

**Roderick McDougall**

## **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 can see no logical objections to splitting the Scottish Rail Franchise into three, Sleeper Services, Social or Remote Rural Services and the remainder. In fact the remaining services could be further split into Commuter services and National services with the former being specified by the RTP's who have a more specific focus including bus services and would have a better understanding of local requirements for access to the network, service requirements and integration of transport modes thus leaving the latter to be dealt with by the national agency who similarly deal with the trunk road network generally linking the same areas and conurbations as the rail network. Even the Remote Rural Services could be split into the North Highland Lines, the West Highland Lines and the South of Scotland Lines. One of the benefits of this approach is that smaller companies, and even community based co-operatives, could enter the market and be more focussed on local requirements. The different franchises would of course require to adhere to a single unified ticketing system so that the passenger could seamlessly cross from one franchise to another. However if a single franchise is to be foisted upon us by an over centralising state then it must be a multi focussed franchise.

The Remote Rural or Social services are not commercial and may be best served by some type of fee earning management contract(s). Lines which would be included are those north and west of Inverness, north of Helensburgh but continuing to Glasgow, and south of Ayr, arguably together with south of Kilmarnock including connections between them, again continuing to Glasgow.

The Commuter lines mainly centred on Glasgow and Edinburgh and extending up to a 30 mile radius have significant peak period passenger volumes and far fewer inter-peak and off-peak volumes. In these areas normal commercial activity is superseded by national and local policies to encourage more use of public transport instead of car commuting and is thus likely to require a specifically different basis or type of subsidy and therefore requires a separate approach from either the Remote Rural or the National services.

The National service network is the closest to a normal commercial service and requires the minimum subsidy to allow the franchise holder to act on a

commercial basis.

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

Q2 comments:

The Chiltern line experience recently the focus of a television documentary exemplifies the benefit of a long franchise where the franchise holder not only built a new station, incidentally for around half the price Network Rail were quoting, but itself upgraded much of its track length to allow faster trains on the basis that the increase in patronage resulting from the new station and improvements to the service would pay for itself over the length of the franchise.

In order to achieve the possible benefits of a long franchise but protect against a poor franchise holder, the franchise should be offered on a short term basis but with automatic extensions dependant on significant investment or adequate performance during the initial or previous franchise period. A franchise period of 5 years with automatic 5 year extensions up to 20 years should be adequate to achieve the best of both worlds.

If separate franchises were to be awarded for each of the different parts of the system as outlined above there would be no bar to one company winning more than one or even all the franchises however there would also be no bar to such a company losing one or more of their franchises whilst being awarded extensions to others.

There should also be no bar to one franchisee relinquishing their franchise to a third party providing that third party is approved by the franchise awarding authority and that it takes over any liabilities of the original franchise holder.

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

Q3 comments:

The risk support mechanism(s) would require to be different for each of the various parts of the network. The type of risk involved in operating a highly subsidised Remote Rural service are totally different from operating a more commercially based intercity network or the commuter network. The risk support mechanism(s) would have to reflect these differences.

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

Q4 comments:

This question is partially answered by my response to Q19 dealing with the profit resulting from innovation or fare increases. Profit growth resulting from factors outwith the ambit of the franchisee and over which the franchisee has had no input should be shared equally between the franchisee and the taxpayer however this would also imply that any losses incurred in a similar

circumstance would be met on the same basis.

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

Q5 comments:

Third party involvement should generally be welcomed however the question arises about the nature of the involvement as to whether the effect is mainly on the franchisee, on Network Rail or on the transport authority or any combination of these. If the promoter wishes the franchisee to operate a new service or make additional stops at say Barry Links and the franchisee can achieve this without undue detriment then the matter should be left solely as a commercial arrangement between these two parties. If the promoter wishes to operate a new service not using the franchisee and can satisfy the franchising authority that there would be no detriment to the franchise then the matter should be between the promoter and Network Rail. If the promoter wishes to provide finance and operate new infrastructure such as a new station and the franchisee determines that stopping at the station can be accommodated within the service pattern without undue detriment to existing passengers and Network Rail is satisfied with the proposal then the proposal should be allowed to proceed.

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

Q6 comments:

The most important output is to increase the number of passengers, this would be self financing and thus its own incentive. Passenger satisfaction is a tenuous measure, passenger complaints may increase but if this is accompanied by a significant increase in the number of passengers such that the number of complaints per passenger decreases would this be classified as a success or failure?

There are three important factors for the passenger:- information, station quality and on-board quality. Information requirements are dealt with in my response to Q36 below and on-board quality in Q31-35. Station quality requirements vary throughout the network dependent on the location and service however all stations should provide sheltered waiting area(s) with seating, help points with CCTV coverage, either mobile phone coverage (all major networks) or land line phone if in a mobile blackspot, grit bins with shovel for spreading at unmanned stations, litter bins and be maintained in a suitable condition. Penalties should be applied for failure to comply with these.

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

Q7 comments:

Performance Bonds are essentially insurance policies against failure of the

franchisee to cover the costs of re-franchising. It would appear to be foolish for the government to pay the franchisee a large sum of money for the franchise only then to pass this money (less an administration charge) to a third party insurer.

The Government could go directly to an insurer or even self insure against failure by the franchisee. In the case of a franchise failure, as re-franchising is a long process, the government would have to step in and run the franchise itself as has happened with the East Coast franchise or immediately offer the franchise to another company, in either case the bond would have to cover the costs of running the franchise for around two years during the re-franchising process as well as covering the costs of re-franchising. The bond would thus have to be set at a very high level and, in the light of a major company already defaulting on a previously very profitable franchise, any insurer is likely to demand a very high premium.

In such circumstances it would be simpler not to request a bond or guarantee and let the Government self insure.

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

Q8 comments:

Withholding subsidy payments and ultimately franchise termination.

### **Achieving reliability, performance and service quality**

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

Q9 comments:

Good performance resulting in reducing operating costs, increasing the number of passengers or otherwise improving income are all self financing and should thus not need further incentives. There could be an incentive awarded for station maintenance and upkeep, availability of customer care and cleanliness of rolling stock but no other incentive should be offered. Poor performance should be penalised.

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:

The rail network is, or should be, an integrated system across the entire country. Train performance in terms of reliability, timekeeping and quality of service, commensurate with the journey involved, should be maintained to a common standard to allow passengers to be assured of connections with both other parts of the rail system and other modes of transport.

The definition of lateness should be 5% of the journey time which can then be

applied across the network (e.g. a 20 min journey should be no more than 1 min late, a 1 hr 40 min journey, no more than 5 min late). Extreme lateness i.e. over 10% late should be penalised by giving all affected passengers a discount on their next ticket purchase equivalent to 10% of the cost of their current journey for every 10% of lateness. This mechanism obviously increases the penalty for busier trains and satisfies the passenger that the operator is not “getting away with it”. The penalties would apply equally to intermediate stations or the final destination.

The total cost of these penalties should obviously be recoverable from whichever organisation proves to be responsible for the delay if not the franchisee. The Government would however be responsible for covering these costs in the case of civil disturbance, police action or suicide.

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

Q11 comments:

By adhering to all the suggestions in this response.

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

Q12 comments:

Published journey times should be achievable but without including too much slack whilst taking account of the motive power. Such journey times must not be used as a cushion for poor performance by the franchisee.

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! But it should only cover those aspects where it is possible to improve the performance by penalising the responsible organisation. SQUIRE should be developed to be flexible and include new issues as they arise.

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

Q14 comments:

The best method of alerting SQUIRE assessors and provide continuous assessment of quality is to utilise local rail user groups where they exist otherwise community councils or other interested community groups.

## **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 current 10 min standing rule has been in tatters for several years now. I have often been on the Glasgow~Edinburgh train where passengers have had to stand between Falkirk High and Edinburgh, far longer than the 10 min rule. I have also noticed the Edinburgh~Dunblane train grossly overloaded leaving Waverley, I assume Japanese style pushers are in attendance at Haymarket to complete the overloading to sardine standard.

Extending the time limit would only result in passengers standing for even longer without penalty to the operator. If we are trying to encourage more mode shift from car to rail then passenger standing must be reduced, not increased.

There is no acceptable limit for standing time on rail services particularly at peak times when passengers are paying the more expensive peak fares. The penalty for not having enough seating for passenger demand should be to refund all passengers on overcrowded trains the difference between peak and off-peak fares. This would be acceptable by the issue of paper credits for a reduction in the price of the next ticket bought. Overcrowding outwith the peak period should be penalised by a 50% fare credit.

Such penalties should be a sufficient incentive to ensure the rail operator does all in its power to maintain seating capacity at an appropriate level.

Obviously if the overcrowding is the result of matters beyond the operator's control then the operator would reclaim the cost of the penalties from whichever organisation was responsible. The only exemptions would be for either extreme weather conditions or major events such as football matches or concerts when the public could expect overcrowding.

