

Respondent Information Form and Questions

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

1. Name/Organisation

Organisation Name

Heritage Railway Association - Scottish Committee

Title Mr ☒ *Please tick as appropriate*

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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual

☐

/

Group/Organisation

☒

Please tick as appropriate

- (a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

Please tick as appropriate ☐ Yes ☐ No

- (b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available ☐

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address ☐

or

Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address ☐

- (c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

Please tick as appropriate ☒ Yes ☐ No

- (d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

Please tick as appropriate

☒ Yes

☐ No

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?

No comment

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

No comment

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

No comment

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

No comment

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

The terms of the franchise contract should ensure that the regular timetable allows adequate paths for the running of charter and other special trains, for example those run by SRPS Railtours which is a subsidiary of one of the members of the HRA. This applies not just to the scenic and tourist routes but also to other parts of the network. Such trains increase the number of visitors to the highlands and other parts of Scotland.

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

No comment.

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

No comment.

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

No comment

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

No comment.

10. Should the performance regime be aligned with actual routes or service groups, or should there be one system for the whole of Scotland?

No comment

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

No comment

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

In striking the balance, the interests of other operators for example those running charter and other special trains, should be fully taken into account.

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?

No comment except to note that whichever body manages station services and facilities should be required to make adequate provision for use of stations by charter and other special trains.

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

No comment.

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?

No comment except to note that on trains serving tourist areas and likely to be used by tourists, adequate seating should be provided to prevent uncomfortable loading at busy times to the detriment of the tourist industry.

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?

In order to encourage tourists visiting the highlands and other parts of Scotland, through train services should be provided wherever practicable to avoid the risk of delays and missed connections and the transfer of luggage. In any case the scope for creating new interchanges between rail services is believed to be very limited.

Where the ScotRail network serves heritage railways, for example the Strathspey Railway at Aviemore and the Keith & Dufftown Railway at Keith, the franchise holder should consult with the heritage railways concerned to promote visitors to these railways coming by train.

In Scotland interchange facilities between rail and bus (both in terms of infrastructure and timetabling) are with few exceptions poor (and indeed often non-existent) in comparison with other countries such as Switzerland. The franchise holder and the bus companies should be obliged to co-ordinate their services and timetables to ensure that localities not directly served by ScotRail are readily and adequately accessible from the railway network. This would also encourage the tourist industry.

As an example of the current lack of adequate interchanges, the bus connections to the Bo'ness & Kinneil heritage railway and the Scottish national railway museum (located at Bo'ness) from both Linlithgow (the nearest national network railway station) and Edinburgh are very poor. As a result very few visitors who are reliant on public transport are able to visit this heritage railway and museum which are major tourist attractions.

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?

The Scottish Government should ensure that the franchise-holder is contractually obliged to provide an adequate level of train service (not only in terms of frequency and journey time but also in terms of suitability of rolling stock and other facilities) throughout Scotland, given the importance of the tourist industry not only in the highlands but also in other parts of the country.

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

The level of contract specification should reflect the previous comment (Q17).

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

No comment.

Scottish rail fares

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

Fares should be reasonably affordable in order to encourage use of the railway and to facilitate travel by tourists given the importance to Scotland of the tourist industry.

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)?

No comment provided that the objectives set out in the previous comment (Q20) are met.

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?

No comment provided that the objectives set out in the previous comment (Q20) are met.

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?

No comment provided that the objectives set out in the previous comment (Q20) are met.

Scottish stations

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

No comment

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?

No comment

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?

Whichever body manages station services and facilities should be required to make adequate provision for use of stations by charter and other special trains. In addition railway heritage purposes can be a productive use of station buildings that are not fully required for operation of the national network and such use should be encouraged. Two of our members are actively involved in the railway heritage use of station buildings. The main station building at Glenfinnan forms the Glenfinnan Station Museum while at Aviemore the up side buildings are occupied by the Strathspey Railway. Sufficient flexibility should be retained in the leasing and management arrangements of stations to allow such worthwhile uses to continue and indeed be developed at new locations where appropriate.

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

No comment apart from observing that where old buildings survive, heritage groups should also participate.

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

No comment provided that an adequate level of facilities are provided at stations which serve as interchanges with bus services and at stations which serve areas frequented by tourists.

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?

Cross-border services should continue to go north of Edinburgh. They benefit passengers and tax-payers by encouraging tourists to visit those parts of Scotland that lie north of the central belt, by removing the risk of delays and missed connections at Edinburgh and avoiding the need to transfer luggage. Furthermore the internal layout of the rolling stock used on relatively short distance ScotRail trains may not be suited to passengers in the course of long distance journeys from England. It would seem appropriate that cross-border services (including those which go beyond Edinburgh) which by definition serve both Scotland and England, should be specified jointly by the Department for Transport (in England) and the Scottish Government but it will be necessary to devise a mechanism for doing so.

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?

The disadvantages of there being no through trains will have to be offset against the claimed advantages of creating an Edinburgh 'hub'. See also comment (Q29) above

Rolling stock

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

No comment

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

The internal layout of trains used in areas frequented by tourists (e.g the West Highland line) should facilitate the views of the scenery and be suited to the relatively long journey times. Refreshment facilities should be provided on such trains. The franchise-holder should also be required to enable tourist information to be given (for example train commentaries and guides).

Passengers – information, security and services

33. How should we prioritise investment for mobile phone provision and / or Wi-Fi type high-bandwidth services?

No comment

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?

No comment

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

Whether or not there should be a ban on consuming alcohol on ScotRail trains is a public order matter on which we make no comment. However any such ban should be a matter only affecting Scotrail trains and should not be the subject of legislation which would apply to other trains operating in Scotland; for example it should not apply to trains operating on heritage railways nor should it apply to charter and other special trains that are operated on the national network.

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

No comment

Caledonian Sleeper

37. Should we continue to specify sleeper services, or should this be a purely commercial matter for a train operating company?

The sleeper services encourage tourists to visit Scotland and facilitate access to those heritage railways that they serve. If such services were not to be specified, the relevant train operating company might then take a commercial decision to withdraw the service, to the detriment of the tourist industry. These should therefore be specified. Concerns have been expressed about the level of subsidy and it would seem appropriate to take all reasonable steps to reduce the cost to the Scottish Government in order that the Scottish Government may continue to be able to afford the provision of the 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?

No comment provided that the sleeper service is integrate with the regular ScotRail services.

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?

No comment

Environmental issues

40. What environmental key performance indicators should we consider for inclusion in the franchise agreement or the High Level Output Specification?

No comment.