

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: AS SCOTRAIL IS AN ENTITY, I FAVOUR A SINGLE FRANCHISE.

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

Q2 comments: THE FRANCHISE PERIOD SHOULD BE OF REASONABLE DURATION, eg. 8 YEARS AT LEAST - LONGER IF APPROPRIATE.

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: A MECHANISM WHICH WOULD ALLOW PROMOTION OF RAIL AS A MORE ACCEPTABLE TRANSPORT MODE, OVER CAR USE, BY SERVICE DEVELOPMENT.

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

Q5 comments: T.P.s COULD OFFER A VALUABLE INPUT TO THE ROLE OF THE T.O.C. eg. USING UNOCCUPIED STATION PREMISES FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICES SUCH AS CATERING, STUDIO USE (eg. LADYBANK STATION, FIFE).

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: THE CURRENT STRUCTURE SEEMS ADEQUATE.

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

YES, GOOD PERFORMANCE SHOULD BE REWARDED.

Q9 comments: ALONG WITH IDEAS TO MAKE RAIL TRANSPORT - RECOGNISING THE BUOYANT PASSENGER FIGURES NATIONALLY - EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE.

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?

PASSENGER ISSUES OFTEN RELATE TO MATTERS INVOLVING

Q11 comments: PUNCTUALITY AND IT IS VITAL THAT PASSENGERS ARE KEPT INFORMED OF REASON(S) FOR DELAY AT REGULAR INTERVALS.

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: YES. IT SHOULD COVER ALL ASPECTS OF STATIONS & SERVICE DELIVERY IN A FLEXIBLE & ADAPTABLE WAY.

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

OTHER THAN PASSENGER REPRESENTATIVE BODIES,

Q14 comments: ADEQUATE INFORMATION IN STATIONS & FULL USE OF THE PLETHORA OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION MEANS SHOULD BE USED.

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: THE 10 MINUTE LIMIT SHOULD NOT BE INCREASED & IN REGULARLY OVERCROWDED SERVICES, INCREASED FREQUENCY OR TRAIN LENGTHENING SHOULD BE CONSIDERED.

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: INTERCHANGE SERVICES HAVE DEFINITE BENEFIT (e.g. INVERKEITHING RAIL/AIRPORT LINK) BUT PEOPLE DO NOT LIKE HAVING TO CHANGE TRAINS (e.g. MOVING LUGGAGE, CONCERNS RE NOT GETTING A SEAT ON THE NEXT TRAIN, etc). AS A RESIDENT OF FIFE, I DO NOT WANT TO CHANGE TRAINS IN EDINBURGH IF TRAVELLING TO LONDON (e.g. FROM LEICHAUS).

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: BY REWARDING THE FRANCHISEE ON THE BASIS OF
GOOD PERFORMANCE, eg. PASSENGER NUMBERS & SATISFACTION
LEVELS.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: THE SCOTTISH (& NATIONAL) FARES POLICY IS TOO COMPLEX BY FAR, AND
IS IN DIRE NEED OF SIMPLIFICATION. ATTENTION SHOULD ALSO BE
GIVEN TO THE FILLING OF EMPTY SEATS ON CERTAIN SERVICES
BY FARE REDUCTIONS.

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: FARES SHOULD RISE ONLY BY THE AMOUNT OF INFLATION.
PASSENGERS USING ENHANCED ROUTES SHOULD NOT BE
ASKED TO PAY MORE - WE ALREADY HAVE THE HIGHEST
FARES IN EUROPE.

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: I BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE WOULD SWITCH TO 'OFF PEAK'
SERVICES IF FARES WERE SIGNIFICANTLY
REDUCED (eg. 30 → 50%).

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: *MANY INNOVATIVE EXAMPLES OF THIRD PARTY INVOLVEMENT IN RAIL OPERATION CAN BE SEEN IN THE 'RESCUED' SETTLE TO CARLISLE ROUTE. ORGANISATIONS, BUSINESSES, TOURIST BODIES & MANY INDIVIDUALS CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUCCESS OF THIS ROUTE.*

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: *AS IN THE OPERATION OF THE SETTLE-CARLISLE LINE, WHICH HAS ITS OWN PROMOTING BODY.*

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: *CROSS BORDER SERVICES MUST CONTINUE NORTH OF EDINBURGH, AS STATED UNDER Q.16. A TRAIN CHANGE AT EDINBURGH WOULD BE VERY UNPOPULAR & PASSENGERS WOULD BE LOST.*

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:

Rolling stock

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

THE DEVELOPMENT OF **ELECTRIFICATION!** SUCH ROLLING STOCK (AFTER INSTALLATION OF OVERHEAD WIRES) IS CHEAPER TO CONSTRUCT & OPERATE THAN DIESEL POWER & MORE ENVIRONMENTALLY BENEFICIAL. IT IS DISGRACEFUL THAT ONLY 2 OF SCOTLAND'S 5 MAJOR CITIES ARE LINKED BY ELECTRIC TRAINS.

Q31 comments: LONG DISTANCE ROUTES REQUIRE (1) ACCESS TO ALL PARTS OF A DOUBLE UNIT (2+DM.U's) TRAIN; (2) SEAT/WINDOW ALIGNMENT. (3) MORE ROOM FOR BULKY LUGGAGE. WE USED TO HAVE GUARD'S VANS, eg. for bulky items, cycles, etc!

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: KEEP THE 'CURRENT SITUATION' BUT WITH MORE EVIDENCE OF TRANSPORT POLICE. (ALCOHOL ABUSE, NATIONALLY, IS AT A SERIOUS LEVEL & ALTHOUGH ACTION IS BEING TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT - ALBEIT SLOWLY - IT WILL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE MATTERS IMPROVE).

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?

THE SLEEPER SERVICE IS A VITAL LINK BETWEEN SCOTLAND & ENGLAND. A VERY RECENT SCOTTISH / UK GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT UPGRADED ROLLING STOCK SEEMS TO INDICATE A MORE CERTAIN FUTURE.

- Q37 comments: 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: NO. THIS SERVICE MUST BE PART OF A SINGLE SCOTRAIL FRANCHISE.

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: * Please refer below:~

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:

- ① * THE MAIN APPEAL IS THAT OF THE EASE OF BOARDING (IN MY CASE, AT LEUCHARS) AND GETTING OFF AT LONDON. ALL THE HASSLE OF AIR TRAVEL - QUEUES, SECURITY SEARCHES - ARE AVOIDED & YOU ALIGHT FROM THE TRAIN REFRESHED. (I WOULD NEVER CONSIDER DOING THIS DISTANCE BY 'BUS').
- ② I ALSO FOUND THE CATERING SERVICE VERY GOOD.
- ③ AS A MUSICIAN, (TAKING A FULL SIZE ACCORDION TO LONDON), I SHARED A BERTH WITH MY WIFE. ALTHOUGH WE MANAGED, IT WAS RATHER TIGHT FOR SPACE BUT THIS WOULD NOT STOP US USING THE SLEEPER AGAIN.
- ④ SLEEPER STAFF WERE HELPFUL & FRIENDLY.

I hope you find my comments helpful for your purposes.

Yours sincerely, George A.M. Lawrie. (R.M.N; R.G.N; R.N.T. - Retired).