

Respondent Information Form and Questions

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Title Mr ☐ Ms ☐ Mrs ☐ Miss ☐ Dr ☐ *Please tick as appropriate*

Surname

Forename

2. Postal Address

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51 CLINCART ROAD		
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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual / Group/Organisation

☐

Please tick as appropriate

☐

- (a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate Y ☐ Yes ☐

- (b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available ☐

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address ☐

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address ☐

- (c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate Y ☐ Yes ☐ No

- (d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

Y ☐ Yes

☐ No

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: Is this the only mechanism to achieve the outcome? It could be complex for citizens to understand or even the gov't and companies. Any mechanism which delineates between routes/services on a different basis or form of regulation and which makes it easy for more third party participation in the timetabling and operation of the 'social' railway and which free-up the conduct of busier sections of network to more entrepreneurial flair would suffice. The mechanism should reflect the place of fixed-link mobility at the top of the mobility hierarchy.

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

Q2 comments: If it is necessary for political reasons to have a bridging short-term contract it should be for only 2 or 3 years and should be business as usual. There would be some advantages to letting a new contract after the Borders and E and G schemes were complete and the A-I upgrade was on-site.

If a preferred length of contract were let, and I think it should be but perhaps bidders would be put off by the constitutional uncertainty, it should be for 10 years with a built-in 2 year extension option. This would allow the next contract to be let to coincide with the completion of HS1 and the re-orientation of cross-border services.

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

Q3 comments: No specific comment

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

Q4 comments: Incentives are essential to get the best from companies.

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

Q5 comments: Under open access rules and also in the case of the more social railway it should be made as easy as possible for local communities

and authorities to have more input including funding and operation of services, management and maintenance of stations and promotion. Scope should also be there for vertical integration on self-contained sparsely populated route corridors. If there were interest in micro-franchising or short-term experimental services paid for by third parties franchisees should be required to co-operate as should Network Rail. Government should ensure no legal obstacles.

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

Q6 comments: Major outcome measures should be dominant in the contract and have much more weight than micro-management or performance measures of a traditional type. All outcome measures should be based on rail as the mode of choice in a sustainable century. If passenger journeys and modal share rise by higher than target the operator should be rewarded. Increased cost to the taxpayer in that scenario is value for money because it is contributing to leaving a society to the next generation which is a reasonable inheritance i.e. breaking car culture.

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

Q7 comments: This should not be so excessive as to discourage an unhappy company from handing in the keys. East Coast customers have been better off the last two years than the previous two years.

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

Q8 comments: More emphasis on warnings and the sack than on fines

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: Incentivise good performance. The private sector understands that.

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: Actual routes and service groups.

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

Q11 comments: You are thinking the right way. It is for the customer. Its not about crews and vehicles. An example of the PPM regime. On the Liskeard-Looe line they have achieved impressive growth due to the Devon and Cornwall Community Rail Partnership but it is a service frequency which is hourly at best. They are losing customers because of the PPM. Train not waiting for the train from London to arrive when it is late. The regime has to ignore late running on a local service if it is less frequent than half-hourly when it waits from the long-distance service which is carrying most of the passengers to arrive. Certainly up to 15 minutes anyway. In Cornwall, people are driving to Liskeard because of this.

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

Q12 comments: Punctuality is most important at interchanges – although for all modes all stations are interchanges. Most services end at large stations which are rail-rail interchanges. Most of the recovery time goes in at the end of the journey. So, it is difficult to get this balance exactly right. One thing should be emphasised by government. Timetables should make motorists think that the train is quicker. Probably up to 8 minutes of late running at the terminating station should be ignored by the PPM if, and only if, it is not on a short route.

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: This seems to cost a lot of money for what it offers. I think you should explore other ways. Asking bidders to describe how they propose to reward station staff, especially where only one person is on shift, for good responsible work would be one possibility.

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

Q14 comments: See above and encourage more station adoption groups and community rail partnerships and ask the regular users to assess them. Bidders should also be asked to demonstrate what they have learned from Switzerland and other mainland countries.

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: Standing for more than 10 minutes relates directly to the internal lay-out and ride quality of the set. I think up to 12 or even 13 minutes

may be acceptable. But the expansion of electrification should make it possible to deploy units on the remaining diesel routes better. Most people prefer to stand in the vestibule/door areas than to stand close to seated persons.

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: All stations should be perceived by citizens as interchanges. Broadly, it would be better if more of the rail stations also had rail-rail interchange. Switzerland does interchange well but to have several trains dwelling at platforms at the same time requires better infrastructure than currently exists in the UK network. The best alternative is facing platform interchange and where this is possible then changes to routes and train set diagrams might be something a franchisee could be encouraged to be innovative about. What is unacceptable is a slower journey time. That will not increase modal share. People over 60 will be a big potential growth market so interchanging has to be simple and a short distance.

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: Services should be clock-face. It is better to allow the franchisee to provide additional services in the peaks as they wish than to allow the possibility of gaps in the day-time as happens notoriously in France. The seats are available during the middle of the day as are the paths. That is where a lot of the passenger journey growth and proportion of the population using rail growth can come from. A half-hourly or hourly clock-face timetable all day brings confidence and certainty to a community and anything else brings uncertainty and gives people an excuse for not using rail.

However, some detail has been a detriment in franchises. The DfT is still doing it in the WCML process despite its protestations to the contrary. By specifying no reductions in core frequency or increases in journey times and leaving the rest to the contractor at least in parts of the network government will signal it does want some entrepreneurial flair in the sector. Where electrification schemes are in progress the franchise should specify shorter journey times subsequently will be required unless additional calling points or higher frequencies are being introduced instead.

18. What level of contract specification should we use the 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: By setting increases in the numbers of passenger journeys as the principal measure and rewarding higher growth than targeted. Variation and innovation within a framework which protects long-term rail customers should be encouraged. Network Rail have to be told to be flexible and fast-moving and supportive of innovative franchise companies.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: To make rail the option of choice for people of all incomes by regulating some fares notably in urban areas and during the off-peak periods of the day and days of the week.

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: Strathclyde fares should continue to be regulated to minimise car use and promote sustainable travel across the conurbation amongst all people including low paid workers, job seekers, students and shoppers. This should not apply on routes which cross boundaries i.e. Croy –Glasgow customers should not have a much better deal than Larbet-Glasgow customers.

Off—peak fares should be regulated but this might be done in a less prescriptive way. However, as the off-peak return price system is familiar to citizens throughout the UK variations in this might be confusing. I support the fares basket approach which encourages in a reasonable way decision making by the franchisee.

The difference between peak and off-peak fares should be at least 25%.

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: Inflation except for journeys where frequency has been increased which could be inflation plus up to 3%.

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: I think 30-35% but at least 25%. Your current thinking about

shoulder fares is wrong. I disagree with the campaign for simplicity. You don't get simplicity in a shopping mall or high street. On the contrary, people work hard to find bargains. People should have to work to find the cheapest travel products too. One way which would help get more people on to busy services without over-crowding would be to have an intermediate price for journeys which arrive between 09.00 and 10.00 or for journeys which arrive before 07.30. Another role for shoulder or intermediate fares would be to make them applicable for returns between Glasgow and Edinburgh which are restricted one way and unrestricted the other way e.g. 09.15 out and 17.30 return.

The more busy and full of facilities are stations and station areas the more people will be able to fit shoulder or off peak travel into their day. An obvious example is nurseries at or adjacent to stations. Proper supermarkets which charge normal prices are a great benefit to flexibility too and should be priority neighbours and tenants.

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 only close if they are replaced by another one in the area at a better location. In the European cities with the best rates of fixed-link sustainable mobility and usually the best overall qualities too there are stations 1 kilometre apart. People need to be able to walk to and from stations in urban areas in less than eight minutes. A kilometre apart on the same line is good in an urban context. It will add numbers especially add regular users and so cut carbon emissions. Remember that in carbon terms a walk in user is better than a drive in user for rail's influence on overall city or nation footprint.

Most of the 50 users or less a week stations are in rural areas. Some of them do not receive a usable service by modern way of life measures. For example, in the North and West Highlands an arrival in Inverness before 09.30 and a departure between 17.30 and 18.15 is likely to increase users at all stations along the corridors as has been demonstrated at some of the closer in places.

