

## 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 Mr  Ms  Mrs  Miss  Dr  *Please tick as appropriate*

#### 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  No

- (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

No

## 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 Although I see some possible attractions in the dual focus approach I am not convinced that this would be a positive development. There is a danger that the "social" provision could become a second class service and that parts of the country covered by the social element would not see innovative and attractive developments being introduced elsewhere. There could also be problems in attracting managerial staff of high quality to run the social element as this could be seen, in terms of career development, as a less attractive option than involvement in the economic rail element. I would prefer the existing franchise system for services within Scotland.

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

Q2 Although I see merits in terms of longer rail franchises in general terms, I recognise that the possibility of constitutional change in Scotland in the not too distant future makes shorter franchises more appropriate at the moment. We do not want to be stuck for too long with a system that might not be seen, in future, as appropriate for Scotland's future needs.

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

Q3 Risk support mechanisms are a complex issue on which I do not feel qualified to comment.

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

Q4 Profit sharing is clearly desirable.

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

Q5 Third parties can clearly make an important contribution in niche areas but should not contribute to core services.

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

Q6 No comment.

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

Q7 No comment.

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

Q8 Fines and ultimately early termination of the franchise after appropriate warnings.

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

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

Q9 Good performance and successful innovation should be rewarded in financial terms. Poor performance should also 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 The performance regime should be aligned with routes and service groups so that staff involved can see some reward for extra effort that they may be putting in to enhance performance on their route or service group.

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

Q11 Through organised discussion between franchise holders, representatives of Network Rail and appropriate bodies involving the public, including passenger groups such as the Scottish Association for Public Transport, local authorities etc.

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

Q12 At the start of a franchise there must be agreement on journey times that must be achieved. Performance should not be enhanced subsequently through extending journey times (apart from exceptional and agreed circumstances).

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 There should be efforts to establish a regime that covers all aspects of stations and service delivery.

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

Q14 It is not clear whether SQUIRE visitation dates are announced in advance. If they are known in advance there should be increased emphasis on spot checks through unannounced visitations by inspection teams. The idea of more emphasis on quality management schemes organised by franchise holders should be followed up.

### **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 Acceptable standing times depend on the nature of the service. Standing is not acceptable on a regular basis for journeys of more than about 20 minutes. Efforts should be made to avoid the possibility of standing for any period of time for passengers on inter-city services. Standing is, however, almost inevitable for some shorter journeys on local services at peak times. Some passengers who have more flexible schedules may choose to travel by less crowded off-peak services and this should continue to be encouraged through the fare structure.

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 There are not enough facilities at present for efficient interchange between rail and other modes of transport. The strategy emphasises “..transition to a low carbon economy by provision of *integrated* and cost-effective public transport”. The current efforts at integration of public transport in Scotland are completely inadequate. Within the UK, as a result of policies of successive governments, the emphasis within the public transport sector is on competition between rail and other modes of public transport such as bus and long distance coach transport. The emphasis should, instead, be on creating a truly integrated system that allows public transport to compete effectively with private and company-owned cars. Efficient interchange and through ticketing should be a central part of a strategy aimed at integration.

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 Government should establish clear expectations in terms of journey times and service frequency at the start of the franchising process. There could be some form of review during the period of the franchise that takes account of customer demand.

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

Q18 See answer to Q17.

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

Q19 There should be some form of recognition and reward for successful innovation. See answer to Q9.

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 Fares policy should seek to reduce car usage in Scotland, thus reducing the need for further expensive investment in the roads network and assisting in the move towards a low-carbon economy.

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 In my opinion the setting of fares and the amount of public subsidy should be a strategic issue that forms part of a deliberate attempt to increase rail usage and reduce the use of cars. This would be valid for all types of journey and all areas. It follows that there is a major role for government in regulating fares.

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 Fares should not increase at a rate greater than the inflation rate. There should not be any greater increase for sections of the network that have been enhanced since this discourages movement of new business from road to rail.

The improvements should be such that they attract new business in themselves and thus additional income.

In general, taxpayers have few opportunities to oppose spending on new road developments (other than through elections and planning processes) and taxpayer subsidy of rail services in Scotland is appropriate and desirable, provided rail usage continues to increase. In due course this should lead to reduced road expenditure and to reductions in other costs (such as NHS costs due to reduced road accident rates). Such cost-benefit information is taken into account in considering new rail developments and should be taken into account in considering taxpayer subsidies.

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 The difference between peak time and off-peak fares should be increased to encourage more off-peak travel. Peak fares which are about double the cost of the equivalent off-peak fares should become the norm but care should be taken to identify the peak period carefully as this may not be the same on all routes. Many routes might not have any services defined as peak time services. Where peak-time services exist there should be clearer information available to passengers about which services are regarded as peak-time services. Off-peak train usage could be increased if more provision were made for car parking at stations. At present many potential users of off-peak services are deterred by the fact that car parks at many stations are full by 9am and remain full until 5.30pm or 6pm when peak-time commuters return. Improvements in car parking facilities could do more than any fares policy to attract off-peak passengers.

### **Scottish stations**

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

Q24 More consideration should be given to matching station locations to potential demand and relocation of stations should become an option that is considered more often. Closure should not be considered without careful consideration of some kind of relocation and the potential for further development of the station involved. Some under-used stations might be used more if good car parking facilities could be developed there, especially if car parking is very limited at stations nearby.

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 See answer to Q24

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 No comment. This appears to be an accounting and legal issue.

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

Q27 More information targeted at the local community and special temporary incentives to promote rail travel for those living in that area. Off-peak train usage could be increased and car-mileage reduced if more provision were made for car parking at stations. At present many potential users of off-peak services are deterred by the fact that car parks at many stations are full by 9am and remain full until 5.30pm or 6pm when peak-time commuters return. Improvements in car parking facilities should be a priority.

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

Q28 One comment is that more stations in Central Scotland should be staffed for most of the day as part of the effort to reduce the current level of fare avoidance. More opportunities should be provided for other commercial organisations to contribute to improving facilities at stations (e.g. through stalls offering refreshments, sale of newspapers etc.) Where this is done at present (e.g. Hyndland) it appears to be successful. Off-peak train usage could be increased and car-mileage reduced if more provision were made for car parking at stations. At present many potential users of off-peak services are deterred by the fact that car parks at many stations are full by 9am and remain full until 5.30pm or 6pm when peak-time commuters return. Improvements in car parking facilities should be a priority.

### **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 I think that in terms of providing an attractive alternative to services provided by the airlines cross-border services originating in Aberdeen and Inverness should continue. Truncating these services at Edinburgh and transferring to Scotrail services would be very unattractive for passengers, especially those with luggage. There must be no down-grading of these services. There is a need for constructive dialogue between Scottish ministers and their UK counterparts on this (as has happened recently in the case of the proposed improvements to rolling stock for the sleeper services).

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 Journey times from Edinburgh and Glasgow to London and many other destinations in England are now quite competitive with air travel but this is not the case for passengers from Aberdeen or Inverness. Rail must compete for them in terms of the quality of the experience rather than on journey time. I see no benefits to passengers in terms of an Edinburgh hub.

### **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 More cooperation between franchise holders in different areas of the UK in specifying common rolling-stock requirements.

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

Q32 Some toilet facilities – but not necessarily all to the standard required for disabled access. Trolley/buffet service on longer-distance services. Services that depend largely on tourist traffic (e.g. West Highland line and route to Kyle of Lochalsh) should have enhanced levels of comfort and seats that align properly with windows. Switzerland has good examples of such services.

### **Passengers – information, security and services**

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

Q33 Wi-Fi services that are free to the user could be very attractive, especially for business users and could contribute to a reduction in car usage for business journeys. This should be a priority. Mobile phone service provision does not really present many problems at present, except in tunnels. Perhaps more “quiet” coaches on longer distance routes would be a good thing.

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 The present level of provision appears acceptable. Special offers in terms of first-class fares for off-peak services could improve usage and provide some (small) additional income.



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

Q35 Alcohol consumption on trains should not be the subject of a blanket ban. Banning of alcohol on days when football matches are being played is sensible but a general ban should be resisted strongly.

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

Q36 Current provision is good except when unexpected problems arise. More accurate and detailed information should be available to passengers when things go wrong.

### **Caledonian Sleeper**

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

Q37 Sleeper services should be specified.

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 It should be contracted for separately. I feel that a single franchise for sleeper services throughout the UK is a possible solution. Sleeper services between London and Scotland would be one part of that broader franchise. Current speculation that the former "International" platforms at Waterloo station could be used for all sleeper services from London (instead of Euston and Paddington Stations as at present) is of considerable interest. This development of a single sleeper base in London could of course move forward whether or not there is a single sleeper franchise. A separate franchise for sleeper services between London and Scotland could fit within this scheme.

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 Early and late day-time services cannot replace sleepers because of the lack of public transport early and late in the day to get passengers to and from the stations where their long-distance journeys start or finish. The value of sleeper service is particularly significant for destinations furthest from London.

### **Environmental issues**

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

Q40 Environmental issues should be a factor in developing some of the performance indicators –especially in terms of efforts to change modes of transport from road to rail. Reductions in miles travelled by car should be a key objective and this must be taken into account in terms of performance indicators for transport policy in Scotland. This is more a strategic issue than one for the franchise agreement, in my opinion. For example off-peak train usage could be increased and car-mileage reduced if more provision were made for car parking at stations. At present many potential users of off-peak services are deterred by the fact that car parks at many stations are full by 9am and remain full until 5.30pm or 6pm when peak-time commuters return. Incentives to invest in improvements in car parking facilities should be a priority.