

Scott Barclay

## Consultation Questions

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### 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 don't feel that there are any merits in offering the Scotrail franchise dual focus in economic and social rail elements. As far as I'm concerned I would like a public transport system that is affordable, runs on time and is efficient with plenty seating capacity. Much like many other passengers I feel that economics and social rail should be a lower priority and should only be focussed when other main target objectives have been met such as punctuality, reliability and service delivery.

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

Q2 comments: 5 years. This is because it would be long enough to see through however I don't have any particular view on this because with year on year fare rises, whoever has the contract I cannot see there being any impact on the traveller.

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

Q3 comments: I think that in terms of revenue, the government should step in to help with contributing with the rail fares instead of passing it on to the passenger. This could be done by raising taxes rather than increasing fares that would have a negative social impact on people on lower incomes and it may impact revenues by putting people off from travelling.

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

Q4 comments: Profits should be capped and the rail system should be run in the benefit as a public service rather than in a capitalist way.

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

Q5 comments: If the main operator is not providing satisfactory service delivery.

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

Q6 comments: Make sure that money isn't wasted on projects that we could do without, reduce the number of managers so that money can be saved – often these members of staff could go if savings needed to be made. Provide good value for money by keeping fares as low as possible and also imposing strict limits that rail companies can make on profit. Ideally I would like the Scottish Railway to be brought back into public ownership rather than being put to private sector companies.

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

Q7 comments: No comment

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

Q8 comments: Increase amount of refunds to passengers for late trains, increase fines for dirty train toilets and litter. Impose strict deadlines to make sure that franchise commitments are being met for improvement.

### **Achieving reliability, performance and service quality**

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

Q9 comments: Both

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: One system for whole of Scotland

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

Q11 comments: I feel that the performance regime is already aligned enough with passenger issues.

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

Q12 comments: No balance, should be same for all regardless of journey time or performance.

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: Yes it should and cover all aspects to optimise service quality.

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

Q14 comments: Having mystery customers so that the train operator does not know of an inspection and to make sure that cleanliness and tidiness is achieved at all times.

### **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: The limit should be 0 minutes on all services, no passengers should have to stand on any service if they have paid the cost for a train ticket.

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: I think that direct services would be better because although interchanges are better for some in that it may avoid changeovers being so busy and stressful, I think direct services maintain simplicity and it is up to the passenger to make their own route.

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: Should be based on customer demand.

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

Q18 comments: 18 months

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

Q19 comments: Transform Scotlands Railways in that trains get internal refurbishment, newer rolling stock added to increase number of carriages on busy routes, maintain punctuality, reliability and cleanliness of trains.

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments: It should be based upon what the customer is getting in return from ScotRail. It should not be based on Retail Price index plus 1% which is a greedy capitalist way for these train operating companies to make more profit. The fares policy should be value for money.

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: Season tickets and peak time tickets should be regulated by the government as these just seem to get more and more expensive as the years go by. Off peak tickets, special offers such as Club 55 and advance tickets should be set on a commercial basis more for marketing purposes as well.

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: I don't think that there should be any future rail fare increases, people are already paying a far excessive amount for what we are getting in return. If ScotRail require more money then they should look at reducing profit margins, looking at staffing and ways to streamline their management of the railways to make it more economically viable. The Government should continue to contribute and if funds are running out then this could be raised through taxes.

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 that both peak and off peak fares should be more reasonably priced. I think that given the work day times for many people the off peak price will not affect when people go on a train as they need to go on a peak time train to get to work or for leisure purposes.



## Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: Through public consultation however I feel that ScotRail should look at improving service delivery first before investing in new stations as I think that there is a lot of improvement to be made in terms of increasing seating capacity.

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: Merits include better value for money for passengers and more community engagement.

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 comment.

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

Q27 comments: By providing better value rail services and better station facilities.

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

Q28 comments: No comment.

## 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: Yes, I think that Crosscountry Trains from Aberdeen and Glasgow Central are good in that they connect the UK. The East Coast Service from Aberdeen, Inverness and Glasgow are also good and if there were no cross border services north of Edinburgh then Edinburgh Waverley would become a bottleneck for passenger congestion. It is already a busy station and more people would turn to other forms of transport such as air travel instead. These services benefit passengers to making the UK rail

network more seam free and accessible. I think agreement should be met between DfT and Scottish Ministers for cross border services.

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: This would be a bad option and would not benefit Scotland for rail travel, Scotland is part of the UK so it should have an integrated rail transport network for services. A lot of the cross-border services such as East Coast have better on train catering facilities, more seating capacity and better standard of travel than Scotrail which tend to be quite often overcrowded usually having 2 or 3 carriages. This proposal would definitely have an adverse effect on rail travel in Scotland.

## **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 comments: Look at other manufacturers perhaps overseas for a cheaper deal than Bombardier. Perhaps rolling stock costs cannot be reduced therefore this would be a necessary cost for ScotRail to get newer trains regardless of cost in improving rail travel.

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 would like all train services to have a clean toilet, not all services have clean toilets. Although the trains have a checklist board of when the toilet was last cleaned I do wonder sometime as to how thorough the clean was as the toilets don't always look that clean even when they have been cleaned earlier on that day. I would also like better catering facilities including provision of heated snacks such as bacon rolls, more sandwiches and ice for soft drinks – more to the catering standard you get on East Coast. I would like more catering facilities on more services and less occurrences when there are cancellations of catering on a service where there should be catering. I would also like the catering stewards to go through the train more often instead of sitting down for long legs of a journey near the end of a route and also to have the catering service available throughout the route. There have been times when I have approached a trolley and I have been told I cannot buy anything as they are closed for counting up the money. This should be done when the train has reached its destination. I also think that a buffet snack bar like what there is on East Coast Services would be good for ScotRail so that passengers can also walk to get their food and drink with more on offer than on a trolley service.

## **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: This should be lower priority for me however I can see this being a priority for business travellers.

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: Additional seating capacity should be aimed at for the busy routes to maximise passenger satisfaction.



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

Q35 comments: I support the ban of alcohol on trains because during services when there are football or rugby matches, this can encourage anti social behaviour such as shouting and sectarian singing. Scotland has had a long battle with the booze and by banning it on the rail transport system this would be one step in the right direction to making Scotland healthier as it would be limited from consumption in public space. I also think that although some drinkers enjoy it for relaxation rather than bingeing on lager and cheap cider I think that the benefits would outweigh the drawbacks of banning alcohol in terms of health and behavioural impacts.

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

Q36 comments: Accurate information displayed on passenger information boards, sometimes the information boards can give incorrect 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: I think that Sleeper Services should be continued with further investment however this is not a priority for me and perhaps should be may be purely a commercial matter for a train operating company given that it is often cheaper and quicker to fly to London rather than get a Sleeper.

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: No opinion here.

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: No comment

**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: No comment