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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:

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:

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:

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: No, the number of direct services should be increased so that

the percentage of journeys requiring a change is reduced. From a passenger point of view, having to make a change is a strong disincentive to making that particular journey. Changes cause passengers inconvenience (from having to find a new seat and re-settle with refreshments and entertainment) and stress (worry about meeting the connection in time). Direct journeys are a vitally important element in the network and should be promoted and increased.

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:

18. What level of contract specification should we use the 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: Consistency in fares is as important as affordability. Fares should broadly reflect the cost of other parallel transport modes such as car or bus. Fares should be broadly scaled by journey length. Circular journeys (e.g. Leuchars - Edinburgh - Dundee - Leuchars) should be priced at a similar rate to return journeys (e.g. Leuchars - Glasgow - Leuchars). Single journeys should be broadly half the cost of return journeys.

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:

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: Yes. It is extremely regressive to even suggest cutting cross-border services. Cross-border services benefit passengers by providing direct journeys on important long-distance routes; direct services having a significant benefit over interchange services. The same factors benefit taxpayers by increasing the general reach and usefulness of the transport network. Journeys that require a change are much less pleasant and convenient for passengers, and forcing interconnections will surely discourage travel on the affected routes. Cross-border services should be specified jointly by the DoT and the Scottish Ministers.

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: No benefits would accrue from forcing connections to be made at Edinburgh Waverley, only inconveniences to passengers and disincentives to travel. This is a regressive and misguided proposal.

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: The restaurant car on the through East Coast service to London is an important part of this key strategic cross-border service and should be retained if not enhanced. Trolley service of food and drink on all services is important. Toilet provision could be enhanced and made cleaner and more pleasant to use. Wireless internet should be made available for free to all passengers, as Stagecoach Buses have already successfully done on competing routes in Scotland.

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:

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: Provision of alcohol is not a problem on many services such as at the restaurant car on the East Coast cross-border service to London. Consumption of alcohol should only be banned, as at present, on specific services or times when it is causing a problem. Otherwise, it should be permitted and any bad behavior should be dealt with using current rules on disruptive behaviour. Otherwise the well-behaved majority are punished for the actions of a minority.

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: Should continue to specify this service.

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: It is a good thing that the Caledonian Sleeper is run by a Scottish train operating company, so that it is seen as a Scottish service reaching down to London rather than a London service reaching up to Scotland.

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 main appeal of the service is the overnight connection direct between London and the far north. Direct services to Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen are key important elements of the service. The current times and services are great. The current facilities are also great. The Caledonian Sleeper as it currently runs is a real asset to Scotland and to the Scottish rail system.

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: