with VTG Rail UK's iWagon technology entered service on the UK's rail network in June, marking a significant milestone in the future of rail freight.

Heidelberg Materials UK is the first company in the world to adopt the iWagon and engineers began retrofitting the system to their entire fleet of JPA wagons at the company's Ribblesdale Cement Works at Clitheroe and Padeswood Cement Works in North Wales in early April.

The wagons are leased from VTG Rail UK and Heidelberg Materials has also placed an order with VTG for an additional 35 new build JPA wagons – all of which will be fitted with iWagon technology. This commitment means Heidelberg Materials' entire wagon fleet will be fitted with iWagon.

The cutting-edge technology includes wheel slide protection, real-time tracking and was developed by dedicated engineers and innovators from VTG Rail UK and Knorr-Bremse Rail Systems UK. It integrates state-of-the-art sensors, data analytics and automation to improve safety, increase performance, and the reliability of rail freight wagons.

Marc Hurn, Managing Director of VTG Rail UK, said: "Seeing the first iWagons roll onto the UK rail network is a very proud moment for everyone involved in its development. I congratulate Heidelberg Materials UK for becoming the first of many companies to be operating wagons with this game-changing technology.

"It marks a significant milestone in the UK rail freight industry and sets a new standard. The iWagon gives our customers enhanced safety, performance and reliability of rail freight wagons and allows for cost efficiencies in the commercial environment."

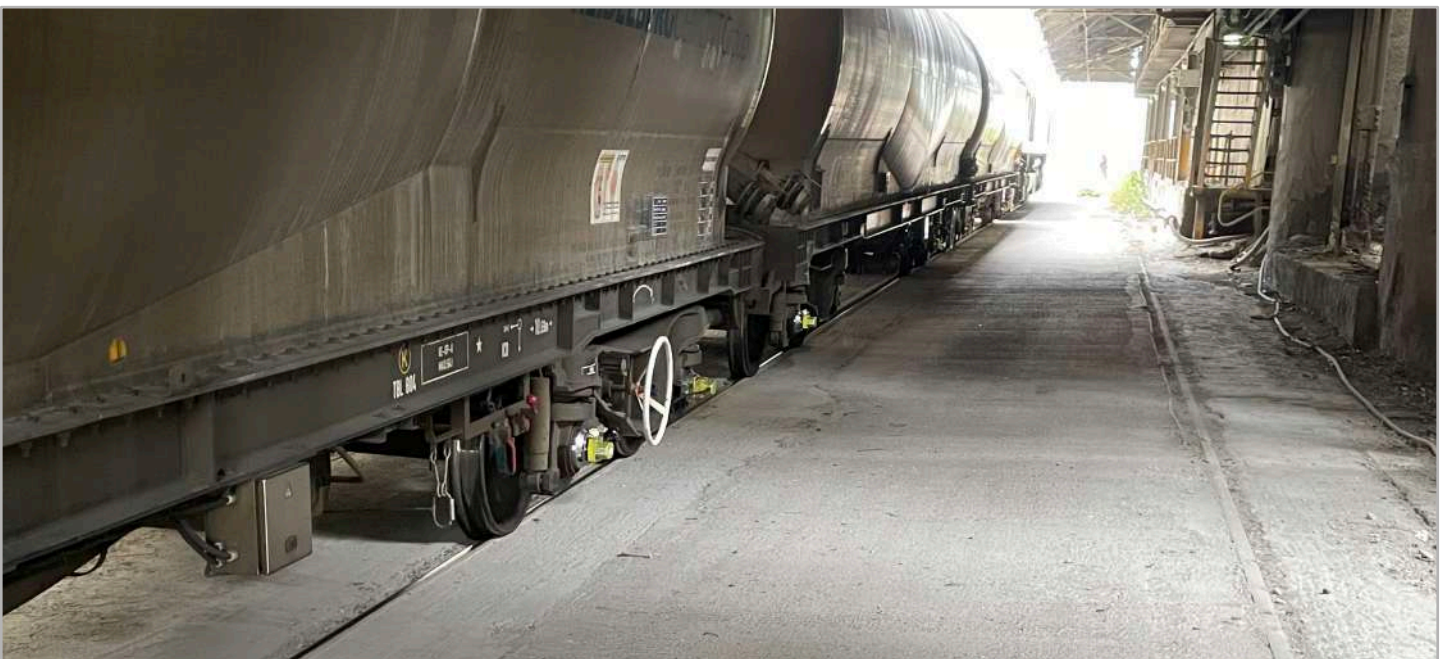
Clare Soper, Operations Director, UK Supply Chain Cement Distribution for Heidelberg Materials UK, said: "It is very exciting



Technicians oversee the installation and commissioning of the first iWagon at Heidelberg Materials' Ribblesdale Cement Works.

that Heidelberg Materials is the first company in the world to adopt the iWagon technology and I am looking forward to seeing the wheel protection and additional data that is produced.

