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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: any franchise should be linked to other transport modes to ensure the whole transport network is fully integrated

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

Q2 comments: 5 - 7 years. This will allow for future investment and long term approach

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

Q3 comments: annual reporting and 3 year plan submissions. Audits should be carried out by independent body to ensure compliance every 2-3 years

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: in audit process

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: threat of contract removal for non-compliance on performance, value for money or passenger satisfaction

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: penalise poor performance

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: one system for scotland

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

Q11 comments: needs to meet needs of passengers completely

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

Q12 comments: journey times, punctuality and passenger times, safety and comfort are musts

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: journey times, punctuality and passenger times, safety and comfort are musts

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

Q14 comments: roving inspectors asking passengers for feedback

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: 15 mins max. But what measures can be put in place to ensure this is met?

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: yes. better communication with other transport operators to ensure better integration of travel services, including electronic displays on trains and buses showing times of departing trains at interchange stations

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 determined by franchise, but audited independently and report passed to Govt

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

Q18 comments: high level contract, with detailed contract managed by franchise

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

Q19 comments: penalties for non compliance

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: fares policy should encourage more people onto rail. To do this, fares should be reduced for all season tickets to encourage more passengers to use

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: Govt should regulate

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 increase for on day but decrease for season ticket holders

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: not really. Most people use peak services for work anyway

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: how often it is used

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: makes sense for LA or business to part fund

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: all must have suitable waiting areas as a minimum – with form of heating and seating

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: no. The costs of operating this are excessive and service should terminate at Edinburgh

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: yes. This makes economic sense

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments:

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

Q32 comments: any journey lasting more than 15 mins, trains must have toilet facilities

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: unnecessary to have wifi on most routes, with exception of services operating to Inverness or Aberdeen from central belt

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: priority should be to ensure more carriages and thus seating

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

Q35 comments: alcohol not an issue but if any passenger becomes unruly then onboard guards should have power to remove them

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

Q36 comments: more, bigger electronic displays at every station, such as the ones that Fife stations use. Currently smaller stations only have small display units

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: no. Commercial matter

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: it should be separate

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:

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: