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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: Direct services are essential. We must attract people away

from road and air and onto the trains. Changing trains is not an attractive option and increases total journey time. Aberdeen and Inverness are the very places that need direct trains and any reduction would cause less use and harm the more distant cities.

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: Yes. Private companies will do what they want in order to maximise profit. Service to the public can only be guaranteed if the Government has influence over the franchisee.

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: They should be easy to understand. The complicated fare structure results in people paying more than is necessary.

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: People who live north of Edinburgh should be able to travel south without the need to change trains. A change is not an attractive option and would result in less people travelling by train.

Aberdeen and Inverness, being more remote, are the very places that need direct trains and any reduction would reduce train use.

Aberdeen, the Oil Capital, should definitely have a direct service and should

not be relegated to a branch line. Taking away the direct services would make rail travel less attractive and could have a damaging impact on the business opportunities in Aberdeen.

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: Terminating cross border services in Edinburgh would not be an attractive option for people who travel north of Edinburgh. The need to change trains would have a detrimental effect and would result in less train use.

Any change of train could put tourists off and they would be more likely to terminate their journeys at Edinburgh or Glasgow. Yet again, Aberdeen would lose out.

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: All passengers should have a seat. The toilets should be clean and functioning. A buffet service is needed on all trains.

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:

There should be no alcohol consumption on trains.

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: Must be specified to ensure that the Sleeper service continues. I am a regular user of the Sleeper service and prefer it to flying. The service could be put at risk if this was left to commercial interest.

The day time train is not an alternative option due to having to spend two days travelling. The loss of the Sleeper service would result in greater demand for flights to London – a less green option.

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 Scottish Government must do whatever is necessary to ensure the continuation of the Sleeper service.

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: We have already lost the direct Ferry service we don't want to lose the Sleeper. Scotland would be at risk of becoming a remote and rarely visited location.

Due to the distance to and from Aberdeen, the Sleeper is an essential service. Indeed, due to its location Aberdeen needs the Sleeper service more than Edinburgh!!

A return sleeper journey avoids the need for two days of travelling, this makes

it very attractive.

Any reduction in the Sleeper service could jeopardise tourism in Scotland.

We need a direct Sleeper Service to the north and north east of Scotland. If it terminated in Edinburgh the tourists would also terminate their journeys there.

The Sleeper service should be family friendly. Families of three or four should be able to travel in adjoining cabins. Presently this is impossible to arrange due to "commercial reasons".

The sleeper service should not only be our convenient link with London it should also be our link with Europe. The Sleeper service should therefore tie in better with the Eurostar service.

I would like to see a direct Sleeper Service from Scotland to Paris.

We should be encouraging green travel and getting people off the plane and onto the train!

The Sleepers service in Spain provides en suite toilets and some have showers. This should be an option.

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: