

**M Douglas**

## **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: **A dual franchise is OK providing there is no conflict between freight and passenger traffic.**

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

Q2 comments: **Do not have the expertise to answer this.**

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

Q3 comments: **Do not have the expertise to answer this.**

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

Q4 comments: **Half the profits should be ploughed back into the rail system to further improve it.**

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

Q5 comments: **Not really in a position to answer this, but if they provide local jobs and provide more efficiencies and are strictly accountable, then see no problem as far as passenger interaction is concerned. However, with regard to the safety of the infrastructure, wasn't the rail maintenance relating to the Hatfield crash a 3<sup>rd</sup> party contract.**

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

Q6 comments: **Do not have the expertise to answer this.**

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

Q7 comments: **Do not have the expertise to answer this.**

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

Q8 comments: **Do not have the expertise to answer this.**

### **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.**

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: **With actual routes.**

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

Q11 comments: **National Express on-board staff would issue passengers with refund forms if the trains were seriously late. Thought this was really good customer relations.**

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

Q12 comments: **Onward connections should be factored in here. Improve train communication so that , if a train is slightly late (say 10 minutes), passengers booked on a connecting service would still be able to catch their connecting train.**

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: **All aspects. Everyone should have pride in the organisation they are working for and the enthusiasm to provide the best service possible.**

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

Q14 comments: **Do not have the expertise to answer this.**

### **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: Do you mean passengers can only stand for 10 minutes on a train? I have travelled up from London (to Aberdeen) to a Northern England station sitting on the floor of the train because it was the only one running direct to Aberdeen from London that Sunday. But having said that, one was so grateful that one had actually got the train. Another journey at the time of the Edinburgh Festival meant seat-hopping until a couple got out at Berwick and the seats were then freed up to Aberdeen.

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 – direct services should not be reduced. The number of changes should be kept to a minimum. (It is really unpleasant having to change at Dundee in the freezing cold for a service to Aberdeen). I know a lot of elderly people who no longer travel by train because it is such a fraught experience having to make changes with their luggage in tow.

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: Government should ensure a minimum of frequency of services is provided. This is a national issue.

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

Q18 comments: 10 years.

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

Q19 comments: Provide them with sufficient profit so that it makes it worthwhile for them to run the railway.

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments: Bring people back to the rail from the roads.

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: The railway system should be subsidised to enable low-earners mobility.

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: Of course a considerable difference in price will encourage people to travel off-peak.

## Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: Access to the network will be defined by demand not supply.

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: A very good idea – see question 31.

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: Yes, only one organisation. 'Do not know' (for second part of question).

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

Q27 comments: Cheaper travel options from one particular destination to another for a specified period? Open days for public to see how the rail network works? Meet a train driver? How do the signal boxes work?.

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

Q28 comments: Do not have the expertise to answer this.

## 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: Absolutely. Aberdeen, Dundee and Inverness should not be a 'too far distant' destination and an aggravation to get to. It is vital that there is a through train service from one end of the U.K. to the other. Who wants to drag their heavy luggage off a train in order to hop on and off local services (and stop at every station). If you wish the tourist industry to grow then surely this is a necessity. If I cannot get a through train to London from Aberdeen, (and in the last five years I have switched from air to train travel) then I will consider changing to Easyjet 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: **Absolutely not. See answer above.**

## Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: Don't know, but what about 'sponsor's' advertising (as in motor car racing) ; or obtain donations from the public or rail enthusiasts and have carriages or even trains named after people or their children (say, in a draw) or a list of people who have donated to fund a carriage or train have their names painted in a list at the end of a carriage.

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

Q32 comments: Toilet facilities; disabled facilities; refreshments (on long distance); luggage facilities in the middle as well as the end of the carriage (room for a small bag behind seats) ; mobile phone charging facilities;

## 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: The present method seems to be satisfactory.

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: Not enough expertise to answer this – but first class should be available. Or carriages specifically designated as 'quiet' for business people working (and firmly adhered to); coaches designated for families with young children only; 'loud' coaches for teenagers, hen parties, rugby fans, football fans etc. Passengers who do not fall into these categories can then decide whether or not to sit in these carriages.

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

Q35 comments: Are drunks a nuisance? How much mess do they cause? . If smokers have to travel without having a smoke, then this should possibly apply to drinkers.

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

Q36 comments: The present method seems to be quite satisfactory.

## 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: The sleeper service should continue to be specified. Travelling time is a waste of time, it would be a retrograde step if this overnight service was discontinued.

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 more competition the better, but if it does not make a profit then a profit needs to be found elsewhere.

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 sleeper service oils the wheels of industry and commerce. The Caledonian Sleeper is a cost effective way of travelling long distance and meeting clients. No, the appeal would not change. Travelling is boring and a waste of time – the sleeper service utilizes that time effectively.

The sleeper is vital in a commercial environment.

The sleeper should provide more facilities for overnight travel in the form of another carriage which provides airline style couchettes which allows one to sleep comfortably in a seat.

Additionally, passengers should not be able to get a refund if they fail to turn up for sleeper travel – since bookings are made which are not honoured because there is only a £10 deduction, which then clogs the system and prevents others from travelling,



### **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: **Do not have the expertise to answer this.**