

Hydrogen fuel cell trains herald new steam age

May 13 2018, 12:01am, Pollution concerns are prompting rail chiefs to convert 30-year-old trains to fuel-cell technology that gives off only water. Mark Hookham, Transport Correspondent. Commuters board an Alstom-built fuel cell-powered train in Germany. ARNE DEDEERT/DPA. Britain's railways are to enter a new steam age with up to 100 ageing commuter trains poised to be converted to run on eco-friendly hydrogen. They could be on the network within three years and will be almost silent, with the same range and speed as traditional diesel and electric trains. Their only emissions will be water, with some released as small puffs of steam above the train. The conversion programme — drawn up by Alstom, the French train maker — would make Britain a world leader in hydrogen train technology. Jo Johnson, the rail minister, called in February for all Britain's 3,900 diesel trains to be scrapped by 2040. There is growing concern about the impact of diesel emissions at railway stations. The Rail...