Lord Hollick  
c/o Rob Whiteway  
Economic Affairs Committee  
House of Lords  
London  
SW1A 0PW

16th December 2014

Dear Lord Hollick,

Thank you for inviting us to give evidence to your Committee’s inquiry into the economic case for HS2.

Rob Whiteway contacted us to request further information about Virgin Trains’ representations to the Government about HS2, and the way in which Virgin Trains’ services for commuters are recorded in official statistics. Please find our responses to the questions below.

**Virgin Trains reportedly raised the concern that HS2 would not be fully integrated with the existing railway with the Secretary of State for Transport last year. Did you receive a satisfactory answer?**

Virgin Trains supports HS2 and believes that the project is necessary to address the long term capacity constraints on the West Coast Main Line. As you note, we have called for close integration between HS2 and the “classic” railway and have raised this recommendation in a letter to the DfT. Having consulted with our former CEO Tony Collins regarding this letter, he confirmed that the DfT acknowledged receipt and agreed to continue dialogue with Virgin Trains on the issue in the future.

We are satisfied that the DfT have taken our comments into account and that the plans for HS2 are moving in the right direction. We also welcome David Higgins’ recent HS2 Plus report, which focused on integration and maximising the economic benefits of HS2.

**Are passengers that use Virgin Train services for commuter journeys – for example Milton Keynes to London – counted as long-distance passengers in official statistics?**

We view London – Milton Keynes as a commuter journey and London – Rugby and further north as long distance journey.

I hope the above information sufficiently answers the Committee’s outstanding questions. We are keen to continue to support your work, and if you have any other questions, please let me know.

Kind regards,

Richard Scott  
Director of Corporate Affairs, Virgin Trains