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 many services that require an increase in frequency both to overcome passenger overloading and to encourage greater modal shift from cars. Most of these additional services would connect to interchange stations. However there are few instances where direct services could be reduced. In general having to change trains is a disincentive to rail travel and, whilst being inevitable in certain cases, should be avoided in most cases.

An example of a possible exception to this general precept would be to discontinue Glasgow - Dunblane services on the basis that Glasgow - Alloa services would co-ordinate with Edinburgh - Dunblane services to provide a short transfer at Stirling with the overall Glasgow - Dunblane journey time still being shorter than the existing due to the EGIP proposal (amended as

suggested to move the turn back facility from Croy to Larbert) to omit intermediate stops between Glasgow and Larbert.

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:

Measuring customer demand is always retrospective and in a climate where railway patronage is increasing, where we are trying to encourage even greater mode shift to the railways and where it is known that mode shift is greatly influenced by frequency and journey time, it may be prudent for the Government to specify a regular minimum 15 minute frequency for commuter services during the working day (7.00am - 7.00pm) and a maximum journey time for intercity services.

Rural services also require a specified minimum service for both social and tourism reasons remembering always that certain sections of these services may also be used for commuting purposes.

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

Q18 comments:

Obviously from my response above a targeted specification is required.

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

Q19 comments:

This depends on the type of innovation. If a rise in passenger numbers results from a capital investment from the franchisee then the franchisee should reap the total increase in income resulting from that investment.

Other innovations resulting in an increase in passenger numbers should also be rewarded by the franchisee retaining an agreed majority proportion of the increase in revenues determined by the level of risk to the franchisee. Any innovation to reduce costs not resulting in an increase in passenger numbers should only be rewarded by a minority proportion of the resulting savings accruing to the franchisee.

Similarly increasing fares by more than the CPI should only result in a minority proportion of that portion of the increased revenue above the CPI accruing to the franchisee.

## **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments:

Fares policy should be a mix of providing basic support to unprofitable lines serving a social need, mainly, but not exclusively, the rural lines serving remoter areas, and support for services fulfilling the national policy of reducing car usage in favour of more sustainable forms of transport.

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:

Fare regulation should be designed to support national priorities. Geographic area and type of journey both affect the determination of the type of regulation required. Greater transparency of operating costs line by line is required in order to properly respond to this and other questions in this section.

Personally I do not agree with large discounts for advance purchase tickets. A discount equivalent to the interest receivable on advance payment less the cost of reserving a specific seat would be understandable but as the interest rates are so low, the time payment is made in advance of travel is generally too short and the amount involved too small to gain enough interest to justify the discounts offered. Such tickets should not be included within the franchise.

Advance discounts for long distance fares in competition with airlines are understandable but their use within the franchise with little competition from domestic air travel defies logic.

My views on the relationship between peak and off-peak fares are detailed in my comments on question 23 below.

On the assumption that the 'standard' commercial fare is around 36p/mile, peak fares, where they operate, should be not more than 130% of the standard fare i.e. under 47p/mile and the rural fare around 70% of the standard fare i.e. ~25p/mile. The rural rate reflects the far greater distances passengers have to travel to reach major amenities and, with the suggested %age differences, would be virtually identical (after rounding off) to the off-peak fare rates suggested below.

Season ticket prices should be charged at a weekly rate of 5 times the standard or peak return fare (whichever applies to the journey involved) less 12.5%.

The adoption of the above suggestions together with the recommended suggestions under Q23 below would tie all rail fares together in a transparent manner such that only one fare, the 'standard' fare mentioned above need be altered and all other fares, other than any of the franchisees promotional fares, would automatically follow thus eliminating the public's confusion and



anger when the annual Government's authorised change in fares appear to be flouted by the rail companies increasing non-regulated fares by more than the stated amount.

It would also be reasonable to gradually raise the age limit for the senior railcard in line with the increase in the female pension age provided the limit only increases by 1 year every 2 years.

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:

The balance between subsidy and revenue should vary line by line throughout the network.

In the case of the rural lines it would appear equitable if the total cost Network Rail charges for the use of these lines were to be paid by the taxpayer, with the taxpayer receiving any income from non passenger income streams such as use by goods traffic, thus leaving fares revenue only requiring to cover the actual train and station running costs on a commercial basis.

