

## Consultation Questions

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### 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: Rail Services are a public service, not a luxury, all emphasis must be on service provision, not private sector profit – not-for-profit organisations or better still, public sector operation is a must

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

Q2 comments: no more than a single parliament

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

Q3 comments: all risk should be with the franchise holder – none against the public purse

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

Q4 comments: yes, but only for those earning below £30K and actual Train Drivers – no managers or management

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

Q5 comments: extremely limited, heavily policed, or better still. Not at all

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

Q6 comments: extra time off instead of financial gain, perhaps charity-giving vouchers or similar

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

Q7 comments: all the assets of the company, plus all the personal assets of the management/shareholders

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

Q8 comments: personal bankruptcy and/or imprisonment for directors

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

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

Q9 comments: only penalise poor performance, and ensure targets are set high

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: obviously with actual routes and services – one size, does not fit all!

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

Q11 comments: ensure passengers/staff can over rule management decisions that are based on financial gain

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

Q12 comments: safety at all times, life is too fast in the pursuit of profit already

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: as above, there should not be incentives except not being penalised

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

Q14 comments: staff and passenger focus groups with real powers

### **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 – who are you kidding, I often stand for the whole trip, both local and long distance

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: yes, only challenges will be to get transport managers to put the emphasis on service instead of profit; re-nationalisation of buses would be a start

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: customer demand, but with basic regular provision as a basis to work from

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: fine them heavily if passenger satisfaction levels fall below 98%

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments: to make them affordable – look to Europe, there train fares are a fraction of what they are in Scotland/UK and the services are excellent, with little or no subsidies

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: they should be fixed and affordable to all – the current ticket

prices are far too high, dis-encouraging rail travel, and down right profiteering on some routes such as Glasgow/Edinburgh and 'peak' 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 comments: agreed this could be difficult, considering the very poor quality of Scottish/UK management, politicians and senior civil servants – perhaps it would be best to hand the whole thing over to a (mainland) European Public Sector body to run, better still hand over all levels of Scottish/British Government to same – couldn't possibly be any worse and would always be cheaper (lower taxes)

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: most people simply don't have a choice, peak fares are simply profiteering, put more trains on to cope with rush hours instead of trying to price people off the railways

### **Scottish stations**

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

Q24 comments: geographic and use. Ensuring no where gets abandoned by some dodgy 'formula' worked out by a £1,000 an hour consultant, without a clue, just a fancy suit and line in PowerPoint

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: Scottish local authorities are in the main, utterly contemptible, much the same for businesses (and Souter/Stagecoach should never be allowed near another penny of public money, ever!

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: one organisation to run the whole lot; with local devolution to aid prioritise local issue etc – franchising and private sector involvement will only lead to higher cost, poorer, services and exploited staff

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

Q27 comments: joint management committees and continuous consultation

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

Q28 comments: seating and rest rooms (quiet) instead of miniature shopping malls – perhaps operating a business on a station should be limited to companies with head offices within 25 miles to promote local employment, business and re-investment in local economies/communities

### **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: of course, Scotland doesn't stop at Edinburgh! Just ensure equal profit sharing models to stop 'English' companies profiteering at the expense of smaller Scottish operations

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: if there is to be an 'Edinburgh hub, don't put it at Waverly – put it half way between Glasgow and Edinburgh with shuttle services to both – e.g. Falkirk area as a new transport hub

### **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 comments: stop buying expensive foreign rolling stock in complex, often underhand, long term deals – with Scotland's engineering expertise and capability why can't rolling stock be made (under licence if needed) in Scotland?

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

Q32 comments: fair priced food/refreshments, silent/child-free coaches and re-introduction of smoking coaches

## **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: don't bother – anybody who really needs to contact 'the office' will already be able to do so from their own funded equipment

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: get rid of first class – rarely used (how many empty coaches do 'you' always walk past trying to find the stuffed cattle wagons – make trains a fair comfortable place for all

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

Q35 comments: none, except on football/rugby/event trains/services, just throw people off if they get drunk/misbehave, fixed limit of drink per person (could be done by showing ticket to bar) – one drink per hour's travel time

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

Q36 comments: currently there is often very little except on the actual stations – better communication in regard to progress/delays would be an improvement

## **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, considering the distances/journey times, there is no reason to stop sleeper services, except private sector greed

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: remain within the Scottish Rail Service

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: time the trains to suit the journeys – current provision is fine though additional services should be considered, especially at ‘busy’ times of the year for these destinations, make ‘bunk rooms available so ‘poorer’ travellers can benefit

### **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: electrification as soon as possible would be the obvious answer – wind farms are very suitable to power more remote regions