"We are passionate about safety at Heidelberg Materials and so adopting VTG's iWagon system was a no brainer for us. It is clear this technology will make our fleet even safer by giving us critical data to prevent incidents from happening in the future and to further increase operational performance."



The final batch of JPA wagons fitted with iWagon technology prepare to depart Padeswood Cement Works in North Wales in April. The cutting-edge technology includes wheel slide protection and real-time tracking and integrates state-of-the-art sensors, data analytics and automation to improve safety and reliability.



# VTG Rail UK completes delivery of 203 HOA hopper wagons for Mendip Rail



In April 2025, VTG completed its largest ever single UK order for new standard freight wagons - 203 state of the art HOA hopper wagons delivered to Mendip Rail.

For 25 years, VTG Rail UK has been the trusted rolling stock partner for Mendip Rail, a joint venture between Holcim UK and Heidelberg Materials UK. This long-standing partnership reached a historic milestone in April 2025, when VTG Rail UK completed its largest-ever UK order for new freight wagons: 203 HOA hopper wagons delivered to Mendip Rail.

This milestone reflects the culmination of years of strategic planning, investment, and collaboration between VTG and Mendip Rail, ushering in a new era for rail freight in the UK. The introduction of the new HOA hopper wagons has modernised Mendip Rail's operations and increased its capacity to manage growing traffic demands.

## Strategic fleet renewal

This large wagon order is the result of a decade-long agreement between VTG and Mendip Rail. As part of a strategic leaseback arrangement, VTG acquired Mendip Rail's JHA hopper fleets and committed to replacing them at the end of the 10-year lease.

This approach ensures uninterrupted growth in the transport of aggregates while securing Mendip Rail's future operations. Today, Mendip Rail operates a total of circa 700 VTG wagons, underscoring the strength of this collaborative partnership.

By investing in high-capacity, track-friendly wagons, VTG and Mendip Rail are

providing a viable, scalable alternative to road haulage, reducing reliance on HGV transport while enhancing the efficiency of bulk material movement.

## Modernising the fleet

The £37 million investment in the new HOA hopper wagons has completely transformed Mendip Rail's fleet. The new wagons replace an aging fleet of LTF and



The retired wagons travelled over 232 million miles during their operational lifespan, transporting 68 million tonnes of product.



## UK News

O&K JHA hopper wagons – 84 and 98 wagons, respectively – that had been in service for more than 35 years.

The retired wagons have collectively travelled over 232 million miles during their operational lifespan, transporting an impressive 68 million tonnes of product while in service for Mendip Rail's parent companies. This equates to each wagon travelling 1.3 million miles and moving over 373,000 tonnes across its lifetime.

### Enhanced operational efficiency

The introduction of the new HOA hopper wagons represents a transformative step in increasing rail freight capacity and improving the competitiveness of rail within the UK's logistics network.

Manufactured at Greenbrier's wagon facility in Poland, the HOA wagons began arriving at Whatley Rail Sidings in August 2024, with deliveries completed in batches of 34. The first batch of wagons was produced within one year, and the entire order was fulfilled within two years.

With an increased running speed for services from 40mph to 65mph, the wagons are specifically designed to maximise efficiency and environmental performance. Each wagon has a payload capacity of 77 tonnes and features track-friendly bogies, enabling transportation of up to 200,000 tonnes of limestone



Efficient manufacturing at Greenbrier's facility in Poland ensured rapid production with the entire wagon order fulfilled within two years from date of order.

weekly from Holcim UK and Heidelberg Materials UK's quarries in the Mendip Hills to terminals across London and the South-East.

### Prioritising safety

The transition away from the UK's last mechanical door hopper wagons used in construction traffic marks a significant step forward in operational safety and efficiency. By eliminating outdated mechanical door-opening equipment, which is now redundant at customer sites, this change removes manual handling requirements and mitigates risks associated with trip hazards and entrapment. Additionally, it reduces the likelihood of mechanical or electrical

failures and minimises potential damage to wagons during operations, ensuring a safer and more reliable solution for the industry.



Mechanical door opening equipment is now redundant from customer sites.



The new HOA hopper wagons pictured arriving at Merehead, replace an aging fleet of LTF and O&K JHA hopper wagons which were in service for 35 years. The new wagons are specifically designed to maximise payload efficiency and improve network performance by reducing travel times.