The superb expertise of the Association of Community Rail Partnerships should be brought to bear before any serious consideration is giving to closing stations. Well run and adequately supported Community Rail Partnerships always add customers.

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: This is a key policy in moving forwards especially in less populous areas and government should insist that franchisees and Network Rail encourage, facilitate and support this at all levels. Not just top management but all employees. Local authorities are key too and should be recognised and supported as partners by the rail. Industry.

Promotion of and funding of and operation of services for an experimental period of 2 years or 3 years has worked in several locations across Europe and it should be a core government policy to encourage this mechanism for building growth in the ridership.

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: No. There is no obvious best way but I suggest Network Rail should be responsible for those 'hard' aspects which directly relate to the value of their assets and that the franchisee, sometimes in collaboration with local authority and community rail partnership should be responsible for the day to day management and the softer elements.

Network Rail should take over Aberdeen, Haymarket and Glasgow Queen Street. Trans-Pennine should run Lockerbie.

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

Q27 comments: They need to feel wanted. They need to be encouraged. They need expertise. The Scottish Government should invite ACORP in to work with it and the industry to support existing initiatives and to promote and give birth to more right across Scotland but especially where there is scope for dramatic growth and where most stations are unstaffed.

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

Q28 comments: Your proposals are ok. Keep it as simple as possible. Learn from Austria, Switzerland and Germany. Remember that all stations should be interchanges and that signage at and around stations should reflect all possible connections as should real-time information. All stations are gateways too. Tourism Information Offices can play a bigger role in making stations great. Planting and soft landscaping generally is important in making stations part of the locality and places where people want to be. At Chirk, in Wales, where the station gardens were a big part of their 2011 Wales in Bloom and Britain in Bloom successes, people go there to eat their sandwiches. So, categorising must not be a way of denying all stations their potential as the most important place in their locality.

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: There are advantages to a East Coast Main Line electric only contract

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: Break in journey would lose some customers. Changing at very large stations is not satisfactory for some travellers. Discount purchasers may be put off by having to decide which connecting service to book. Older and disabled customers would not be able to take advantage of quick connections even if the timetables were re-cast to facilitate this.

if the infrastructure capacity allowed it the EC operator might prefer to continue to Haymarket. This would permit same platform quick connections though not, as at presently operated, facing platform connections.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: There would be a medium term economic benefit from a one-off expenditure of a fleet of modern lightweight vehicles for the rural diesel routes. This would be part of reducing their annual costs and could also improve journey times.

Buying more 380's for the next wave of electrification would get a good price and provide good comfort levels and performance. These two improvements should permit the remaining suburban and long-distance and local diesel services to be operated with more fit for purpose sets.

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

Q32 comments: I think the time of journey for toilets should be about 20 – 25 minutes. The difficult issue is that some stations do not have toilets and not all stations are close to shops or other toilet equipped locations. Older people, a growing market, have to go to the toilet frequently usually.

Windows should be large.

There should be adequate standing room in coach ends and middles.

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: I don't agree with you. This should be a commercial decision.

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: This should also be a commercial decision provided the interior layout of the units is satisfactory for standing.

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

Q35 comments: This is a tempting thing to do. But should it not be for the franchisee to take the responsibility.

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

Q36 comments: In many ways. Two examples. More use in directional signage of a variety of fonts and colours. More use of horizontal and vertical oriented real-time information screens so that they can be positioned in a way which is suitable for people's sight-lines and mental ways of noticing and absorbing information.

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: Commercial

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: If it is to go on being franchised a separate contract might be an interesting option

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: If this is to continue it must have comfortable sitting up coaches so that it can attract more users who will not pay a premium or who do not like being in a confined space with other people. On many overnight trains in mainland Europe most people choose to sit up. I do myself.

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: Your three suggestions are satisfactory if they are perceived and understood in the context of a settled view that rail, especially electrified rail; is preferred to all other powered modes of mobility. The target numbers of passenger journeys a year approach could be applied as an Environmental Key Performance indicator.

If energy wise means that the contractor will be expected to insist that their electricity comes from renewals it is a good indicator.

If a long franchise were to be offered bidders could be invited to pay for one or more bits of additional electrification as part of their proposition.