Sheffield-based Tinsley Bridge Group is celebrating another key business milestone with the shipping of its first delivery of state-of-the-art stretcher bars from its newly formed rail division.

Tinsley Bridge Rail is one of just three suppliers to have been selected by Network Rail to manufacture the new design of tubular stretcher bar which is starting to be rolled out across the UK rail network this summer. Developed to give greater safety, improved performance and reduced whole-life cost, the stretcher bar keeps the switch rails in the correct position under the passage of a train. It is also simpler to install, requires less maintenance and is designed to better withstand the rigours of the 21st century rail network.

Requiring high levels of manufacture and quality assurance, this project follows a ground-breaking, rigorous process to ensure that completely redesigned safety-critical equipment can be successfully introduced onto the passenger carrying railway. The new design has been developed and tested under...
the most challenging conditions, safely supporting 91 million tonnes of traffic in a testing environment before being introduced onto the UK rail infrastructure.

The engineering group which is over 150 years old, originally manufactured vehicle suspension springs and has developed to make anti-roll bars for truck producers such as Volvo and Renault, rolling stock parts for railways and suspension components for military vehicles. It has a turnover of £16m and employs 180 people.

“This is the first time that we have successfully broken into the rail infrastructure market, but with our proven experience in the high-risk, zero-tolerance environment of truck suspensions, we have the perfect skillset to transfer to the safety critical rail project which demands the highest levels of quality and precision,” explains Mark Webber, managing director of Tinsley Bridge Group.

Earlier this year, the group announced a £5m investment in redeveloping its manufacturing facilities in the city, boosted by a Regional Growth Fund grant secured with the help of Creative Sheffield. Work on phase one of the new factory and offices at the Shepcote Lane site started last May.

Grant Thornton has worked with the Tinsley Bridge Group since 2002 providing a full range of business advisory services including audit, corporate tax including international tax advice, VAT and employment tax advice. The firm is currently working with the directors to ensure that the group gets the maximum benefit from capital allowances on offer, in relation to the new premises currently being built.

“Having worked with Tinsley Bridge Group for 12 years, it’s fantastic to see it embarking on a new and exciting phase in its development. Not only is it making a major investment in its manufacturing facilities in Sheffield, but it is also applying its complex engineering skills to break into a new and potentially high growth sector,” comments Peter Edwards, director at Grant Thornton in Sheffield. “The group has a solid track record of working with world-class companies, but to be one of only three manufacturers in the UK to be chosen by Network Rail is a huge coup.

“This is a great example of a Yorkshire manufacturer diversifying across different industry sectors. It is vital that companies are fleet of foot and apply their existing skills to take advantage of new market opportunities.”

- ENDS –

Picture 012 shows (L to R): Tinsley Bridge Group engineering development manager Russell Crow; Peter Edwards, director at Grant Thornton in Sheffield; and Mark Webber, managing director of Tinsley Bridge Group, with the new stretcher bars
Notes to editors

About us

Grant Thornton is one of the world’s leading organisations of independent assurance, tax and advisory firms. These firms help dynamic organisations unlock their potential for growth by providing meaningful, forward-thinking advice. Proactive teams, led by approachable partners in these firms, use insights, experience and instinct to understand complex issues for privately owned, publicly listed and public sector clients and help them to find solutions. More than 35,000 Grant Thornton people, across over 100 countries, are focused on making a difference to clients, colleagues and the communities in which we live and work. The UK Grant Thornton member firm provides services to over 40,000 privately held businesses, public interest entities and individuals. It is led by more than 185 partners and employs more than 4,200 of the profession’s brightest minds.

Find out more at www.grant-thornton.co.uk