## UK News

### Supporting infrastructure development

The wagons play a pivotal role in supporting major infrastructure projects such as HS2, housing developments, and road improvements. By ensuring a reliable and efficient supply of construction materials, VTG and Mendip Rail are contributing to the timely delivery of critical national projects.

The ability to transport larger volumes of aggregate per journey, while maintaining reliability and consistency, strengthens rail's position as the preferred mode of transport for the construction sector. This investment also ensures that rail freight remains cost-competitive by delivering greater payload efficiencies and reducing overall transport costs for end users.

### Pioneering recycling initiatives

The replacement of the old LTF and O&K JHA hopper fleets was undertaken with a strong focus on sustainability. Partnering with Yellow Rail, VTG has implemented a turnkey asset disposal programme to decommission the old wagons at Crewe, whilst also recycling redundant mechanical door-opening equipment at customer sites.

This initiative ensures that 100% of materials from the retired fleets are recycled, directly supporting the circular economy and sets a new benchmark for sustainable practices in the rail industry by minimising waste and maximising resource recovery.

### Setting a new standard

The delivery of the new HOA hopper wagons marks a significant achievement



The end of an era. The final O&K hopper wagons leave Merehead Quarry in April to make way for the last batch of 33 new HOA hopper wagons to arrive from VTG.

in VTG's partnership with Mendip Rail. By replacing aging fleets with modern, high-capacity wagons and implementing a sustainable asset recycling programme, this project exemplifies innovation, environmental stewardship, and operational excellence.

This investment also aligns with broader industry efforts to decarbonise logistics, helping companies meet their sustainability commitments while benefiting from rail's inherent advantages. By modernising its rolling stock, VTG is not only future-proofing Mendip Rail's operations but also reinforcing the strategic importance of rail freight in meeting the UK's growing infrastructure demands.

Together, VTG and Mendip Rail are redefining sustainable rail freight, driving economic growth, enhancing customer service, and protecting the environment for future generations. This achievement sets a new standard for the rail freight sector, offering measurable benefits for end users, improving wagon infrastructure and operational practices, and delivering significant wider benefits for the UK's rail network.

### Key features



- Payload capacity: 77 tonnes
- Gross laden weight: 101.6t
- Air operated door opening mechanism
- Increased running speed for services from 40mph to 65mph
- Fitted with track-friendly TF25A low noise bogies
- Fully loaded in under 4 mins
- Increased door control to regulate material flow
- Full wagon discharge in under 6 minutes
- Improved network performance and reduced travel times





## UK News

# VTG Rail UK welcomes Matt Hannant as Head of Sales and Marketing



We are delighted to welcome on board Matt Hannant as our new Head of Sales and Marketing.

Matt steps into this role following the promotion of Marc Hurn, who became the

company's Managing Director in April. Bringing a wealth of experience from previous senior sales and marketing positions in the water and lighting sectors, Matt is eager to apply his expertise to the rail freight industry.

Matt, aged 43, said: "I was attracted to VTG as they have a great reputation for being a successful, forward-thinking business and also as a good company to work for. I'm excited about VTG's current market position in terms of providing high quality, its strong focus on service delivery and on product development, which will ensure its successful long-term future.

"I'm joining a winning team and I'm looking to add value, continually support the company and to bring close communication across all departments. I have stepped in to lead a young and

talented team and there are real opportunities for me to share my knowledge, learn new skills and become part of a hugely successful sales and marketing department."

Marc Hurn, adds: "Matt has extensive experience in the sales and marketing arena, and this is his first role in the rail freight industry which means he will bring fresh eyes and new ideas. I'm delighted to welcome Matt to VTG Rail UK, he will be an effective and motivating leader within our business."

Outside of work, Matt is a dedicated family man, married with a 14-year-old daughter and a six-year-old son. In his spare time, he enjoys a variety of sports and road running.

VTG is excited to welcome Matt aboard and looks forward to the contributions he will bring to our growing success.

## VTG Rail UK appoints Rizwan Shaik as Standards and Reliability Engineer

VTG Rail UK has appointed Rizwan Shaik as its new Standards and Reliability Engineer.

Rizwan joins VTG following his role as a Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) Associate, where he collaborated with the University of Huddersfield and the Rail Wagon Association on a nationally funded project focused on freight wheelset maintenance. With a background in rail and mechanical engineering, he has worked internationally and brings experience from both research and industry perspectives.

He said: "I was attracted to work for VTG Rail UK because the company is a step ahead in the industry in terms of its innovations including digitalisation and harnessing data to make the railway

freight safer and more efficient. I'm very much looking forward to playing my part in the company's continued success and I am grateful to the VTG team for the opportunity to work with them in the exciting times ahead."

As part of the Knowledge Transfer Partnership with the University of Huddersfield, Rizwan worked closely with the members of the Rail Wagon Association to develop tools that support freight wheelset maintenance. His work included creating a mobile application based on the Wheel Tread Damage Guide and collaborating with stakeholders across the rail freight industry.

Marc Hurn, Managing Director of VTG Rail UK, said: "I am delighted to welcome Rizwan to our team. He has a wealth of

experience in the industry, and he is a pivotal appointment to VTG Rail UK as we forge ahead with future innovations for the benefit of our customers and the entire rail freight sector."





## People

## Farewell to an industry veteran!

Congratulations and good wishes to our colleague Mark Pumphrey who retired from his role as Asset Manager in March.

Mark has spent 30 years working in the rail industry with the last 15 years spent with us here at VTG Rail UK.

He said: "When I joined the company the fleet was in the region of 1,800 wagons and since then the number of our wagons has risen to 4,500. That's a great achievement by all the people I have worked with here over the years."

Reflecting on his time with the company Mark said: "VTG Rail UK is a great and happy place to work. Every day has been a highlight for me, we have a fantastic team. The main memories that will stand out will always be the people that I have worked with and met along the way, and I

thank them all for their support and friendship. On the social side I used to love running the VTG Christmas quiz."

He added: "I'm also very proud that, as a company, we have been able to support the Acorn Children's Hospice which supports children and families across the West Midlands, including those who have been bereaved."

Mark's wife, Sophie, has retired at the same time and the couple have lots of exciting plans for the rest of the year such as travelling in the UK and abroad, including a cruise in the summer.

Our Managing Director, Marc Hurn, said: "On behalf of VTG Rail UK I'd like to thank Mark for his excellent service over the last 15 years. We wish Mark and Sophie, a long and happy retirement."

## Pedal power!



Good luck to our colleague Chris Parker who is cycling all the way from the UK to New Zealand!

Chris, our Standards and Reliability Engineer, has been part of the VTG family since 2020. He has decided to embark on the trip and feat of a lifetime to pedal over 11,000 miles. His incredible journey will take around 10 months and take in 22 countries across multiple continents including Europe, Asia and Oceania, ending in his final destination point in New Zealand.

Chris, aged 30, said: "I'll be averaging 60 miles a day, six days a week. This is a personal challenge for me. I've previously cycled from Land's End to John O'Groats but this trip to New Zealand is on another level!"

Chris left his home in Bristol on Thursday (May 1<sup>st</sup>) to take on this mammoth challenge and all of us at VTG wish him the best of luck. We're looking forward to receiving regular updates from Chris about his travels across the globe.

You can follow Chris' bike journey blog by clicking here: <https://chrisp3112.wixsite.com/uk-2-nz>





# iMaintenance<sup>®</sup>

Condition Based Monitoring for Rail Freight

## Improving rail freight with condition-based monitoring

Hot on the heels of the introduction of the VTG iWagon to the UK rail network, VTG Rail UK has developed the ground-breaking VTG iMaintenance.

The VTG iWagon was launched in October 2023 and the technology has already been adopted by a number of high profile companies including Heidelberg Materials UK, Breedon, Tarmac and Alvalde British Aluminium. Now, VTG's innovation has provided the platform for further digital developments to create iMaintenance.

iMaintenance is condition-based maintenance rather than periodical, leveraging digital tools to streamline processes and monitor the condition of rolling stock. It enables real-time prediction of maintenance activities, helping to reduce downtime and improve fleet availability. It also supports users and customers in planning and managing scheduled maintenance based on the operational needs of the fleet, subsequently reducing costs and improving overall fleet performance.

It is centred on digital wagon monitoring, powered by the features of iWagon, extracting data which VTG's machine learning analyses to extrapolate wagon condition, creating work orders and plans maintenance schedules based on the intelligence provided.

In conjunction with iWagon, iMaintenance will provide benefits to all users of rail freight with its valuable insights:

- **Freight Operating Companies:** Improved performance & safety
- **Wagon Lessees:** Improved availability which boosts operational performance and reduces costs
- **End Customers:** Increased reliability, operational stability and availability

In addition, machine learning allows the system to construct predictive maintenance, where issues are anticipated before they become major problems, helping to allocate resources more efficiently and prevent un-planned emergency repairs. iMaintenance also ensures that maintenance schedules align with industry regulations and safety standards.

