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## **WCML gets up to speed with 3M Cold Shrink**

The use of the 3M Cold Shrink as part of WCML's auto transformer feeding system is expected to allow Network Rail a saving of £3 million compared to traditional methods.

To inter-connect 25kV feeders through the top of the tunnel in the horizontal plain, Network Rail and its WCML joint venture partner looked at various cable connection options and found that most could not achieve this aim.

Allan Telfer of Atkins saw the advantages of the 3M Cold Shrink cable jointing system after contacting ETS and designed a support system using this product, which he submitted to Network Rail.

Termination and joints can be quickly installed on-site and without the need to apply heat or using specialist tooling, hence reducing the amount of equipment that needs to be carried. However it was the fact that 3M Cold Shrink – unlike alternative methods - is flexible enough to enable the feeder system to connect to the insulated cable horizontally, that led Network Rail to choose this method.

Says Network Rail's Mike Coupe, "Using 3M Cold Shrink saves us space and gives us additional functionality. It allows us to seal the cable in the horizontal plane and is far easier to accommodate."

Allan Telfer adds, "The cable preparation time is the same, but once done, installing the termination takes just minutes using 3M Cold Shrink. There is no need to use heat torches or to set up tents – if it raining, we can just hold up an umbrella. There is also reduced room for error and installation quality is more consistent."

Moreover, Allan sees the tangible cost benefits. "We are able to use 60 to 80 metres less cable per side per tunnel or bridge. Network Rail has forecast an approximate saving of three million pounds over the next stage of the WCML project."

Such is the confidence in Cold Shrink that 3M is the first cable accessory manufacturer to have approval for a 52kV class termination from Network Rail.