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Consultation Questions

The answer boxes will expand as you type.

Procuring rail passenger services

1. What are the merits of offering the ScotRail franchise as a dual focus franchise and what services should be covered by the economic rail element, and what by the social rail element?

Q1 comments:

I think there is merit of having both social and economic priorities expressed in the same franchise, so that the franchisee has to meet both requirements.

2. What should be the length of the contract for future franchises, and what factors lead you to this view?

Q2 comments:

5 years. Shorter franchises lead to greater competition and allows performance to be monitored more closely.

3. What risk support mechanism should be reflected within the franchise?

Q3 comments:

Minimal risk support.

4. What, if any, profit share mechanism should apply within the franchise?

Q4 comments:

5. Under what terms should third parties be involved in the operation of passenger rail services?

Q5 comments:

6. What is the best way to structure and incentivise the achievement of outcome measures whilst ensuring value for money?

Q6 comments:

7. What level of performance bond and/or parent company guarantees are appropriate?

Q7 comments:

8. What sanctions should be used to ensure the franchisee fulfils its franchise commitments?

Q8 comments:

Serious financial penalties are the only way to drive change.

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

9. Under the franchise, should we incentivise good performance or only penalise poor performance?

Q9 comments:

Both. But define stretching targets for good performance. For example “on time” should mean within 60 seconds of the advertised time, not 11 minutes!

And FULL passenger refunds should be mandatory for any cancellation, or delay of more than **10** minutes.

Performance should cover any station along the route, not just the final station.

10. Should the performance regime be aligned with actual routes or service groups, or should there be one system for the whole of Scotland?

Q10 comments:

Aligned with actual routes/service groups. Intercity has different performance requirements than Glasgow commuting.

11. How can we make the performance regime more aligned with passenger issues?

Q11 comments:

Involve passenger groups in setting, monitoring and adjusting the performance regime.

12. What should the balance be between journey times and performance?

Q12 comments:

It should be possible to achieve both a reduction in journey times and an improvement in performance. The East Kilbride line, for example, is unreliable because of poor timetabling and a pre-1950s single-track section.

13. Is a Service Quality Incentive Regime required? And if so should it cover all aspects of stations and service delivery, or just those being managed through the franchise?

Q13 comments:

All aspects but prioritising the most important. And should also include Network Rail assets.

14. What other mechanisms could be used for assessing train and station quality?

Q14 comments:

Self-monitoring system should be required.

Scottish train services

15. Can better use be made of existing train capacity, such as increasing the permitted standing time beyond the limit of 10 minutes or increasing the capacity limit? What is an acceptable limit for standing times on rail services?

Q15 comments:

10 minutes standing is acceptable.

Why not make better use of rail capacity and run more frequent trains. For example, run the Cathcart Circle continually (with a 10-15 minute frequency).

Also lengthen the trains where there is limited capacity.

The East Kilbride line should be converted to a) double track beyond Busby and b) electrified to increase capacity.

16. Should the number of services making use of interchange stations (both rail to rail and rail to other modes) be increased to reduce the number of direct services? What would be the opportunities and challenges of this?

Q16 comments:

17. Should Government direct aspects of service provision such as frequency and journey time, or would these be better determined by the franchisee based on customer demand?

Q17 comments:

Put in place a mechanism for customers rather than government to influence the franchisee.

18. What level of contract specification should we use for the next ScotRail franchise?

Q18 comments:

Targeted.

19. How should the contract incentivise the franchisee to be innovative in the provision of services?

Q19 comments:

Scottish rail fares

20. What should be the rationale for, and purpose of, our fares policy?

Q20 comments:

Fares policy should encourage modal shift to rail from car.

And YOU REALLY NEED AN OYSTER CARD!

21. What fares should be regulated by government and what should be set on a commercial basis? Do your recommendations change by geographic area (the Strathclyde area example), or by type of journey (for example suburban or intercity)?

Q21 comments:

22. How should we achieve a balance between the taxpayer subsidy and passenger revenue contributions in funding the Scottish rail network? At what rate should fares be increased, and how feasible would it be to apply higher increases to Sections of the network which have recently been enhanced?

Q22 comments:

23. What should the difference be between peak and off-peak fares? Will this help encourage people to switch to travelling in the off-peak?

