



Transport Committee

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

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Jacques Damas
Chief Executive Officer
Eurostar

By email

Dear Jacques

I am writing regarding the future of Eurostar services at Ashford International and Ebbsfleet International.

I am very grateful to you for the positive working relationship that the Transport Select Committee has established with Eurostar over recent years, as you faced unprecedented challenges as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and uncertainty arising from the UK's departure from the EU. I am pleased that your recovery is progressing well, with passenger numbers increasing.

Despite the upturn, I understand that Eurostar has recently confirmed that services will not resume at Ashford International or Ebbsfleet International during this year or in 2023. In addition, it is reported that no commitment will be made for another two to three years as to when services may resume there. International rail services offer an environmentally friendlier alternative to travelling by air or road. Through these station stops, Eurostar has played a significant role in the economic prosperity of Kent and the surrounding South East. The decision not to resume services will have a knock-on effect to the regional economy in addition to the loss of choice for individual travellers.

It would be very helpful if you are able to detail the operational challenges currently faced by Eurostar which have driven this decision. In addition, it would be helpful to understand what course of action you believe would help to alleviate this pressure and allow services at Ashford and Ebbsfleet to resume.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Huw Merriman
Chair of the Transport Committee