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Planning

ETCS Portable Simulators

NORTHERN TRAINS LIMITED

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-071719

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-051c0f ([view related notices](#))

Published 6 November 2025, 3:16pm

Scope

Description

Northern Trains Limited ('NTL') is planning on going out to tender for the procurement of ETCS Portable Simulator solutions and their subsequent maintenance.

The aim of the procurement is to establish a single supplier framework agreement with the winning tenderer, which both NTL and other Participating Authorities (as named on the Tender Notice) will be able to call-off from.

The scope of the requirement includes the purchase of portable simulator solutions that will allow train drivers to undertake training on ETCS (European Train Control System) system.

The requirement for simulator solutions includes, but its not limited to, the following:

- Portable Simulators

Hardware: simulator station (including, but not limited to: screens, driving controls, DSD pedal, keyboard, mouse, headset, PC base unit, graphics card, connecting wires)

Software: traction type for existing rolling stock as well as newly built trains

- Simulator Control Stations: hardware & software
- Admin Interface Station: to include firewall & network interface equipment

NTL will also require:

- spare parts package
- 36 month warranty for each simulator solution
- extended maintenance & warranty for subsequent years
- CGI Route development
- ETCS App (multi platform) that can provide a number of scenarios

There will also be the option for additional purchases under the framework, which include:

- VR training headsets
- ETCS traffic simulator workstation
- Additional CGI routes (per mile)

Commercial tool

Establishes a framework

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 May 2026 to 30 April 2034
- 8 years

Main procurement category

Goods

Additional procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 34150000 - Simulators

Contract locations

- UK - United Kingdom

Engagement

Engagement deadline

10 March 2025

The engagement was carried out before this notice was published.

Engagement process description

Northern Trains Limited ('NTL') has invited a selected pool of suppliers to engage in pre-market engagement.

The suppliers have been selected based on their involvement in the previous simulator tenders (both in NTL and in other Train Operating Companies) and through engagement at trade shows.

The main aims of the pre-market engagement was to:

- Better understand the current driver training simulator market and supplier capabilities
- Validate the feasibility of establishing a single-supplier framework and gather examples from the market where this has previously been done
- Understand the pricing methodologies for a framework agreement and any commercial challenges
- Understand how the project can be delivered to multi-customer end users and how much involvement would be required from the project teams during the development and delivery stages

The suppliers have been asked to fill in a short questionnaire focusing on the above mentioned points and a 30 minute call took place with the suppliers to go through their responses in more detail.

The pre-market engagement has confirmed that a single supplier framework for multiple customers is a viable solution. Following pre-market engagement, work has started to develop a suitable contract. It gave the project team an understanding of what is available and possible in the simulator market, which impacted the specification development and tender response questions. It has been confirmed that indexation in line with CPI is a standard practice on other frameworks and that has been included in this framework.

Participation

Particular suitability

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME)

Submission

Publication date of tender notice (estimated)

7 November 2025

Procedure

Special regime

Utilities

Contracting authority

NORTHERN TRAINS LIMITED

- Companies House: 03076444
- Public Procurement Organisation Number: PZCJ-2164-HJQZ

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Region: UKE21 - York

Organisation type: Public authority - central government