

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: none.

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

Q2 comments: 5 years – long enough to see if the operator is any good or not

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

Q3 comments: none

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

Q4 comments: none

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

Q5 comments: they shouldn't

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

Q6 comments: customer satisfaction levels

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

Q7 comments: high enough to be a serious financial penalty

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

Q8 comments: financial pain

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: one system

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

Q11 comments: customer satisfaction surveys

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

Q12 comments: realistic journey times and no cancellations

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: low levels of cancellations

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

Q14 comments: adequate seats for the number of passengers

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: 10 minutes seems long enough

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: no. That's a really stupid idea. Direct services are highly valuable.

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: adequate frequency should be directed in the absence of genuine competition

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

Q18 comments: at least as good as the current service with fewer people standing

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

Q19 comments: rewards for increased seated occupancy with increased service frequency

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: to cover costs as far as is reasonable

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: all should be regulated by government

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: that's a political decision. Fares should go up by less than inflation (CPI)

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: high enough to make off peak travel attractive

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: those with enough travellers a year – will depend on rurality of station

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: dunno

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: dunno

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

Q27 comments: dunno

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

Q28 comments: dunno

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: yes they should. Cross border services are essential to reduce the numbers of people using planes. The current cross-border services are the absolute minimum required.

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 this is a really stupid idea. You might as well have services terminate at Berwick.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: dunno

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, enough seats, adequate luggage space. Longer distances should have more of both.

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: wifi would be useful

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 first class would encourage greater car travel. First class service attracts people who would use other means of travel if not available.

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

Q35 comments: actual evidence that consumption of alcohol is a problem. Normal trains isn't an issue. Late night trains have people smoking and drinking on them with no sanction

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

Q36 comments: informing passengers in advance when their train is late or cancelled

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: the sleeper service is a vital link between Scotland and England. It must continue to 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 comments: it is an essential =cross-border link and must be retained.

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: all are vital local links with London and any loss would just result in greater plane travel with loss of local links to 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 comments: greater electrification