Ultimately, VTG's innovation allows for increased accuracy, flexibility, improved customer service and a reduced carbon footprint.

The iWagon technology can either be retrofitted or installed on new builds; therefore, freight operators and end users can also experience the benefits of iMaintenance.

As the leading rail freight wagon hire company in the UK, VTG is taking on the responsibility to move rail freight forward through innovation. VTG's latest innovations are making the rail freight industry even more attractive for customers in the supply chain, particularly with the benefits of increased sustainability and improved rail performance.





# VTG Rail UK supports major HS2 milestone: 3 million tonnes of material transported by rail

VTG Rail UK is proud to support the HS2 project with the Skanska Costain STRABAG (SCS) Joint Venture which marked a significant milestone earlier this year. The state-of-the-art Logistics Hub at Willesden Euroterminal in West London celebrated transporting over 3 million tonnes of excavated material by rail.

This milestone is part of HS2's ambitious tunnelling operations, where material excavated by tunnel boring machines (TBMs) is conveyed to the Logistics Hub via an advanced conveyor belt network. From there, the material is loaded onto trains and transported to three strategic disposal sites across the UK.

In 2023, VTG Rail UK delivered 146 newly designed JNA T open box wagons to support this massive transportation effort. Each wagon, equipped with track-friendly bogies and reinforced for durability, can carry up to 65 tonnes of material. The innovative design includes wear-resistant steel floors and high-strength walls, ensuring reliable performance under demanding conditions.

At its peak, the hub facilitates up to seven train departures daily, with each train capable of transporting over 1,500 tonnes of material - the equivalent of removing 80 lorry loads from the roads. To date, more than 2,000 trainloads have successfully transported excavated material to disposal sites, where it is repurposed for sustainable uses such as housing developments and wildlife habitats.

This approach aligns with HS2's commitment to sustainability, minimising environmental impact through innovative reuse strategies. The milestone also marks significant progress for the Materials by Rail programme, with the spoil removal effort now more than halfway complete.



In 2023, VTG Rail UK delivered 146 newly designed JNA T open box wagons to support the transportation of excavated material for HS2.

VTG Rail UK has played a key role in this achievement as part of a strong supply chain collaboration, working alongside GB Railfreight, Freightliner Group Ltd, Cemex, Brett Aggregates, and RFS Works. Together, these partners are driving forward the success of HS2 while exemplifying efficiency, innovation, and sustainability in rail logistics.

Graeme Murray CMILT, Rail Logistics Manager, highlighted the significance of teamwork, saying: "I would like to say the biggest thank you to the Rail Logistics Team and Supply Chain who have consistently delivered incredible operational and safety standards throughout the last three years.

"The collaboration and integrity of the whole team have demonstrated what rail freight and construction can achieve by working as a partnership and leveraging digital platforms to monitor performance, record essential data, and inform decision-making. With this strong foundation, we will continue to deliver at these levels for the remaining 2.6 million tonnes of excavated material to be moved by rail."



The state-of-the-art Logistics Hub at Willesden Euroterminal in West London celebrated successfully transporting over 3 million tonnes of excavated material earlier this year (© Skanska Costain STRABAG Joint Venture).



# Challenging conversion of hopper wagons complete



In mid-2023, VTG Rail was approached by Nedmag B.V. with an ambitious challenge to modify 35 hopper wagons to enable efficient, dust-free loading and unloading of dolomite lime - a task fraught with unique complexities.

Dolomite lime, known for its extremely dusty nature, posed a significant hurdle. The team designed a solution by developing a new flat-slide module equipped with pneumatic operation, designed to minimize dust during unloading. To further enhance operational efficiency, additional electric and pneumatic switches were incorporated into the design.

Another challenge lay in the journey itself. The wagons had to pass through a 120-year-old tunnel that was too low for standard hopper wagons. Demonstrating engineering ingenuity, our team successfully reduced the wagons' height to 4.2 meters, allowing safe passage through the tunnel without compromising functionality or performance.

As of now, all 35 modified wagons have been delivered to Nedmag, where they are diligently being used to transport dolomite lime efficiently and effectively. This project demonstrates VTG Rail's commitment to addressing unique customer requirements through innovative solutions and exceptional

collaboration.

The seamless teamwork between our Technical Support and Sales teams underpinned the success of this project, demonstrating the value of expertise and collaboration in tackling even the most complex challenges.



## Ready for the next chapter in ammonia transport!

In June, our new NH<sub>3</sub> wagons were completed and prepared for delivery to customers. These state-of-the-art wagons are the product of precision engineering and a dedicated focus on safety, efficiency and performance.



Each wagon has a tank volume of 106 m<sup>3</sup> and is constructed from robust, stress-relieved P400NGJ4 tank material, designed to withstand extreme conditions, including a lowest filling temperature of -40°C.

Built at our subsidiary Waggonbau Graaff, the wagons showcase a range of innovative features. With a tare weight of 34,420 kg and an overall length of 17.09 metres, they are engineered for both strength and practicality. A sun-shield provides thermal insulation, while the floor-operated parking brake ensures ergonomic handling. The inclusion of Y25 Lsd-1-KP1 bogies delivers smooth, stable operation, further enhancing performance.

Loading and unloading are made simple and safe thanks to Waggonbau Graaff's advanced system, ensuring these wagons are as efficient to use as they are durable.

We are excited to see these impressive wagons entering service and making a real difference in ammonia transport across Europe.



## People

## Spotlight on Lewis Bryan - shaping the future of rail freight at VTG Rail UK

Since joining VTG Rail UK as a marketing and sales coordinator in August 2023, Lewis Bryan has become an integral part of our team. At just 26 years old, his efficiency, attention to detail, and forward-thinking approach have made a lasting impact across both marketing and sales.

A marketing graduate from Nottingham Trent University, Lewis plays a key role in shaping VTG Rail UK's online presence. Under his leadership, the company's LinkedIn following has grown significantly by 70%, and he has spearheaded engaging campaigns across Instagram, including our new VTG photo competition. This initiative has encouraged creativity and passion within the rail freight community, with winning photos set to feature in newsletters and on social media.

Lewis also manages VTG's relationship with our retained PR agency, Gravity PR, collaborating closely on media, PR and marketing strategies that have delivered impressive results. This relationship has seen significant success in terms of media coverage, notably for the VTG iWagon, our customer newsletter, launch events, winning award entries, media interviews and filming opportunities.

Lewis's conscientious attitude and painstaking attention to detail was essential to the success of our iWagon launch event in



May 2024 at Merehead Rail Sidings and Torr Quarry, Somerset, which was attended by the then Rail Minister, Huw Merriman. In his calm, methodical and creative manner, Lewis played a pivotal role in the organisation of the event to ensure everything went smoothly.

Beyond marketing, Lewis plays an integral role in VTG's sales operations. From streamlining the sales pipeline to ensuring smooth invoicing processes, his behind-the-scenes contributions are vital. He also takes the lead on contractual updates, attends sales board meetings, and is an active voice in pushing agendas forward.

Lewis is highly regarded by colleagues for his approachable nature and sense of humour, even penning a heartfelt poem to celebrate a colleague's retirement earlier this year. He organises annual customer events such as clay pigeon shooting days, further solidifying VTG Rail UK's relationships with clients and partners.

In just under two years, Lewis has not only adapted to the complexities of rail freight but has also demonstrated his potential as a future leader in the industry. His diligence, creativity, and collaborative spirit are setting a new standard, and his career in rail freight is undoubtedly one to watch.



Starting young - Lewis has had an interest in trains since an early age!

## Welcome to Claire Parmar-Fleming



Claire Parmar-Fleming has joined our team as HR and Office Administrator.

Claire has over 20 years' experience working in banking and education and she will bring new ideas to her role with us at VTG.

She said: "I'm delighted to join the team at VTG Rail UK. It's a forward-thinking company and it is continuing to grow, and I am relishing being able to contribute to its ongoing success."

Marc Hurn, VTG Rail UK Managing Director, said: "Claire has experience across a number of sectors and has already brought fresh thinking to her role here at VTG Rail UK. She is a great addition to our team."

## Careers at VTG Rail UK

Are you looking for a career that combines efficiency and sustainability with a passion for rail? Then why not work with us? To view our current vacancies, click [HERE >](#)

For more details, contact Claire Parmar-Fleming, VTG Rail UK, HR & Office Manager: [claire.parmar-fleming@vtg.com](mailto:claire.parmar-fleming@vtg.com)





# JPA powder tank wagons delivered to Alvalance

The official handover of 20 newly commissioned 4-axle powder tank wagons to ALVANCE British Aluminium took place in July, following the announcement of a 10-year leasing agreement with VTG Rail UK in December.

The agreement represents a major step forward in the transformation of Alvalance's rail logistics between the Port of Blyth in Northumberland and our Fort William smelter in Lochaber.

The new wagons, which replace a fleet of 2 axle models that have been in service since the late 1980s, will nearly double the payload capacity per trip. This upgrade will reduce the number of annual rail journeys required from 107 to 76 - a 30 percent reduction that delivers meaningful gains in both efficiency and environmental performance.

