



FLOORING SYSTEMS

EMT is right on track with Forbo Flooring Systems

There can be few environments more challenging for floor coverings than the inside of a busy saloon carriage. Specifiers involved in the interior fit out of new and refurbished rolling stock have to be confident that their chosen products have the exceptional level of durability required to maintain appearances and performance, despite punishment from intensive foot traffic, heavy wheeled luggage and trolleys, and the rigorous cleaning regimes imposed in passenger transport environments.



Two products that are proving to be right on track with East Midlands Trains are Tessera Alignment FR carpet and Coral Brush Activ FR entrance flooring from Forbo Flooring Systems. The operator recently completed the refurbishment of its entire HST fleet at its Neville Hill depot in Leeds and fitted these two high performance Forbo textile floor coverings throughout 93 saloon carriages during the programme.

East Midlands Trains was one of the first train operators to specify Tessera Alignment FR, a tufted multi height loop pile carpet manufactured from 100% solution dyed nylon 6.6 yarns. This was introduced by Forbo as a logical, cost effective and convenient alternative to wool-based carpeting traditionally used in saloon carriage interiors.

Tessera Alignment FR features a bold and contemporary directional theme, and is available in a wide range of colours as standard, with other bespoke colour schemes available to meet individual requirements. The use of solution dyed nylon yarn means that Alignment FR delivers long lasting colour retention and is significantly more resistant to soiling, and quicker to dry after intensive cleaning, than floor coverings made from wool. It is also fitted with a flame retardant backing to meet the requirements of NFF16-101, NFP91-501 and BS6853.

Minimising the amount of soil that is tracked into EMT's carriages from the soles of shoes and wheel treads is the Coral Brush Activ FR entrance matting fitted in every vestibule. By far the most widely chosen vestibule matting in the UK, this particular range has been specified by EMT for its supreme durability and its ability to absorb moisture and remove soil effectively in the most heavily trafficked areas. This is achieved with a unique combination of three types of yarn: capillary yarns shaped with a large surface area to help absorb moisture; active yarns to provide scraping actions, and heavy duty yarns to give resilience to withstand heavy foot traffic.

This particular Forbo flooring product has literally transformed the appearance of the vestibule area on UK trains in the last fifteen years having effectively replaced coir matting, which has all but disappeared from the nation's rolling stock.

"From the outset of our refurbishment project back in Jan 2011, we were very pleased indeed with the new floor covering specification," said Chris Elliott, who managed the HST Refurbishment, "Tessera Alignment FR was a very good looking contemporary carpet that incorporated our corporate colours and we were able to chose Coral Brush Activ FR vestibule matting to comply with DDA requirements and also to ensure a match to our existing vestibule colour coding scheme. The products we specified offered a good solution for the cost".

He continued; "Now, 18 months after the first carriages were refurbished and returned to service, we continue to be very satisfied with the performance and appearance of the products we've fitted. We've been transporting passengers from Sheffield and Nottingham into London several times a day and we've no complaints. The Tessera carpets are living up to expectations and still look great. The tufted construction is very hardwearing and standing up well to daily vacuuming. We see no reason why they shouldn't last throughout the current franchise."

"The Coral vestibule matting has been used on all of our train refurbishments because it does a superb job of stopping soil entering the carriage in the first place and causing unnecessary soiling and premature wear and tear. Once again on this project it has proved to be an excellent. It is by far the best product in the marketplace that we have found."

Whilst product performance has been a key deliverable in the EMT HST fleet refurb programme, Chris Elliott is also pleased with the service he has received from Forbo. "We've been operating on a 'just in time' delivery basis which has worked extremely well for the projects and on the few occasions when minor problems occurred Forbo worked very closely with us to resolve them, quickly and effectively," he said.

He concluded: "During my time as East Midlands Trains' refurbishment project manager I would like to thank Forbo for their hard work in helping us to purchase products of a high quality to meet our spec, and delivering them in the right quantities at the right time. This has resulted in strong and effective relationship between customer and supplier."

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