In the case of commuter services (i.e. generally those services within 30 miles or under 1 hours travel time of a major employment centre) a subsidy related to a proportion of the ticket cost would be more appropriate. Such a subsidy could take the form of the difference between peak and off-peak fares plus a general subsidy for the route to maintain services during the quieter periods. Ideally fares should not increase beyond the CPI but increases up to the RPI could be acceptable with the taxpayer benefiting the majority (say 60%) of rises greater than the CPI.

We are told that network enhancements have been subject to strict cost-benefit analyses and only implemented if such analyses prove positive. In such circumstances there should be no question of applying higher fare increases on lines that have been enhanced. The enhancements should in themselves attract more passengers to the network and thus greater revenue without increasing fares.

Would the 'enhancement' of the Cumbernauld line (resulting in an increased journey time) attract higher fare increases???

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:

There is already a very significant difference between peak and off-peak fares on for example the Glasgow-Edinburgh route. I believe that most people who can alter their travel times from peak to off-peak, not only due to the cost but

to improve comfort, have already done so and thus the reduced price off-peak fare now serves to encourage additional passengers rather than time-shifting existing passengers.

Nationally altering passenger travel times now depends more on greater numbers of employers embracing fully flexible working hours, or altering shift patterns to avoid shift changes during peak periods, than on rail fare differentials. This in turn however means that public transport in general would have to adjust their operating patterns to extend full working day service frequencies to start earlier and finish later than at present.

The relationship between fares is complex, return tickets should be cheaper than two single tickets both peak and off-peak, however for the passenger who can only manage to avoid one of the peak periods the cost of a peak single plus an off-peak single should be cheaper than a peak return, or why bother trying to avoid one of the peak periods?

These criteria are in fact possible to achieve, for example if the differential between the return fare and twice the single fare is set at 10% then the off-peak fare must be set as 62% of the peak fare [i.e. £10 peak single gives a £18 peak return, a £6.20 off-peak single, a £16.20 cost for one way peak plus one way off-peak singles and an £11.20 off-peak return] or if the single/return differential is set at 15% then the off-peak fare would be 45% of the peak fare [i.e. £10 peak single gives a £17 peak return, a £4.50 off-peak single, a £14.50 cost for one way peak plus one way off-peak singles and a £7.70 off-peak return].

My recommendation is to set the single/return differential as 12.5% leading to a peak/off-peak differential of 53% [i.e. £10 peak single gives a £17.50 peak return, a £5.30 off-peak single, a £15.30 cost for one way peak plus one way off-peak singles and an £9.30 off-peak return].

## Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

There should be a presumption against closure of any rail station. This statement would not preclude the removal of a station to a better location either closer to, or more convenient for, the current users, the centre of population or the tourist destination it serves; or for specific operational purposes such as straightening platforms, clearing junctions, providing passing places etc.; or to improve interchange with bus services; or to allow the provision of car parking etc.

In any other situation, closure should only be considered after strenuous efforts, in conjunction with the local rail users group if one exists, otherwise with an independent rail supporters group such as Railfuture Scotland, have been taken to improve passenger usage such as improving the service, nationally advertising the local attractions, locally publicising the benefits of using the station, providing parking and providing bus connections and then only after agreement from the local RTP and the local authority.

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:

It should be remembered that many existing well used stations were established by private developers (including the railway companies) several having been on a speculative basis to support major investment in the surrounding areas.

Provided there is no capital cost to the public purse new station development or even extensions to the network should be welcomed without the need for a STAG or GRIP stages 1-3 assessment, both of which are designed to ensure that capital financing from the public purse is properly assessed.

The proposer should be free to negotiate with the train operator on using the new asset and the franchise be flexible enough to allow for the extra stop(s) or services. It would be up to the proposer to persuade the franchisee of the commercial benefits of using the new infrastructure. The proposer would thus have a major vested interest in ensuring the success of such an investment.

There should also be no bar to the franchise holder itself providing or financing in part or in full any such new infrastructure or improving or expanding the existing infrastructure as has recently been illustrated by Chiltern Railways at far less cost than that quoted by Network Rail.

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:

Network Rail is obviously responsible for the structural maintenance of every cutting, embankment or viaduct required to allow the safe operation of train services and cannot pass on that responsibility to any third party.

Franchisees of stations sharing such structures can only be responsible for the station itself and not the structure upon or within which the station is situated. The mere idea that different parties are responsible for walls above and below a certain height is ludicrous. The franchisee may take on the responsibility for the cosmetic appearance of part of or the whole of such a structure but not the structure itself or its integrity.

