

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

Title Mr Ms Mrs Miss Dr *Please tick as appropriate*

Surname

Forename

2. Postal Address

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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 x Yes

- (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 x 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?

Q1 comments: While there would be some merits of offering separate ScotRail Intercity and Scotrail Suburban franchises, as long as they had the flexibility of sharing resources.

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

Q2 comments: Longer franchises give the operator more confidence to invest in the franchise. It also should mean that applicants spend less on bidding for contracts.

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: There has to be some degree of risk-sharing.

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

Q5 comments: There is a large amount of community involvement in England and Wales., particularly on rural routes. This is worth considering for Scotland.

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: Good performance should be incentivised.

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: Performance has to reflect reality. Long distance services will inevitably be at greater risk than short distance services.

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: Again, longer distance routes cannot be expected to be as reliable as shorter distance services.

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: SQUIRE appears to be over-prescriptive, and should be more flexible. It might concentrate on fewer qualities and cover all aspects.

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: Better use can be made of capacity probably by replacing 2X3 seating by 2x2. The middle seat of 3 is often not used, and 2x2 gives more room for standing. Also, a lot of people are prepared to stand for short distances even when seats are available.

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: There are some opportunities of this, but in my opinion they are outweighed by the disadvantages. It may align capacity more with demand and also improve performance, but it is well known that people prefer through travel rather than having to change.

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: These should be better determined by the franchisee, although, if the government is providing substantial support for a particular route, it should specify a minimum level of service. The franchisee will be in a better position to align resources with demand.

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: There could be the equivalent of the support mechanism provided to airlines to encourage them to establish new routes. Support would be provided for a specific period, and if by the end of that period, the service had proved itself, the support could be discontinued. On the other hand, if the service was not proving popular, it could be withdrawn.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: Fares policy has to be a combination of market forces and social support. Most services in Scotland require support but fares should be

set at a realistic level that reflects value for money.

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: It should be possible for the basic Scottish intercity triangle - Edinburgh- Glasgow –Aberdeen, and possibly Inverness, to operate on commercial fares. However the suburban and rural lines will continue to require support.

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: It is ironic that the people who travel at peak times and cause the extra resources and expense, i.e. extra trains and staff, longer platforms, are those who get the most discounted travel. Peak fares should reflect the fact that extra resources are required to operate at these times.

There should be a larger differential between peak and off-peak fares to encourage people to travel off-peak, especially since more people have more flexible hours.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: It should be determined on usage. Someone has to bite the political bullet and say that services such as Motherwell- Cumbernauld and Glasgow- Maryhill- Anniesland should not have dedicated train services, because the demand is not there.

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: There are bound to be instances where a local body will be in a better position to promote and possibly fund a local station. Taking on a service might be more of a challenge.

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: Through trains have operated from Inverness, Aberdeen and Dundee to points south of the border for many years, because people want to travel through, particularly older people and those with large amounts of luggage. It is well known that people prefer through trains to having to change. It could also be seen as a very isolationist policy. Many of the trains that operate north of Edinburgh operate in marginal time so that they might well be doing nothing if they did not operate north of Edinburgh. Some of them

provide substantial capacity into and out of Edinburgh at peak times, so that, if they did not operate, ScotRail would require several additional trains to replace that capacity. It should be possible for the two government departments to come to some arrangement.

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: This already happens to a large extent, but it should also be possible to have some through services, to give passengers a choice. The additional platforms provided at Edinburgh Waverley mean that it is in danger of becoming another Birmingham New Street, and, while much money is being spent on both stations, it does not detract from the amount of changing levels required for people who need to change trains.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: Allow other operators to supply stock in marginal time –see Q29 above.

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

Q32 comments: Airlines have shown that business travel is where the money is, so the provision of First Class is important on the Scottish inter-city triangle or rectangle. A trolley service is also an important asset on longer distance service. Coach operators now provide this facility on similar routes.

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: Whether we like it or not, passengers now expect 24/7 contact with the rest of the world. It is difficult to say which is more important, but certainly mobile phone reception, particularly in tunnels, should be a priority. Wifi is also important on the main routes for business travellers, see Q32.

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: It should be possible to retain a limited first class facility on the main routes, and have that available at other times for a supplement, eg Weekend First, as happens on some routes at present.

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

Q35 comments: A blanket ban would be a retrograde step, but it may be necessary to ban at certain times, such as before and after certain football or rugby matches.

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

Q36 comments: Most operators already provide text and Twitter links, so the main improvement would be to provide accurate and timely information

through all media at times of disruption.

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: It is difficult to see how this could be a purely commercial matter, given the high costs and low earning capacity of the sleeper service. For example, the present Mk 3 sleeping car in First Class mode can convey only 12 or 13 people, while the equivalent Mk 3 day vehicle carries 72 or 76 people. The staffing ratio is also much higher. First Class sleeper passengers do not pay 6 times the fare for the same journey. Most trains will make several long distance trips each day, eg Glasgow- London and back, whereas sleepers make only one trip every 24 hours.

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 sleeper services were at one time part of the Intercity West Coast operation, now Virgin, and there would be merit in considering such an organisation again. Virgin already has staff and facilities at most of the points along the core part of the sleeper route, whereas the sleeper services have very little in common with the rest of ScotRail services. A long distance operator could also make marginal use of day trains to provide an overnight seated service, say London- Edinburgh- Glasgow (2 electric Voyagers splitting at Carstairs?), without requiring special seating coaches , which the present sleeper does.

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: 1) The main appeal of sleeper services is to avoid late arrivals or early morning departures, particularly for people who have evening engagements. It also avoids the need for hotel accommodation. It has been possible to get to London from Edinburgh and Glasgow by air in time for say a 10am meeting, but increased security means earlier and earlier departures. It

is already possible to reach London by 1000 by day train from both Edinburgh and Glasgow, but there is not much time built in.

2) Aberdeen has a more substantial all-year market from oil-related businesses, and also has more population along the route. Inverness and Fort William are more seasonal - Fort William in particular. Fort William was only retained because of the pressure from landowners along the route, who use the service infrequently. Oban might have the advantage of connections with ferries, although most would have departed before the sleeper arrived.

3) The problem with the sleeper service is that it tries to be all things to all men. Ideally it would provide the equivalent of an hotel- the main improvement being en-suite facilities, but that reduces capacity even further. It is significant that Business Class on, for example, eastbound transAtlantic overnight flights, of the same duration, does not provide en-suite facilities. As mentioned in Q38, there is scope for using existing day trains to provide an overnight seating service, possibly providing two seats for each passenger, and using the First Class accommodation to provide superior seating accommodation. Removing seats from the sleeper trains might provide capacity for the additional vehicles required after the addition of en-suite facilities. The length limit at Euston is still a problem, unless the sleeper terminal is moved to Waterloo International as has been suggested. That has the problem of isolating the sleepers again from other long-distance operators.

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: