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London Northwestern Railway supports Network Rail power line inspection

Pioneering tests of almost 800 miles of high-voltage overhead electric cables which power trains have shown they are in great condition on key rail routes across the north west of England.

In a first for the region, London Northwestern Railway (LNR) loaned Network Rail an electric train equipped with a system called PANDAS to check for any underlying faults on the overhead lines.

The PANDAS (Pantograph Damage Assessment System) technology is

mounted on the pantograph of a train, which connects the vehicle to the overhead electric lines, drawing power. The system draws information which checks the condition of the wires, alerting engineers to any potential issues.

The Class 350 electric train used in the testing is part of LNR's fleet carrying passengers on the West Coast Main Line between Liverpool and London, via the West Midlands.

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Over two days of inspections, just two faults requiring immediate attention were discovered,

Phil James, north west route director for Network Rail, said:

“We work tirelessly to maintain vital overhead line equipment which power trains across the region and it’s a testament to my hardworking teams these PANDAS inspections have revealed so few faults.

“Being able to spot hidden issues before they delay passengers and freight is crucial, and by adopting modern techniques like these we’ll be able to build a much more reliable railway for the future.”

Alex Crow, general manager for fleet and contracts at LNR, said:

“It has been great to see this innovative equipment on our unit. When

Network Rail approached us to utilise it outside of our usual network it made perfect sense. If we can assist in preventing issues with infrastructure that could ultimately have a knock-on effect on our patch, why wouldn't we?"

For more information on how Network Rail maintains its overhead line equipment visit: www.networkrail.co.uk/running-the-railway/

About West Midlands Trains

For further information on this release, call our press office on 03300 955150 or email press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

West Midlands Trains operates both West Midlands Railway and London Northwestern Railway services.

- **London Northwestern Railway** services operate between Liverpool and Birmingham, and on the West Coast Main Line to and from London Euston.
- **West Midlands Railway** services operate to destinations across the West Midlands via Birmingham New Street and Birmingham Snow Hill.

For more information on these services visit westmidlandsrailway.co.uk or londonnorthwesternrailway.co.uk

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Press Contact

press.office@wmtrains.co.uk

0330 095 5626