

Hugh Morris

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: No view

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

Q2 comments: The longer the better - to avoid 'short termism'

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

Q3 comments: No view

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

Q4 comments: No view

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

Q5 comments: No view

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

Q6 comments: No view

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

Q7 comments: No view

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

Q8 comments: No view

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: Both

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: By responding to passenger's views

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

Q12 comments: Where there is a conflict: favour times over other performance indicators

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 view

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

Q14 comments: No view

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: Increase the capacity limit - without putting a specified limit upon standing times, all efforts should be made to limit this

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: My principal reason for filling in this questionnaire is to stress my absolute objection to any change that reduces the number and frequency of those services that start south of the border and continue beyond Edinburgh. In particular I would not wish to see a cessation or reduction in those services between London and Leuchars involving a change in Edinburgh. Changing trains is for many (especially the elderly, disabled or young) a challenge that needs to be kept to a minimum if rail services - of which I am a supporter - are to become the choice of most.

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: It is a balance but I believe that, as a public service, it should not be solely determined by customer demand - but rather that minority interests need to be safeguarded in a civilised society

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

Q18 comments: No view

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

Q19 comments: No view

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: To seek to support and maintain the use of the rail service - ideally using low fares as an incentive to attract travel off the roads and to thereby ensure a larger usage of rail travel (if necessary through subsidy) leading to a long term viability for rail

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: Nil to add to above answer to 20

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: See 20 (again)

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: For those who can travel off-peak and for whom the saving is an incentive I believe it desirable to encourage them to do so - and therefore would support a large differential between fares for peak and off-peak travel

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: By being influenced by the need to maintain as wide a network of service as possible. The Beeching cuts were driven by economic decisions that have in the long run proved to be very bad for our national rail network. Clearly usage and public opinion should help inform such decisions but the guiding rule should be to avoid a reduction in service.

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: No view

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: Probably 'yes' but how it should work I do not know - presumably there are examples we should be able to copy from the Continent where, generally speaking, the infrastructure seems much better managed

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

Q27 comments: By their genuine involvement

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

Q28 comments: No view

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: My principal reason for filling in this questionnaire is to stress my absolute objection to any change that reduces the number and frequency of those services that start south of the border and continue beyond Edinburgh. In particular I would not wish to see a cessation or reduction in those services between London and Leuchars involving a change in Edinburgh. Changing trains is for many (especially the elderly, disabled or

young) a challenge that needs to be kept to a minimum if rail services - of which I am a supporter - are to become the choice of most. This is the answer that I gave to Q16 above.

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 in passing it is worth noting that a train stopping at Waverley (before continuing north) affords just as much opportunity for 'Scottish connections' as one terminating there; and in answer to the second question (and from my perspective) no additional benefits at all, merely disadvantages

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: No view

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

Q32 comments: I would restrict service trolleys and bars to long journeys only and would be very happy if, in addition to no smoking, trains were an alcohol free area

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: If train travel is to be attractive then it is clear that this is a high priority (for some) - perhaps its distribution could be limited to certain carriages

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 view - although my priority would be for good universal 'second class' over first class

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

Q35 comments: I strongly support this proposal. The evidence that alcohol causes antisocial behaviour on trains is already there. No doubt banning it would cause those opposed to object on grounds of freedom of choice, 'that it damages the innocent pleasures of the responsible drinker' etc but, like the ban on smoking it comes to be accepted and is ultimately for the good of all

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

Q36 comments: I believe that there has already been a great improvement in this

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 - I would be very sorry to see this service discontinued or curtailed - and therefore: No, it should not be left to the train operating company as a purely 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: So long as it continues, I do not mind

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 appeal is one of the great convenience of saving time on those rare occasions that I have used the service (mainly in my case to Leuchars and less frequently to Fort William) - I personally find the late departure /early arrival to be part of its attraction, but, no doubt, were the hours to change it would appeal to others differently.

I have never used the Inverness sleeper but it must be of great value to those who do - Oban would I suspect have a considerable appeal. Might it be possible to alternate services to Fort William and Oban as a means of seeing which had the greater usage? And then to allocate the ratio between them accordingly. Of course, if the economics allowed for it, I would prefer that the present services continued and that Oban was an additional service.

I find the present level of service quite adequate and would prefer not to have to pay more for a higher level of service. I do, however, know that there are those who think the breakfast poor and for whom a 'proper dinner' would be a great attraction - here I am thinking of the service south out of Fort William which as it crosses Rannoch Moor is, especially in the summer months, one of the great train journeys in the world and is a much under publicised joy.

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 view