

## 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?

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

10. Should the performance regime be aligned with actual routes or service groups, or should there be one system for the whole of Scotland?

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

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

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

### **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?

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?

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?

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

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

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

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)?

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?

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?

### **Scottish stations**

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

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?

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?

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

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

### **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?

I am responding to this consultation as a regular user of the Caledonian Sleeper Service. It is vital that the sleeper service continues to go north of Edinburgh so that the northern part of Scotland doesn't become the economic equivalent of Alaska. I am a career professional who is considering re-locating to Aberdeenshire because the sleeper service provides good links with London. If this was removed I would have to rethink that decision. Air services are more often disrupted by the weather (e.g fog) and routes can be withdrawn by the operators at any time. Not to mention the fact that they're environmentally undesirable. If the North of Scotland is to be economically active, it needs reliable **direct** train services to London.

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?

As above

## **Rolling stock**

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

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

As a regular user of the Caledonian Sleeper I think it's unnecessary to provide en-suite berths. However it would be advantageous to negotiate reduced price access to showers at Euston. Most importantly, and often overlooked, is the need to provide somewhere safe to store luggage. The current left-luggage store in Euston closes in the early evening, making it impossible to use for a service which leaves the station at 11pm.

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

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

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?

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

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

The Caledonian Sleeper website is totally unfit for purpose and recently had to refund me £100 after it caused me to book the wrong type of ticket. I understand it is being re-designed but any new design needs to make abundantly clear the difference between sleeper seats and sleeper beds – which at the moment are not clearly marked.

## **Caledonian Sleeper**

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

Sleeper services are vital to the economy of Scotland as they provide one of only a few alternatives to air travel for business people (who are unlikely to take a coach.) However the level of subsidy from the Scottish Government would be less if they were better promoted. The website is hard to use, promotions are rare and poorly advertised, and advice and support via the telephone is virtually non-existent. (When I first began using the service no-one could tell me whether there were showers, where they were, whether there was a left luggage station, or even what time the train departed!) The service is currently used by a small but loyal band of travellers who have grown used to an obscure service, when in reality it could attract far more custom.

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?

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?

- 1) The appeal is that it avoids the extra costs of a flight plus a hotel, or alternatively you get more sleep than catching one of the 'red-eye' early flights. There's also no luggage restrictions and if you're using it for a weekend trip there's more time to spend at your destination.
- 2) As per earlier response
- 3) In order: left luggage facility which is available until the sleeper departs (unlike the current ones which close at teatime), reduced price access to showers at Euston (I would be prepared to pay for this.) I wouldn't pay more for en-suite services on board as I think ticket prices are already at their maximum.

### **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: