

Jenny Mayhew

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: I do not feel that, as a private individual, albeit a frequent passenger, I have anything to contribute on QQ 1-9. So skip to Q10

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: different criteria for Central Belt commuter services as opposed to long distance (though these are of course in part and at certain times of day commuter services as well)

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

Q11 comments: East Coast Trains should consider reducing the no. of stops N. of Edinburgh on the Chieftain journeys, where it is a stopping train as opposed to the fast service S. of Edinburgh

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

Q12 comments: as Q11 - this would affect only 2 journeys per day
Delays at intermediate stops must be taken into consideration, not just overall journey times – especially where connections and onward travel are concerned

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: all aspects – and taking into account passenger numbers over a whole journey eg how many passengers in total on and off an 8 hour journey – not just those travelling terminus to terminus. This particularly affects litter collection, emptying of bins, as well as – very importantly – toilet cleaning en route. This last must be given high priority

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: loops from Inverness to Airport and to the new proposed University/College campus, which could be on the same route. Frequent services, separate from the main Inverness-aberdeen service. Airport and campus can only expand in future. Airport needs luggage space, campus less so. The large influx of students expected must be encouraged onto the train

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: much more info needed on eg ferry at Thurso/Scrabster and proper and properly-advertised connections there as far as possible within weather constraints of course. Ferry info to be on printed timetables and known to Inverness booking office staff (which it is not at present) and info on late/early sailings to be relayed in real time to booking office and on-train staff. Info to be available at Thurso on Northward ferry sailing times – and taxi numbers prominently displayed, as well as clear map for walking to Scrabster. On a very few services eg Inverness-aberdeen 1730 a carrying capacity limit must be set – this service tries unsuccessfully to be both a commuter train and part of the distance network. Extra trains specifically at this time surely? Or more carriages, and longer platforms therefore at some country stations

16. 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: on to Q22

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

Q18 comments:

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

Q19 comments:

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments:

20. 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:

21. 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:

22. 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:nobody surely travels at peak times unless they have to. But sometimes, with so few trains through the day in the North, there is little choice

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

24. 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:

25. 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:

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

Q27 comments:

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

Q28 comments:

Cross-border services

28. 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: benefit to elderly and/or encumbered passengers of sitting put throughout journey (and rail demographic at off-peak surely indicates that this category of passenger is numerous) Through journey would be better if fewer stops N of Central Belt (see Q 11)

29. 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: benefits listed at 8.8 are persuasive – though empire-building by Scotrail? But must be an easy interchange, with guaranteed connections, for elderly/encumbered – no more than across a platform, and staff available

to speed the luggage onto and also for stowing once inside the train

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments:

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

Q32 comments: more cycle space esp in Highlands – but for commuters as well as tourists. Less rigidity on rules for number of bikes on train if there is space. At present it can depend on personality or mood of conductor. “Guard's van” - type provision (maybe quite small) to be standard on all except commuter electric trains

Passengers – information, security and services

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

Q33 comments: understand this is under active consideration

33. 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: definitely have capability to alter First Class at overcrowding times, or allow free upgrades. Wi-fi throughout would maybe mean fewer would opt for First anyway?

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

Q35 comments: yes ban all alcohol as on flights except as served by bar staff in small units and consumed in buffet car only

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

Q36 comments: see Q16. More instant up to date info on connections

Caledonian Sleeper

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

Q37 comments:

37. 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:

38. 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: don't use sleeper myself despite frequent Inverness-London journeys to family (can't sleep on it and it takes too long) but WELL AWARE how well-used and well-regarded it is. What about half fares/family reductions/Railcard discounts?

Environmental issues

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

Q40 comments: overcrowding (eg Aberdeen-Inverness 17.30) is surely driving commuters on this route off the railway and into their cars and the A96. And the growing population of Highland students with the new University and its projected campus (see Q15) must be encouraged to use the train