

Elizabeth Gebhard

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: Rail service must serve the public needs otherwise irrelevant

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

Q2 comments: long term contracts are more cost effective

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

Q3 comments: depends on how well the franchise meets public needs

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

Q4 comments: only if it runs efficiently

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

Q5 comments: depends on circumstances

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

Q6 comments: use of a service that is well-run, appropriately priced and above all fulfills the needs of the public will show a profit

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

Q7 comments: TBA

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

Q8 comments: Open the tender to another company

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: Both. They are interdependent

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: routes and service groups will be more efficient in the long run due to local control. Large systems are inefficient and expensive and soon become insensitive to the customer. Eg. Soviet-style centralization

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

Q11 comments: Keep in touch with you customer base

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

Q12 comments: keep to the time table even if the times are longer. Uncertainty is worse than a slow 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: What is the historic result of such schemes? Close control by management ensures the best service.

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

Q14 comments: See above

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: Both alternatives seem possible

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 without changes are greatly preferable

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: Based on consumer demand

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

Q18 comments: Best service to the traveler

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

Q19 comments: What does innovate mean here?

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: fares should reflect real costs and be subsidized where 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: commuter fares are most sensitive to economic conditions and they should have more government support than intercity

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: fares need to reflect real costs with government subsidy to the extent necessary to keep a rail service running that is efficient and serves the needs of all the people of Scotland.

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: possibly, for leisure travellers

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: consult on the ground with local people to determine their needs. **This type of questionnaire is not a consultation for the public!!**

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: Confuses business interests (profit) with public service. To be avoided.

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: Station is a capital asset involving real estate and probably should belong to the local authority and be leased by the franchisee. Otherwise franchisee could allow station to run down and thus deprive local council of valuable property. Also, there should be a clause that requires cooperation between franchisee and local authority for station maintenance.

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

Q27 comments: Publicity

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

Q28 comments: depends on use and location

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: IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT CROSS BORDER SERVICES CONTINUE BETWEEN SCOTLAND AND THE REST OF THE UK. THE BENEFIT EXTENDS TO ALL CATEGORIES OF PASSENGERS AND IS ESSENTIAL FOR ELDERLY AND CHILDREN.

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. NO BENEFIT TO ANYONE AND GREAT DETRIMENT TO ALL.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: PROBLEM NOT CLEARly stated

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

Q32 comments: Food and drink should be available in some mode on all services, but method of service should vary according to class of travel and length of journey.

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: not a high priority in relation to the train service, but desirable when economically feasible

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: Add more cars

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

Q35 comments: history of alcohol-related disturbances on certain lines and at certain dates and times.

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

Q36 comments: information seems satisfactory as is

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 BE CONTINUED. THEY PROVIDE AN IMPORTANT LINK BETWEEN THE NORTH AND SOUTH AND ESPECIALLY FOR PEOPLE WITH MORNING BUSINESS IN LONDON

AND OTHER AREAS IN THE SOUTH. I USE THEM FREQUENTLY.

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: DEPENDS ON CONDITIONS. BUT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT CELEDONIAN SLEEPER SERVICES BE CONTINUED AS THEY ARE. See above.

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: EARLY AND LATE TRAINS WOULD NOT MAKE SLEEPER SERVICE LESS USEFUL. THE OVERNIGHT SLEEPER FROM INVERNESS TO PERTH AND TO KINGS CROSS IS AN EXCELLENT AND MOST CONVENIENT SERVICE AND I USE IT ALL THE TIME.

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: keep carbon emissions to minimum even if times are longer.