

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:

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

Q2 comments:

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

Q3 comments:

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

Q4 comments:

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

Q5 comments:

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

Q6 comments:

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

Q7 comments:

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

Q8 comments:

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments:

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:

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

Q11 comments:

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

Q12 comments:

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:

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

Q14 comments:

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:

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:

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:

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

Q18 comments:

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

Q19 comments:

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments:

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:

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:

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:

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

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:

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:

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

Q27 comments:

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

Q28 comments:

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:

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:

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments:

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

Q32 comments:

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:

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:

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

Q35 comments:

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

Q36 comments:

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 level of sleeper services should continue to be specified and this level should be no lower than currently provided. As a purely commercial matter, the wider economic and social benefits of the sleeper services to London and Scotland would not be captured by the franchisee, as they will have a narrower short-term commercial interest which is likely to see services

end.

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 are examples in the UK rail network where small franchisees may have delivered improvements that would perhaps not have been realised had the route been part of a large franchisee. For example, the c2c franchise has received more management attention than had it been part of a larger franchise and has delivered consistently high performance levels. The downside, however, is greater management overhead costs overall.

This example may or may not be appropriate with the sleeper services. In any case, the franchisee should have the remit to identify new markets and grow and improve services over time.

The services should be mandated in any case.

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:

For me, the key appeal of the sleeper service is that it enables me to spend a full day in London/Scotland, travel on the sleeper, and then have a full day in Scotland/London. This is the most productive use of my time possible (whether for business or leisure) and far preferable to taking a 5am flight or spending an entire day travelling. In any case, it is not normally possible to carry sufficient luggage on flights, which is another benefit of the sleeper.

I normally use the sleeper service to Inverness for leisure. The wider economic benefits for the highlands are that it enables me to visit 2/3 times a year, hire a car, stay in hotels, eat in pubs and restaurants etc. I would not visit without the sleeper as the journey times by any other mode are prohibitive and connections from London to continental Europe would then be a better option for short breaks.

The proposed reductions in journey times noted, particularly to highland destinations, are not material as the vast majority of a day would still be spent

travelling. Changes to provide more early and late trains would not alter the appeal of the sleeper to me.

I have used the Fort William, Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow sleepers. Oban would provide better connectivity with CalMac services than Fort William does, but Fort William does provide a very useful connection to the highlands for leisure. The better solution is to route the sleeper to either Fort William or Oban, then improve the connections from the sleeper service to the other destination. Currently there is a 2 ½ hour wait at Crianlarich for an Oban connection which makes the service unappealing.

It would be very useful for the sleeper to also run on Saturday evenings. En-suite accommodation would not make me more likely to travel and, given the journeys only last one night, seems unnecessary. It is often difficult to obtain a berth on Thursday/Friday/Sunday evening and if en-suite facilities reduced berths this would no doubt make availability even worse.

The wider environmental benefits of the sleeper service should be considered during any evaluations. It provides a good alternative to flying and, with fuel and air travel costs due to increase, the attraction of the rail service will improve.

I would be prepared to pay more for better facilities and/or services. The food provision is good value and fit for purpose. It would be useful to have electrical sockets for mobiles and Wi-Fi. Ensuring the air conditioning always works should be a top priority. Selling ear plugs may also help many passengers.

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: