

Statement to Parliament: East Midlands rail franchise pre-qualification

Today (1 March 2017) the Department for Transport [has announced](#) that the following companies have successfully pre-qualified to bid in the competition for the East Midlands franchise, to run rail passenger services from November 2018:

- Arriva Rail East Midlands Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Arriva UK Trains Limited
- First Trenitalia East Midlands Rail Limited, a joint venture company wholly owned by First Rail Holdings Limited and Trenitalia UK Limited
- Stagecoach East Midlands Trains Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Stagecoach Transport Holdings Limited

In order to pass the pre-qualification evaluation each of the prospective bidders had to demonstrate that they have the financial strength, safety and operational experience to run this important franchise. This announcement marks another key milestone in the rail franchising programme and is the next step in delivering real benefits for the passengers along the East Midlands routes.

In due course, once the 'Invitation to tender' has been issued, the bidders will be required to submit plans to demonstrate how they will deliver the enhancements for passengers using the East Midland services.

The department will evaluate the submitted bids to determine passenger benefits, deliverability, and value for money.

As for all rail franchise competitions, and as is consistent with the Secretary of State's duty, the department will ensure that alternative plans are in place for the continued running of passenger services in the event that the department determines that the bids would not provide services in the most efficient or economic manner.