

**Norman 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:

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

Q2 comments:

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

Q3 comments:

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:

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

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

Q9 comments:

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:

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

Q11 comments:

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

Q12 comments:

Don't agree that the two things are necessarily opposed. I think turn-round times at termini may be more important to performance than 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:

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

Q14 comments:

## **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:

Many trains are overcrowded already. Increasing the permitted standing time would make them even more overcrowded. Not an acceptable suggestion.

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:

An exceptionally stupid suggestion. This would increase overall journey times and cause great inconvenience to passengers who have heavy luggage. Unless the operator was required to delay train departures when connecting trains were running late, the overall reliability of journeys would be reduced.

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:

In general, the franchisee cannot be trusted, and therefore a large degree of government specification is required.

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

Q18 comments:

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:

To maximise the use of rail travel on environmental grounds, and to shield the passenger from the financial consequences of the current lunatic ownership structure of the railway.

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 fares should be regulated by government

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:

It should be remembered that a major reason for the apparent high level of passenger subsidy is the high costs imposed by the inefficient structure of the privatised railway. The rail passenger should not be penalised for this. It should be the aim of government policy that fares should be no higher than they would be if the railway had a rational ownership structure, and if greater public subsidy is required to achieve this, then this would be an equitable use of public funds.

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:

There is no cost penalty for a car user who decides to travel at peak times. If it is an aim of policy to tempt passengers from their cars into trains, then the cost penalty for a rail passenger who decides to travel at peak times should not be too great.

## Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

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:

## 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:

Of course cross-border services should continue to operate N of Edinburgh. The provision of through services offers passengers shorter journey times and greater convenience. One of the reasons why through services tempt passengers away from internal Scottish services is the very poor standard of rolling stock used for the latter.

If revenue abstraction by through services from internal Scottish services is a problem, why can't Scotrail run all through services from N of Edinburgh to England, daytime services included?

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:

There are no benefits from forcing passengers to change at Edinburgh – Waverley station is too crowded and congested as it is. The overall reliability of through journeys would suffer unless Scotrail was forced to hold departures from Edinburgh in order to maintain connections with late-running trains from the South.

## Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments:

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

Q32 comments:

- Seats aligned with windows, so all passengers can see out
- Adequate legroom
- Adequate luggage space
- Adequate numbers of toilets
- Catering facilities for long journeys

Current Scottish rolling stock is deficient in most of these respects. These factors are obviously more important for long-distance journeys than local ones, but it should not be forgotten that many long-distance routes in Scotland (e.g. the West Highland and Far North lines) are currently served by what is basically suburban stock.

## 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:

Excessive use by passengers of mobile phones is a great nuisance, and I would be very happy if it was impossible to use a mobile phone on a train.

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:

### **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 by government, at the current level or better.

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 current franchisee runs the franchise acceptably well, and I see no value in hiving it off as a separate 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:

- The two main benefits of the sleeper service are:
  - The ability to arrive at the destination in reasonably good shape at the beginning of the working day. Very early morning air or rail services do not allow the passenger to arrive in good shape.
  - The ability to make journeys to SW England or the Continent that would not be possible by rail in reasonable time if the sleeper was not available.
- The value of the services to these towns is the ability to make overnight journeys to/from London (with all the advantages listed above) without the inconvenience of having to change at Edinburgh, which is an even less pleasant process late in the evening than it is during the day. I suspect that if the services N of Edinburgh were withdrawn, then journeys to these places would no longer be made by rail. A service to Oban would be very useful, but not at the expense of the



Fort William service.

- En-suite facilities would be very nice, but I don't think are practical at reasonable cost. The biggest single improvement that has been made in the current service in recent years has been the provision of new bed linen, and this has greatly improved the quality of my sleep in recent journeys. The biggest improvement that could be made in the future would be to allow earlier boarding, particularly on the northbound journey.

### **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:

The overall environmental benefits of transferring more passengers to rail should not be put at risk by imposing cost on the railway to promote secondary environmental goals, e.g. biodiversity.