Their introduction forms part of a wider infrastructure upgrade at Alvalance's Blyth site, where a significantly enhanced rail loading facility is on track for completion this year, ensuring compatibility with the new fleet and long-term logistics resilience. The transition has been carefully planned to maintain uninterrupted alumina supply to Alvalance's 24/7 smelting operations.

Tom Uppington, Managing Director of ALVANCE British Aluminium, said: "This handover marks a significant milestone in our logistics modernisation programme. Our partnership with VTG is helping us move more efficiently, more sustainably and with greater resilience."

"These new 4 axle wagons, combined with major infrastructure upgrades, will enable us to carry higher payloads per journey, reduce the carbon intensity of our operations and support the long-term sustainability of our supply chain."

The agreement includes a comprehensive maintenance contract provided by VTG Rail UK, ensuring the wagons meet the highest standards of reliability and operational performance. Additionally, the wagons will be equipped with VTG's iWagon technology, giving Alvalance advanced capabilities to meet the demands of its operations while pushing sustainability efforts forward.

Supported by Mandy Rail Limited and Feldbinder UK Ltd., who played a pivotal role in overhauling the wagons for alumina transport, this collaboration showcases the power of innovation and teamwork.

Archie Lucas, Sales & Account Manager at VTG Rail UK, said: "The introduction of the JPA wagons into service with Alvalance is a significant achievement for both of our companies. VTG has had the pleasure of working closely with Alvalance to understand how to best-serve their business and operations and transform this into a tangible wagon solution within Alvalance's required timeframe."

"The project to prepare the wagon fleet has been delivered successfully to specification, a credit to all parties involved and the partnership between them. VTG are proud to have contributed towards the sustainability and longevity of Alvalance's supply chain, with these wagons set to serve Alvalance long into the future. The fitment of VTG iWagon to this fleet is now fast approaching, and we are truly excited to see the further gains that this brings in terms of efficiency and safety."



The first batch of overhauled JPA powder tank wagons for Alvalance British Aluminium arrived at Fort William in the Scottish Highlands in June.



The new wagons, which replace a fleet of 2 axle models that have been in service since the late 1980s, will nearly double the payload capacity per trip.

## Follow us on Instagram!

Instagram is where we'll be sharing the more visual side of VTG Rail UK so you can see the business from another angle and feel even closer. Give us a follow @vtgrailuk to keep up-to-date with the UK's largest wagon lessor; stay connected with the VTG family.





# Online wagon catalogue available...

Download our online catalogue showcasing current wagon availability from VTG Rail UK.

Aimed at enhancing our commercial offerings and simplifying the enquiry process for customers, this service is designed to assist both existing clients looking to augment their fleets and new customers entering the rail freight sector.

Details include the wagon's specifications broken down to gross laden weight, tare weight, payload, wagon length and bogie type. Furthermore, it provides descriptions of the wagons and what loads they are suitable for.



**Special Wagon: KWA**

Well wagon suitable for carrying plant machinery such as diggers etc. Optional self-loading ramp and platform. Suitable for excavators and plant machinery.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	57
Tare Weight (t):	25.2
Payload (t):	31.8
Length (mm):	17,060
Bogie Type:	VNH1
Qty Available:	27



**Hopper Wagon: IIA-C**

Covered high volume wagon with automatic top door operation triggered by magnetic door control sensors. Suitable for biomass, wood chippings and other similar commodities.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	101.6
Tare Weight (t):	27.7
Payload (t):	73.9
Length (mm):	18,339
Bogie Type:	TF25
Qty Available:	23



**Hopper Wagon: IIA-A**

Open hopper wagon. Suitable for coal and low volume aggregates.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	101.6
Tare Weight (t):	27.7
Payload (t):	73.9
Length (mm):	18,339
Bogie Type:	TF25
Qty Available:	26



**Hopper Wagon: JIA**

Covered hopper wagon with manual top door operation. Suitable for aggregates and bulk products.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	90
Tare Weight (t):	25.5
Payload (t):	64.5
Length (mm):	17,200
Bogie Type:	Y25
Qty Available:	1



**Hopper Wagon: HOA-B**

Open hopper wagon. Suitable for small aggregates and bulk products.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	101.6
Tare Weight (t):	23.8
Payload (t):	77.8
Length (mm):	15,200
Bogie Type:	TF25A
Qty Available:	10



