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Planning

## **Railhead Adhesion**

Transport for London

F01: Prior information notice

Prior information only

Notice identifier: 2024/S 000-025420

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-0489e0

Published 12 August 2024, 1:26pm

### **Section I: Contracting authority**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

Transport for London

5 ENDEAVOUR SQUARE

LONDON

E201JN

#### **Contact**

Valentina Laughton

#### **Email**

[valentinaughton@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:valentinaughton@tfl.gov.uk)

#### **Country**

United Kingdom

#### **Region code**

UKI - London

**Justification for not providing organisation identifier**

Not on any register

**Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://tfl.gov.uk/>

**I.3) Communication**

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

**I.4) Type of the contracting authority**

Body governed by public law

**I.5) Main activity**

General public services

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**Section II: Object**

**II.1) Scope of the procurement**

**II.1.1) Title**

Railhead Adhesion

**II.1.2) Main CPV code**

- 60200000 - Railway transport services

**II.1.3) Type of contract**

Services

**II.1.4) Short description**

Transport for London's Open Innovation Team works with market innovators of all sizes to

help solve some of the challenges that TfL faces where there is a need for more innovative solutions. Rather than prescribing solutions, we instead look to the market for creative, resourceful and novel approaches to problem solving to create new value for TfL by doing things better, quicker or cheaper.

Transport for London (TfL) relies on adhesion management to maintain a safe, reliable, and high-frequency railway system while preserving asset health. Both high and low friction levels at the wheel-rail interface can cause safety issues like delays, derailments, and asset damage. To address these, TfL uses various operational, procedural, and technical solutions.

During autumnal months, outdoor sections of the network (55% of the London Underground) face low adhesion due to fallen leaves mixing with iron oxides on rails. This can lead to delays, cancellations, wheel flats, and even collisions or derailments. TfL's current solutions include vegetation management, rail adhesion trains, Traction Gel Applicators, seasonal timetables, and reduced brake rates.

Any new solution must consider the diverse infrastructure of TfL's network, which includes a mix of above-ground and underground stations with varying platform dimensions and designs. The network also features different rolling stock and signalling systems, some automated and others manually driven. Service intervals range from 22 to 36 trains per hour. Any proposed solution should ensure safety across these varied conditions without compromising service frequency or asset longevity.

Problem statement:

How might we target railhead contamination such that we retain optimal (or as near as feasible) levels of friction on the railhead; allowing us to run a high-frequency service year-round regardless of the weather?

### **II.1.6) Information about lots**

This contract is divided into lots: No

## **II.2) Description**

### **II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)**

- 34600000 - Railway and tramway locomotives and rolling stock and associated parts
- 34900000 - Miscellaneous transport equipment and spare parts
- 60000000 - Transport services (excl. Waste transport)

### **II.2.3) Place of performance**

NUTS codes

- UK - United Kingdom

#### **II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

TfL wishes to engage the market to seek feedback on emerging approaches and solutions for rail adhesion management.

Interested respondents are required to email [msginnovation@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:msginnovation@tfl.gov.uk) to request the Rail Adhesion - Market Sounding Questionnaire (MSQ) for completion by 12:00 (midday) on Monday 23 September 2024 in order to receive the MSQ.

This is a pre-procurement activity and does not imply any commitment to any future procurement process. The purpose is to seek feedback on TfL's approach, appetite from industry and information on alternative solutions that are being developed in the marketplace for similar schemes. Participation in the PIN and subsequent MSQ is not a prerequisite to, and will not prejudice, participation in any future competitive process. The information contained in this PIN or in any communication made between TfL and any supplier in connection with this should not be relied upon as constituting a contract, agreement, or representation that any contract will be offered as a result of this PIN and MSQ. If TfL decides to progress with any procurement exercise, TfL will publish a separate contract notice.

#### **II.2.14) Additional information**

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#### **II.3) Estimated date of publication of contract notice**

12 August 2025

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## **Section IV. Procedure**

### **IV.1) Description**

#### **IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)**

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

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## **Section VI. Complementary information**

### **VI.3) Additional information**

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