International Post Corporation

Royal Mail rolls out new fully automated parcel sorting machine in Tyneside Gateshead

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A new fully automated parcel sorting machine which can process 180,000 parcels per day has been installed by Royal Mail in its Tyneside Mail centre.

The machine – officially opened by Gateshead MP Ian Mearns – is an intelligent system of conveyor belts and scanning technology that automatically sorts parcels for despatch within Royal Mail's network.

With Royal Mail's busiest time of the year just a few weeks away, the machine uses its 200 sorting trays to process up to 10,000 parcels per hour to local mail centres across the country.

Built by automated technology company Bowe Group, the parcel sorting machine - which is about the same length as six double-decker buses – can handle a variety of parcel shapes and sizes weighing up to 31kg.

It is part of Royal Mail's multi-million pound investment programme to replace significant manual sorting processes that can be both time consuming and physically demanding and help the Company meet the surge in demand for online shopping. Using parcel automation can mean that parcels are sorted up to four times more quickly than manually sorting them.

Achim Dunnwald, Chief Operating Officer, Royal Mail, said: "We are transforming the way Royal Mail processes parcels which are rapidly growing in popularity thanks to the boom in e-commerce and new online shopping trends accelerated by the pandemic. Our investment in state-of the-art parcel sorting machines and automated technology enables us to compete more effectively for business and meet the demands of our customers, while helping to secure quality jobs for the future of Royal Mail."

Ian Mearns, MP for Gateshead, said: "I'm very honoured to have been asked to unveil this new state-of-the-art machinery for Royal Mail at the major Tyneside depot in my Gateshead constituency. It will undoubtedly enhance Royal Mail's capacity to respond to the demands of business customers and domestic customers alike and help facilitate the ever growing demands for a universal parcel service that only Royal Mail can provide."

Lisa Banton, Bowe Group UK & Ireland, said: "We are extremely pleased to partner with Royal Mail on this journey towards fully automating their sorting centres with our very latest technology. We believe our parcel sorting solution and services will enable Royal Mail to effectively meet the demands of their customers now and in future. We are particularly pleased that the Bowe Group and Royal Mail teams collaborated together to deliver this automation just in time for the peak period."

Source: Royal Mail

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