

# Henkel

## Henkel Improves the Art of Removing Graffiti from Trains



**T**rains and trams are a favourite target for graffiti ‘artists’, creating a major headache for rail companies.

In practice, it is not possible to lock all rolling stock away during

non-operating hours, leaving trains vulnerable to attack. As a result, the only real solution is to find a quick, effective and economic way of removing graffiti. Here, a new-generation, non-harmful solvent from Henkel delivers a new level of performance on painted surfaces and glass, as evidenced by recent

trials involving Technicentre SNCF Midi Pyrénées in Toulouse, France. Antagonists and would-be artists love to leave their ‘tags’ on rolling stock. To help deter these nuisance attacks, adopting a strategy of rapid removal can serve to prevent copycat or ‘retaliatory’ graffiti from rival artists. Of course, this tactic



also helps to protect the reputation of the rail company and can drive up business. Customer expectations are high when it comes to feeling safe and comfortable on the rail network, but preciously few passengers are likely to feel this way with graffiti-covered rail carriages.

With these thoughts in mind, maintenance teams in the rail industry tasked with graffiti removal can now take advantage of Bonderite C-MC 450, a non-harmful, new-generation solvent mix that is available in liquid or gel form to remove graffiti from non-porous materials such as glass and painted surfaces. The product also works on sensitive surfaces such as PVC, polycarbonate and acrylic plexiglass, although Henkel recommends compatibility trials before application.

## Safety First

Bonderite C-MC 450 contains modern, non-flammable, low-odour

solvents that comply with stringent health and safety standards. Only labelled with the exclamation mark, the product is totally free from chlorinated solvents and is not harmful to the environment.

Henkel has designed Bonderite C-MC 450 to remove a very large spectrum of graffiti without attacking the base paint, even after an extended application time. Notably, the product is very economical in use, especially the gel version, which offers less chemical waste due to its higher viscosity. To confirm the product's credentials, trials of Bonderite C-MC 450 took place in November 2021 at Technicentre SNCF Midi-Pyrénées in Toulouse, which likes to remove any graffiti it finds within 24–72 hours. Henkel and SNCF set about agreeing a simple, yet highly effective graffiti removal procedure designed to deliver optimal results. First, clean the surface and apply Bonderite C-MC 450 with a brush. Leave the product to work for 2–3 minutes (do not let the product dry)

before removing with a broom or buffer and rinsing with water or a cleaning agent. To ensure the desired outcome, Technicentre SNCF Midi-Pyrénées wanted to trial Bonderite C-MC 450 in both liquid and gel form.

## The Trials

Beginning with the liquid, the surface temperature of the train was 14.6°C at the time of application (the product works best when applied to surface temperatures ranging from 5 to 25°C). Following the aforementioned procedure, the time to remove the graffiti was just 30 minutes. Technicentre SNCF Midi-Pyrénées noted that it used 5 litres of product for 7m<sup>2</sup>.

Using the gel and the same procedure, Technicentre SNCF Midi-Pyrénées reported that although cleaning took a little longer (35 minutes), less product was required as the gel's high viscosity





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allowed prolonged adhesion to the train's vertical surfaces. Indeed, consumption was just 2 litres to achieve the same highly effective cleaning result as the liquid. Final rinsing with a cleaning agent such as Bonderite C-MC N DB or Bonderite C-MC 3000 was recommended in both cases.

Delivering very high efficiency on all graffiti colours, the trials indicate that maintenance teams can clearly choose between a slightly faster cleaning operation and one that is more economical. This factor will almost certainly depend on the volume and regularity of graffiti.

As a point of note, the colourless Bonderite C-MC 450 is safe to use on surfaces coated with polymerised paints, even after

prolonged or repeated application. If required, users can apply the product several times using a brush or sponge on highly polluted surfaces without any risk of paint damage.

### Proven Track Record

Henkel has a long and proven track record in supplying high-quality, effective solutions to the rail industry. The company supports its vast portfolio of adhesives, sealants, surface treatments and cleaning products with a global footprint and the engineering and application know-how to solve rail sector challenges. Bonderite cleaners, for example, are available in a variety of different grades and temperature ranges to provide solutions for

almost any rail industry cleaning requirement. In all cases, Henkel products and expertise can optimise processes and drive down costs.

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