Q23 comments:

Scottish stations

24. How should we determine what rail stations are required and where, including whether a station should be closed?

Q24 comments:

Stations should not be closed without extensive public consultation.

25. What are the merits or issues that arise from a third party (such as a local authority or local business) being able to propose, promote and fund a station or service?

Q25 comments:

26. Should only one organisation be responsible for the management and maintenance of stations? If this was the franchisee how should that responsibility be structured in terms of leasing, investment, and issues relating to residual capital value?

Q26 comments:

27. How can local communities be encouraged to support their local station?

Q27 comments:

28. What categories of station should be designated and what facilities should be available at each category of station?

Q28 comments:

There are too many commuter stations with ticket offices. Replace these with an Oyster card and you won't need so many.

Also re-introduce ticket machines that take cash.

More cycle storage facilities.

Cross-border services

29. Should cross-border services continue to go north of Edinburgh? In operating alongside ScotRail services, how do cross-border services benefit passengers and taxpayers? And who should specify these services, the Department of Transport or the Scottish Ministers?

Q29 comments:

Only if the interchange times make this a viable option for passengers.

Waiting for >15 minutes for an onward connection is not a good use of time.

We also need the East Coast services to extend to Glasgow, as this provides a vital link to the NE and East of England.

30. Or should the cross-border services terminate at Edinburgh Waverley, allowing opportunities for Scottish connections? And if so, what additional benefits would accrue from having an Edinburgh Hub?

Q30 comments:

Only where there is merit. For example, Aberdeen should have a direct connection to London to have any chance of a modal shift from air to rail.

Rolling stock

31. What alternative strategies or mechanisms could be used to reduce the cost of the provision of rolling stock?

Q31 comments:

Electrify more of the network. It's crazy that Glasgow-Edinburgh has never been electrified!

32. What facilities should be present on a train and to what extent should these facilities vary according to the route served?

Q32 comments:

Toilets should be available on most trains.

Passengers – information, security and services

33. How should we prioritise investment for mobile phone provision and / or Wi-Fi type high-bandwidth services?

Q33 comments:

WiFi should be available on the Glasgow-Edinburgh route (priority), and extended to other routes where possible.

34. How should we balance the need for additional seating capacity and retain the flexibility of a franchisee to offer first-class services if commercially viable?

Q34 comments:

35. What issues and evidence should be considered prior to determining whether or not to ban the consumption of alcohol on trains?

Q35 comments:

36. How can the provision of travel information for passengers be further improved?

Q36 comments:

More (and accurate) announcements of delays and problems. Accurate reporting of issues.

Caledonian Sleeper

37. Should we continue to specify sleeper services, or should this be a purely commercial matter for a train operating company?

Q37 comments:

Yes, you should continue to specify sleeper services. This is a vitally important link with London.

38. Should the Caledonian Sleeper services be contracted for separately from the main ScotRail franchise? Or should it be an option for within the main ScotRail franchise?

Q38 comments:

Are there benefits of having this service operate as part of the main franchise? Does it receive any cross-subsidy from the main part of Scotrail? If there is an economic case for a separate franchise that might encourage smaller specialised and innovative operators.

39. We would be interested in your views in the level and type of service that the Caledonian Sleeper Services should provide. Including:

- What is the appeal of the Caledonian Sleeper Service, and if there were more early and late trains would the appeal of the sleeper services change?
- What is the value of sleeper services to Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen and are these the correct destinations, for example would Oban provide better connectivity?
- What facilities should the sleeper services provide and would you pay more for better facilities?

Q39 comments:

YOU NEED TO KEEP THE SLEEPER FROM GLASGOW-LONDON.

This is a vital service that I use at least once a month for business in London.

The alternative for me is either a train arriving in London around midnight or a train leaving Glasgow at 0430. Neither are an attractive option compared with a good night's sleep. More early or late trains are not a realistic option. The sleeper bus service is not attractive.

Replacing the Glasgow sleeper with an Edinburgh hub would add an extra hour to my journey and would mean that I would not use the Sleeper.

Facilities are OK, but could do with being upgraded and modernised. In particular, temperature controls. I don't think en suite is needed.

Environmental issues

40. What environmental key performance indicators should we consider for inclusion in the franchise agreement or the High Level Output Specification?

Q40 comments: