

## 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 comment

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

Q2 comments: no comment

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

Q3 comments: no comment

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

Q4 comments: no comment

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

Q5 comments: no comment

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

Q6 comments: no comment

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

Q7 comments: no comment

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

Q8 comments: no comment

## **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: no comment

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

Q11 comments: no comment

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

Q12 comments: surely journey times are part of performance

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: What is this?

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

Q14 comments: SQUIRE system should be publicised. Passengers should be able to contact SQUIRE with concerns which could influence inspection regime

## **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 is probably about right. As far as I know there are currently no capacity restrictions on railway coaches unlike buses where there are limits on seated and standing passengers. Similar capacity restrictions should be applied to rail coaches

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. I would suggest trying, in the middle of winter, the existing interchange at Perth for Inverness/Aberdeen to Edinburgh/Glasgow trains to experience the full disadvantage of such ideas.

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: Government should direct minimum levels of service for frequency and journey time

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

Q18 comments: Targeted specification

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

Q19 comments: no comment

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments: To encourage the highest possible usage of rail transport

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: I cannot understand the logic in the current system where standard singles and returns are only regulated in the Edinburgh area. Surely these tickets should be regulated throughout Scotland. Types of regulated fare should be for the whole of Scotland and not by geographical area nor journey type.

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: As the UK government appear to be changing from RPI to CPI for benefits, pensions etc. it would be logical to change to this index for rail fares. Increased fares for enhanced sections of the network would cause inconsistencies. For example Glasgow-Edinburgh has been improved therefore increased fares, but Ayr – Dunbar has in general not been improved therefore no increase, but uses Glasgow-Edinburgh.

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: There may be a case for an off-peak season ticket

### **Scottish stations**

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

Q24 comments: I would question the statistics on Table 5. I do not know how the statistics are derived now, but I know that previously station passenger figures were based on ticket sales and so passengers from minor stations were often allocated to major stations as the ticket issued was between major stations. Statistics based on ticket sales also ignored season tickets being used for intermediate stations and rover tourist tickets. I would suggest that where there are stations close together there is a passenger demand. Considering stations less than a mile apart is very simplistic, after all Glasgow Central and Glasgow Queen Street are less than a mile apart and both serve the north Clyde electric line.

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: There may be some merit in a third party contributing to promotion of a station or service for example as part of a major planning application. Local government should not, as this is merely a transfer of responsibility from the responsible public body. In all cases the rail company has to remain responsible for maintenance.

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: This is a matter of rail safety and economics.

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

Q27 comments: This is buck passing!

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

Q28 comments: Destination station category is illogical. Such a station would also be an origin. Fort William and Kyle of Lochalsh may be used by tourist but are also used as origin stations by passengers from a large catchment area who are likely to need to drive to the station and therefore parking at the stations is necessary.

### **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! The origin of the East Coast mainline services to Inverness and Aberdeen was that when these trains arrived in Edinburgh they originally were overnighed at Haymarket, as there was not sufficient time to clean them etc and then make the return journey to London so it was better use of the trains to continue to Inverness and Aberdeen. This is presumably still the case. The Scotrail services that would provide the connection service to Inverness have insufficient luggage space and are normally busy. There is also the difficulty in holding connections if the London train is late. I recently travelled from London on the Inverness train and it was two hours late at Edinburgh, due to a fatality in the north of England. Would Scotrail either hold a train or put on another train in such circumstances. I doubt it, as they will not hold the north line trains if a train from the south is late arriving in Inverness.

As the service is the East Coast Mainline franchise, Obviously Department of Transport should specify with input from Scottish Ministers, as presumably happens with all the other cross border services. Joined up government!

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! there would be no benefit from an Edinburgh Hub. A check of bookings would show that the through services are preferred to the existing change at Edinburgh services.

## **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 comments: No comment

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

Q32 comments: Trains should be suitable for the routes they serve. In particular long distance trains should have comfortable seating, adequate luggage space and toilets (with sufficient water capacity including an allowance for delays. I would suggest that the French SNCF – TER trains would be a good standard to try and achieve, although modified to suit the smaller UK gauge.

## **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: Lower priority than facilities mentioned above. If there is to be mobile phone provision then there should also be “silent” coaches

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: If specification is by maximum permitted standing time then the franchisee would have the choice of either increasing the coaching stock or removing first class.

For long distance trains where most seats are pre-booked the franchisee should have to increase capacity if booked demand often exceeds say 90% of capacity.

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

Q35 comments: Firstly is there a problem outside services which are carrying football fans. I would suggest that if there are problems then the solution is for train staff to radio ahead and police to meet the train at the next station, where they can either charge those that are causing the problem or just take them off the train and let them find another form of transport. Passengers who enjoy a drink with a meal or snack should not be penalised. Catering staff on trains should not sell drink to passengers who are under the influence of alcohol.

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

Q36 comments: Stations should have real-time information boards. If delayed trains are diverted from their normal platform then timeous information should be given. There should be real-time information boards in coaches. Where there are delays staff should inform passengers of the cause and likely length of delays.

### **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.

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: In some ways it is illogical to have the sleeper service as part of the Scotrail franchise as they are the only cross border services. I understand that the sleeper service receives no cross service subsidy from the franchisee therefore there is no benefit to having it as part of the Scotrail franchise. Perhaps it should be either a separate franchise or included with one of the other cross-border franchises which would give the marketing opportunity of one-way sleeper other way day coach.

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 It appears as if the UK government has already decided on an upgrade. I am not sure what is meant by the first point. Is this early and later sleepers or day trains? No early or later trains could compete with the sleeper trains to Aberdeen, Inverness and Fort William. It is doubtful if an early morning train to arrive before 9am would be more desirable than the Edinburgh / Glasgow sleeper. Surveys would be needed to see if there would be more demand for an Oban service than a Fort William service. Perhaps a normal service for

one town with a sleeper for the other with a connection at Crianlaroch.?

### **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 Comment