

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 Councillor

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 **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 ☐ 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

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:

Throughout the network many lines perform both functions (inter-city services may be economic, with stopping services providing a primarily social function for example). There is a need to ensure an appropriate balance between economic and social railways, recognising the role of providing access to towns and cities and enabling a choice of transport options. If the franchise were separated into these two elements, services to, from and within the North East would likely be considered “economic” but it would be essential to retain an element of social support. For example, services from the Central Belt running across Aberdeen may be economic for most of the journey, but possibly “social” through to Inverurie?

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

Q2 comments:

Offer the future rail operator a longer franchise to allow the Scottish Government to insist on service improvements for passengers. Longer trains and faster long-distance journeys should be delivered as a result. Not cuts, overcrowding and closed services.

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

Q3 comments:

No comment

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

Q4 comments:

No comment

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

Q5 comments:

No comment

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

Q6 comments:

The Scottish Government should set clear targets, relating to safety, efficiency, quality and contribution to social and economic objectives, as well as the more operational aspects including reliability, punctuality and revenue returns. Only by making trains a cheaper, faster, reliable alternative to the car can we hope to encourage more people off our clogged up motorways.

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

Q7 comments:

No comment

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

Q8 comments:

Fines.

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:

Aligned with routes.

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

Q11 comments:

Passenger satisfaction surveys

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

Q12 comments:

Performance has often been achieved at the expense of journey times. Passengers, particularly on long distance routes, would prefer improved end-to-end journey times, even if only achieved 90% of the time.

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:

No comment

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

Q14 comments:

Passenger surveys

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:

Unaware there was a 10 minute limit – my experience belies that. Intercity travellers should expect a seat, with more tolerance in that regard for commuter services.

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 stations should be kept to a minimum on intercity services. Local services can interconnect at say Aberdeen, Dundee and Haymarket/Waverley and Queen Street.

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:

Government should require a minimum level of service provision but with the ability for operators to provide a greater level of service if they wish to do so. The potential for extra carriages should be considered.

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

Q18 comments:

No comment

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

Q19 comments:

No comment

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments:

Best value for both the tax payer and the travelling passenger

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:

Fares should be capped by the Scottish Government, but with operators able to offer cheaper fares as an incentive to use less-well patronised services.

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:

No comment

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:

The aim should be to accommodate demand, not pricing people off the railways. The present practice of very high fares for tickets bought on the day of travel does not appear to achieve any stated objective.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

An open consultation should consider opportunities for opening stations or increasing stopping patterns.

The success of investment in recent years – Airdrie-Bathgate, the Alloa line, the Paisley Canal line, Glasgow to Aberdeen now terminating at Inverurie, Dyce and Laurencekirk stations – shows there is a demand.

Further stops beckon in the Aberdeen area for example at Kintore, Newtonhill, Altens, Cove, Bucksburn etc. Extend the Inverness-Aberdeen services south to Stonehaven or even Montrose. More trains stopping at Portlethen. In other words, Crossrail, as proposed by Nestrans and supported by Aberdeenshire Council and Aberdeen City Council. The A90 and A96 trunk roads struggle to cope at times, and meanwhile the under-used railway line runs parallel.

Revive the Glasgow Airport link.

Station closures should be a very last resort and only taken once future projections have also been taken into account.

We are suffering now from some of the mad decisions taken at the time of Beeching. At that time railways were suffering from a lack of investment and were not appealing to the travelling public. Now we all make more journeys, live further from work, and take more holidays. The railway system can take the strain off the road network, and reduce the need for air travel.

Vision and aspiring for better is required, not closures.

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:

Where a third party feels that a station or service would be beneficial, it should be acceptable for the franchise operator to implement a trial with funding support to ascertain the benefits. Councils, regional transport partnerships or other organisations should be involved.

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:

No comment

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

Q27 comments:

Promotional campaigns are required so that residents know when services are available, and at what cost. For example, I cannot recall any significant publicity campaign for Portlethen rail services.

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

Q28 comments:

Three.

1] Aberdeen is a primary level station at which all trains call and many services terminate. Aberdeen has toilet facilities, shop and refreshments and First Class waiting facility

2] Dyce, Inverurie and Stonehaven are secondary stations at which all through trains should stop. These should be staffed with indoor waiting facilities, ticket machines as well as toilets, catering and a shop. Dyce is due to be upgraded.

3] Third level stations at which local trains call. Basic platforms and bus-shelter type waiting areas.

All stations within the north east should have ticket machines, electronic real-time information points, CCTV and telephone helpline (all stations except Portlethen meet these standards).

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:

Emphatically yes. The world does not revolve round the Central Belt. The East Coast and Virgin trains are vastly more comfortable than the ScotRail services.

It is unacceptable to expect passengers from north of the Central Belt to change in Edinburgh for cross-border services.

Since they are cross-border surely the administrations of both countries should come to an agreement?

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, and none.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments:

No comment

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

Q32 comments:

Toilets, access for people with a disability, and catering (trolley services as a minimum)

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:

Commendable.

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:

No comment

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

Q35 comments:

Is there a problem? If so it should be tackled by enforcement of current laws, by the police (including local forces if Transport Police are not available)

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

Q36 comments:

No comment

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:

Sleeper services should be maintained. They provide one of the few alternatives to air travel from Aberdeen and are important part of travel choices available for business travel and leisure .

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 comment

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:

Apart from confirming Aberdeen is appropriate, no comment.

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:

No comment