It is not necessary for the one organisation to manage, maintain or even own all stations. The franchisee should be free to pass on the management, maintenance or both of any station leased within the franchise to any third party provided that set standards are maintained. The maintenance of such standards would always be the ultimate responsibility of the franchisee. Such third party could be a local tourist authority, local authority, RTP, business or business group, users group, volunteer gardeners or other community group or any combination of the above.

Capital investment in a station could be to reduce maintenance costs, or increase income from sub-leasing station facilities, in which case there should be no requirement for remuneration at the end of the franchise.

Alternatively investment to provide long term improvements to passenger facilities such as resurfacing platforms, new lifts, new station access etc. for which the franchisee could reasonably expect either a reduction in leasing costs or recompense at the end of their holding of the franchise or both, in which case the franchisee should be free to negotiate directly with Network Rail outwith the franchise agreement to vary the terms of their lease prior to making the investment.

The local RTP or Transport Scotland would be expected to support the franchisee in its negotiation with Network Rail if the proposed improvement is shown to be to the long term benefit to passengers, passenger safety or to improve disabled passenger access.

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

Q27 comments:

As stated in the above answer to the previous question, the franchisee should be free to delegate the management and / or maintenance of any franchised station to any third party on the understanding that the responsibility for such matters cannot be devolved.

The existing 'Adopt a Station' scheme should be encouraged and supported and sub-leasing facilities including ticket sales to local businesses etc. should

be facilitated thereby ensuring at least part time manning of the stations involved.

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

Q28 comments:

The idea of categorising stations as suggested seems over-bureaucratic in the extreme and would appear to be devised by an organisation that does not understand the railway industry. This type of categorisation could result in stations where there is a proven demand for some facility, such as improved parking, being denied that facility due to being categorised as a tourist destination and thus does not require parking.

This type of categorisation leads to a tick box mentality which is the last thing we need to improve the railway industry. The entire idea must be consigned to the dustbin.

### **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:

Until such time as High Speed Rail services reach the Central Belt and significantly reduce travel time to London and other major Transport Hubs in England; the standards of comfort in the Scottish services between the Central Belt and the North are upgraded; and timetabling of services north and south of the Central Belt are properly integrated to minimise interchange delays, the Cross Border trains should continue to extend to the Northern Cities although ideally on a more regular timetable.

Scotrail services should co-ordinate with the Cross Border services to provide a regular clock-face timetable between the Northern cities and the Central Belt cities. The greatest benefit to taxpayers and passengers is to provide fast, frequent, regular, reliable, comfortable and 'no hassle' services to encourage the maximum usage of rail services.

The question of which organisation should specify Cross Border services will depend on the political future of Scotland. It may be questionable that the DfT would continue to specify any services north of the major English cities in which case all Cross Border services would have to be specified / subsidised by the Scottish Government from these English cities to and across the border if the rail companies decide that continuation of their services across the border would not be profitable.

For the present, the existing arrangements should be maintained however the allocation of ticket income between the companies (ORCATS) should be

revised to match actual passengers rather than seating capacity.

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:

No! Cross Border services would have no greater opportunities for Scottish connections than they currently have, in fact they would have fewer. If Cross Border services terminated at Edinburgh, passenger journeys to destinations such as Elgin, Dingwall, Oban or Fort William or major centres of population such as Paisley, Inverclyde or Ayr would require a double change of train rather than a single change at Aberdeen, Inverness or Glasgow.

Thus unless Glasgow Crossrail were implemented and through services from Edinburgh to the aforementioned destinations were to be specified in the new franchise, then Edinburgh could not be identified as the rail hub for Scotland.

Waverley is already overcrowded at certain times of the day and significantly more passengers having to interchange there would not provide visitors to Scotland with the experience we need to give them to encourage rail tourism.

Additionally more long distance trains terminating at Edinburgh will result in greater demands on platform space. The only possible benefit I can perceive from having Edinburgh as such a hub would be to provide a slight relief to the track capacity between Waverley and Haymarket but this would be speedily lost to the additional onward services that would be required to serve the rest of the country.

## **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 comments:

The implementation of the EGIP and the other STPR electrification projects during the term of the franchise will result in much of the diesel stock (approx 50% of the type 156/158 units, after cascading the type 170 units no longer required for the Edinburgh~Falkirk High~Glasgow service) being redundant thus there should be no need for major refurbishment of those.

