

# A maintenance revolution for the UK - update

**Plasser UK's Mark Simmons details the latest on the Robel mobile maintenance system for Network Rail.**

In the update for *Rail Infrastructure* No: 102, I mentioned that we planned to have the three parts of the first Robel Mobile Maintenance System (MMS) mechanically coupled together before the end of 2014. As it happened, Dave Ward, Route Managing Director, London and South East, Network Rail, paid a visit to the Robel factory on 15th December 2014, so the 'end of the year' target transformed into a much more challenging middle of December one.

As can be seen from the photograph (right) in the workshop, all three parts were connected in time for the visit. The eagle-eyed may notice though that the Traction Supply Unit (TSU) section, pictured at the rear, still required a little further work under the floor and so the body was raised slightly relative to the Intermediate Car (IC).

Before the visiting party were allowed to see the yellow machine, they were first treated to a tour of the facilities including an important check on the progress of system number two.



The IC (pictured above) is the furthest advanced with the superstructure already in place on top of the frame. The TSU frame is pictured below upside down. It will spend quite some time in that state while the pneumatics and hydraulics are fitted. In the meantime, the mess-room, engine-bay and mini-workshop cabin can be seen ready for painting (above right). Even Mobile Maintenance Unit (MMU) number two is underway. Pictured below right,

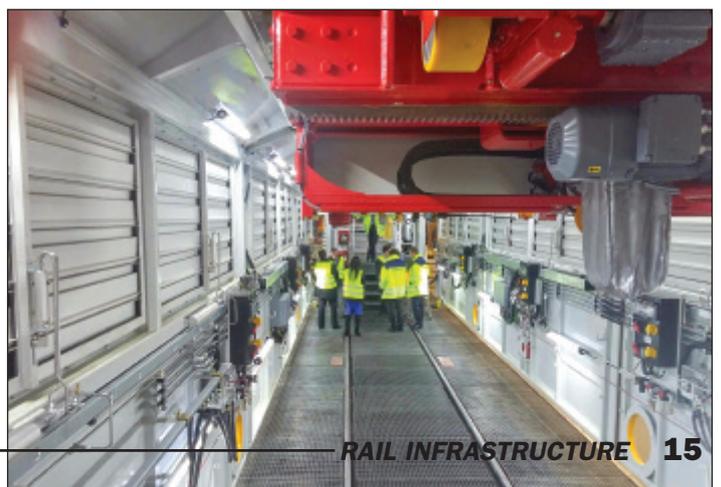
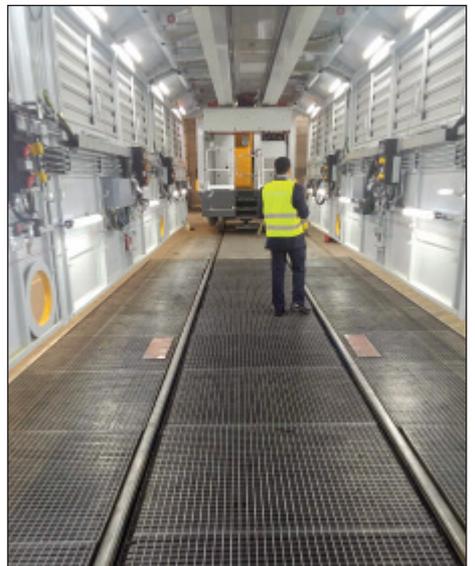
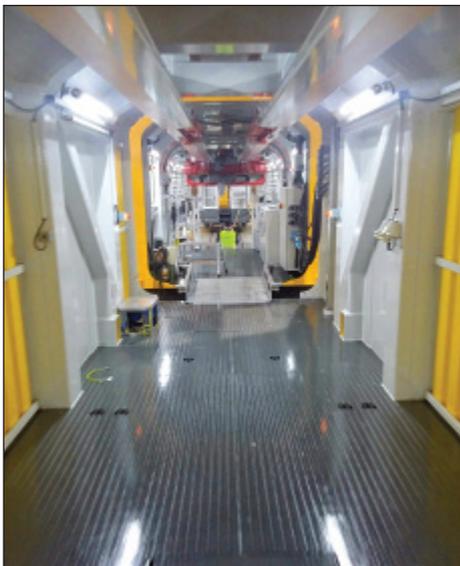
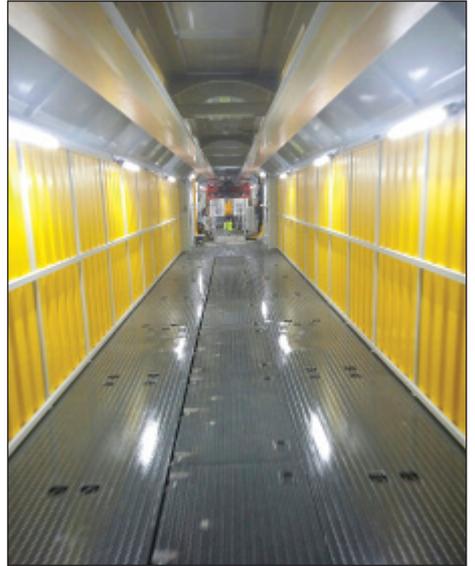
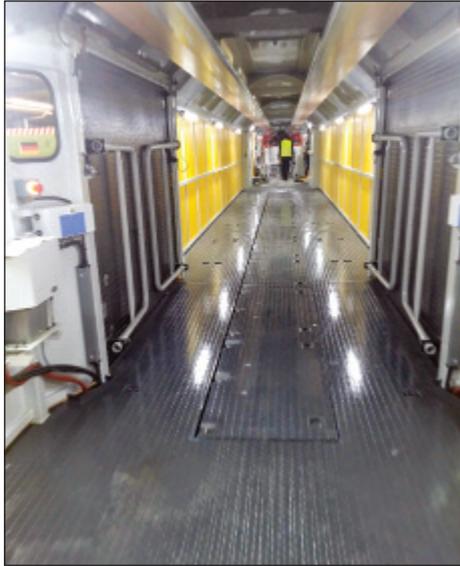
the spine of the MMU is visible receiving a quality inspection by the visitors.

Arriving at the machine in the workshop, in the evening after the shift was complete, gave the inspection team an opportunity to view the inside of the system from end-to-end. The series of photographs on page 15 walk through the system from the TSU messing area, past the toilet, through the corridor into the mini-workshop at the end of the TSU and

into the IC.

Here, you can see the side-lift doors and the storage area and, in the far distance, the platform on the MMU with the gas storage area and steps leading down to the track level in the MMU. Closer up you can see the lifting hoist in the MMU over the track access and the view from track level. Finally, climbing up the stairs at the end and turning around a view from there and of the MMU operator's panel.





### MMS stop press

With such significant progress since the last update, I had anticipated finishing there. However, the next meeting focusing on the small plant to be used inside the MMU took place in the middle of January. By this time, the structure of the second IC had been painted (right), pneumatic installation had begun on the second TSU frame (below) and the second MMU had gone from a couple of I-beams to a machine frame (bottom).



The highlight though was the first MMS (below), engine started, now out of the workshop and moving up and down the test track! 

