



## **Virgin Trains announces acquisition of fleet of high speed trains for its Channel Tunnel service, London-Frankfurt to start in late 2027**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Virgin Trains today announces that it has acquired a fleet of 13 high speed trains for its future services from London through the Channel Tunnel, to Paris, Brussels and onwards to Frankfurt.

Thanks to an innovative financial package negotiated with BlackRock, Virgin has purchased the 330 km/h (205 mph) trains from Germany's Deutsche Bahn. The Siemens built 406 series trains were most recently in service between Frankfurt, Brussels and Amsterdam. Each train is composed of 8 carriages, and seats 425 passengers.

Founder of the Virgin Group Richard Branson: *"The opportunity to purchase these trains now was an offer too good to turn down. With no need to wait for new trains to be built, we can bring forward our plans for new services through the Channel Tunnel that customers have been demanding. Anyone who has taken one of these trains has been enchanted by their reliability and comfort."*

### **December 2027 start date, route plans finalised**

Virgin Trains will start its services in December 2027, with 7 return trips planned each day from London to Paris, and 6 a day to Brussels. 2 of the Brussels services will continue to Germany, serving stations at Cologne-Bonn Airport, Montabaur and Frankfurt. This will make Virgin the first company to offer direct UK-Germany services.

Virgin Trains Head of European Operations Jean-Eric Suiscon said *"We are happy to have found a way to adapt services in Germany for Channel Tunnel Services. With our partners 1&1 we will rename Montabaur station to 'Virgin 1&1 Mediapark International' and private money will be used to adapt the station. This is the innovative approach Virgin brings."*

### **First test runs conducted on the Belgian network**

Within days of the contract being concluded, the first test runs were undertaken on the high speed line between Brussels and Liège in Belgium.

J.-E. Suiscon: *"These trains proved they can withstand the toughest service requirements, and are particularly adapted to the stringent fire safety standards in the Channel Tunnel. Our first tests show that with just minor adaptations the trains will be perfect for services to London."*

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