The standards of comfort of the dmu's for long journeys (i.e. those longer than 2 hours) is well below that which passengers, particularly those which we wish to attract from cars, should expect. The shortcomings include cramped accommodation especially legroom and table size, insufficient toilets, inadequate luggage, pram and cycle space, poor window visibility from several seats and poor climate controls. This explains why many passengers prefer East Coast or Cross Country trains to Scotrail trains when they have a choice. Long distance trains should thus be equipped with significantly better rolling stock thus making the remainder of the 156/158 stock redundant and leaving the 170 stock for short to medium distance journeys (i.e. under 2 hours).

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

Q32 comments:

Long distance trains (over 2 hours) should have hot and cold catering services, other intercity and journeys over 1 hour should have trolley catering. All trains should have adequate storage space for luggage and bicycles.

## **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:

Whilst considering mobile phone users on trains a major nuisance, Wi-Fi provision on trains (and at stations where significant waits are likely) is a useful adjunct to travel and an important one for business travel. The priority should thus be its provision firstly on longer (i.e. over 1 hour) intercity journeys followed by other longer journeys.

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:

Whilst acknowledging the annoyance of standing passengers if first class seating is available, I can also understand that passengers paying the significant additional cost for first class travel would object if their accommodation were to be invaded by passengers not paying the supplement.

These passengers currently paying for first class accommodation may decide either not to travel by train in the future or to travel with ordinary tickets which, in either case, would result in a reduction in income to the franchisee. This matter should be left to the franchisee.

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

Q35 comments:

The problems caused by alcohol on trains, in stations and elsewhere are a social problem caused by a few. It would be undesirable to deny such refreshment to the majority of responsible passengers.

One answer could be to prohibit the consumption of alcohol on railway premises and trains not purchased on the premises or the train. The higher prices, smaller quantities and vigilance of the sales staff should inhibit antisocial behaviour.

The main problem arises when passengers are inebriated before reaching the station at unmanned stations or where automatic barriers are in operation however this situation would be unchanged whether or not alcohol was allowed on trains.

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

Q36 comments:

Passenger information should be used to attract passengers onto the rail network as well as keeping them informed after they have entered the system.

To this end, easily read (from the road) real time information should be provided at station entrances, and car park entrances where applicable, (other than at the major terminus stations) indicating waiting time for next train in each direction, travel time to each terminus and train frequency.

Times of last return trains from the termini should also be displayed, although obviously not in real time, and the ticket costs.

The greatest cause of dissatisfaction is the lack of timely and accurate information when the system is not operating as expected, particularly when rail staff cannot provide the information.

All the above information should also be made available on the web and by mobile phone.



## **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:

Yes - a minimum service between existing termini should be specified but any intermediate stops or additional termini left to commercial influences.

There could be a question of whether Saturday night services should also be included.

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:

There could be a case for contracting sleeper services separately particularly if they could be integrated with the Cornish Riviera sleeper service thus combining all UK sleeper services under the one umbrella.

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:

The main business appeal of sleeper services is the ability to be in London for a 9.00 o'clock start without needing an excessively early trip to the airport or a day before trip with an overnight stay, or vice versa for trips from London.

The main tourist appeal is effectively an additional day's stay on the trip.

In the case of the Highland services earlier or later services would have no effect, in the case of the Lowland services, the introduction of High Speed Rail services with earlier and later trains would possibly make the sleeper services redundant but as these services will not reach Scotland until long after the new franchise period has expired they can be ignored for the present consultation.

The current resurgence of popularity for these services is indicative of the value of the services to the economy.

The addition of Oban, Kyle of Lochalsh or Thurso as sleeper destinations should be left to the successful franchisee to negotiate separately however there should be proper connecting services between sleeper services and onward connections to these destinations, e.g. a service from Crianlarich to Oban connecting with the sleeper service is required rather than the currently timetabled 2<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> hr interchange.

Proper integration is also required between the Inverness service and the Orkney shipping service from Thurso.

The sleeper facilities should be at least to the standard of the Cornish Riviera Sleepers, en suite facilities are probably not essential but family cabins should be available at least on the Highland services.

Single cabins and seating accommodation should be available on the Lowland services.

### **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:

The franchisee has little opportunity to reduce carbon emissions other than to ensure that diesel units are not used on electrified lines, however their road or platform vehicles could be electric where feasible or hybrid elsewhere thus performance indicators for carbon emissions could be set.

Installation of solar panels on station and other roofs should be encouraged to reduce their overall power consumption.

Waste disposal however is totally within the franchisees control and a 100% recycling target, other than residual floor/ platform sweepings should be set.

Biodiversity is only really feasible in stations and other premises with gardens and the franchise should encourage their maintenance possibly by assisting local groups to adopt gardens etc.