

**Douglas Cameron**

## **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 agree with the dual focus franchise principles as proposed in the consultation document.

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

Q2 comments: I believe a minimum of 5 years and a maximum of 10 years is appropriate for future rail franchises to allow franchisees to plan and invest with some degree of certainty.

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

Q3 comments: The risks within the franchise should be shared and each risk should sit with the party best able to control that risk.

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

Q4 comments: Any profit share mechanism should reflect the risk profile.

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

Q5 comments: Third parties could run and maintain stations. Third parties (other than Network Rail) could maintain the track or other parts of the rail infrastructure.

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

Q6 comments: Outcome measures must achieve a minimum standard before incentives are applied and then should be progressive.

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

Q7 comments: No company without adequate financial strength and stability should be permitted to tender for a franchise.

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

Q8 comments: Sanctions should be clear and graded, the ultimate sanction being termination of the franchise.

### **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: Aligned to actual routes.

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

Q11 comments: Regular train passengers should be consulted on this point.

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

Q12 comments: Performance should have priority over journey times.

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, and it should be related to the franchise.

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

Q14 comments: Cleanliness of stations and trains (both internally and externally), quality of information at stations and helpfulness of station and train staff.

### **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: Increasing capacity either by increased frequency or additional carriages should reduce or eliminate standing times which are unacceptable except in exceptional circumstances.

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: Passengers would rather have direct services without the need to change where possible.

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: Perhaps there should be a minimum frequency set which could be increased should customer demand prove the requirement.

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

Q18 comments: The next ScotRail franchise should specify what and when the rolling stock is to be replaced or refurbished.

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

Q19 comments: Peak services should be direct with quick journey times whereas off-peak services could use interchanges to allow more flexibility to the franchisee and journey options to passengers.

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments: The overall contribution from the travelling public should be about 50% of the cost of travel.

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: All season tickets should be regulated and the remainder on a commercial basis.

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: The overall contribution from the travelling public should be about 50% of the cost of travel. The increase in regulated fares should not exceed RPI.

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: Off-peak travel should offer a 50% reduction in the peak fare.

### **Scottish stations**

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

Q24 comments: The rail network needs to respond to the current population movement to determine the location of new stations. It seems unlikely that any stations should be closed.

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: There could be issues of safety, ownership and co-ordination with the remainder of the infrastructure. However, housing developers could promote and fund stations in connection with their adjacent housing projects, such as at the Allander in Milngavie.

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. Housing developers could promote and fund stations in connection with their adjacent housing projects, such as at the Allander in Milngavie.

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

Q27 comments: The franchisee should be required to engage with the local community and community groups to encourage dialogue and discussion. As has been the case at the Allander in Milngavie.

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

Q28 comments: Major stations, interchange stations, urban and suburban stations almost all with full facilities. Rural stations, termini and rail halts with limited facilities as appropriate.

### **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: No.

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: Yes. Additional revenue for the ScotRail franchisee.

### **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 comments: Expand the electrification of the rail system.

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

Q32 comments: All trains should have at least one toilet. All journey times greater than 45 minutes should have on-board catering services.

### **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: Yes.

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 carriages should be provided and first-class services should be determined based on need.

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

Q35 comments: Only alcohol purchased on the train should be consumed on the train.

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

Q36 comments: This matter has improved dramatically over the past few years. Not sure what more can be improved.

### **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: Sleeper services should continue to be specified.

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: The sleeper service should be tendered separately and should also be an option within the main ScotRail franchise.

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: I am uncertain if the sleeper service requires to operate every

night, depending on customer demand. Oban should be an additional destination for some of the services presently terminating at Fort William. The sleeper service experience must be improved to reflect modern expectations with a corresponding increase in price for passengers.

## **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: A Key Performance Indicator should be measurable. I am not sure that the three environmental principles are measureable items. Reductions in carbon and energy use would be more useful indicators.