**Intermodal Wagon: FWA-A**

VTG's award winning Ecofret, designed to carry intermodal containers. Suitable for intermodal containers and modular solutions.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	57
Tare Weight (t):	21
Payload (t):	36
Length (mm):	Triple - 40,820
Bogie Type:	SCT
Qty Available:	6 (2 triples)



**Hopper Wagon: HYA-B**

Open hopper wagon operating a specialised unloading system. Suitable for small aggregates, sand and other similar commodities.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	101.6
Tare Weight (t):	25.4
Payload (t):	76.2
Length (mm):	14,900
Bogie Type:	TF25A
Qty Available:	24



**Box Wagon: JNA-T**

Open top box wagon with an internal capacity of approx 60 cubic metres. Suitable for aggregates, scrap metal, spoil and other similar commodities.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	101.6
Tare Weight (t):	24.2
Payload (t):	77.4
Length (mm):	13,970
Bogie Type:	TF25
Qty Available:	86



**Hopper Wagon: HHA-E**

Open hopper wagon with an internal capacity of 55 cubic metres and capable of 75mph in tare state. Suitable for small aggregates, sand and other similar commodities.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	101.6
Tare Weight (t):	24.5
Payload (t):	77.1
Length (mm):	15,200
Bogie Type:	TF25
Qty Available:	27



**Hopper Wagon: HQA**

Open hopper wagon for the transport and application of railway ballast. Suitable for small aggregates, sand and other similar commodities.

Gross Laden Weight (t):	90
Tare Weight (t):	25
Payload (t):	65
Length (mm):	17,200
Bogie Type:	AM1
Qty Available:	10 (2 x 5)

To enquire, please contact:



[salesuk@vtg.com](mailto:salesuk@vtg.com)



0121 421 9180



To download the online catalogue click [HERE](#)



# VTG photo competition – winner announced!

We're delighted to announce that the winner of our Q2 photo competition is Jon Hird!

Jon impressed our judges with his stunning photo of a DB Cargo-operated Class 66 loco (66127) hauling VTG ballast wagons across the Golant causeway on the Fowey branch line. This picturesque stretch of track runs alongside the River Fowey in Cornwall – and Jon's photo truly brings the scene to life.

Our judges had the tough task of selecting from the dozens of fantastic entries received. For his winning entry, Jon receives a £100 Amazon eGift card. Congratulations, Jon!

Our new photo competition is open to rail enthusiasts, customers and colleagues to showcase their creativity and passion for the rail freight industry. We'll award regular prizes to the best photos submitted, whether it's a stunning shot of our wagons in action, or a unique perspective of our wagons and operations.

Winning photos will not only receive recognition and a prize, but will also be featured in VTG Rail UK's communications, including our newsletter and social media. So grab your camera, get creative, and start capturing the power and elegance of VTG Rail in motion.



## Get involved – your chance to win!

The VTG Rail UK Photo Competition is open to rail enthusiasts, customers, and colleagues alike. Whether it's a dramatic shot of our VTG wagons in action or a unique perspective of our operations, we want to see your best work. So grab your camera, get creative, and show us the power and elegance of VTG Rail in motion. Good luck – we can't wait to see your photos!

### To enter:

- Upload your photo(s) to your Instagram story and tag **@VTGRailUK**
- Follow **@VTGRailUK** on Instagram
- Send your photo(s) to us via email at: **marketing@vtg.com**

Please mark the email subject 'VTG Photo Competition' and make sure you include your Instagram handle, name, contact details and a brief description of where your photo was taken. All entrants agree to share copyright of photos submitted to VTG Rail UK. For further details click **HERE**:





# iMaintenance<sup>®</sup>

Condition Based Monitoring for Rail Freight

## Smart maintenance for rail freight

### The benefits

Increased availability

Reduced human error

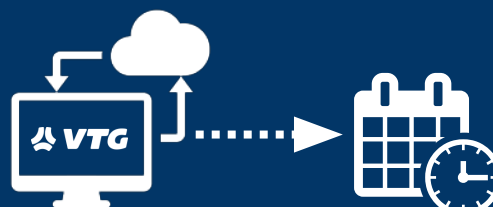
Reduced maintenance events

Reduced customer costs

Reduced  emissions



VTG machine learning predicts wagon condition and forecasts maintenance



Digital monitoring data sent to VTG iMaintenance

VTG iMaintenance creates work orders and plans annual schedules



iWagon's constant monitoring feeds wagon condition to VTG iMaintenance

 [salesuk@vtg.com](mailto:salesuk@vtg.com)

Powered by **iWagon**<sup>®</sup>  
Digital Intelligence for Rail Freight

VTG Rail UK is the leading wagon hire company in the UK and across Europe