

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: incentivise good 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?

Q10 comments: one system for the whole of Scotland. I have experienced excellent customer service in transiting between the Caledonian Sleeper and a train to Oban at Glasgow. Due to the late running of the sleeper I was provided with a taxi to Oban to meet the ferry to Barra. I was extremely impressed with this level of customer service, and joined up approach to delivering excellence for Scotrail customers – something I would never have experienced in London when transiting between trains run by different companies.

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

Q11 comments: align the performance regime with passenger satisfaction surveys, comparing to a baseline set up prior to the franchise review.

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

Q12 comments: no comment

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: no comment

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

Q14 comments: no comment

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: no comment

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

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 aspects of service provision, particularly for remote areas such as the line to Oban or Fort William.

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

Q18 comments: no comment

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: no comment

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: no comment

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: no comment

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: Passengers should not be severely penalised for working in jobs which require them to travel at peak periods. There should not be a major difference between peak and off-peak.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: Options should certainly include reviewing what other transport facilities are available, at what time and cost to local communities.

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: no comment

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: no comment

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

Q27 comments: no comment

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

Q28 comments: no comment

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. Cross-border services benefit Scotland in terms of tourism and business travel. Significant amounts of business travel is done via train rather than air due to the ease of travelling across the border and

further north. The low-carbon aspect of train travel is also important, and should be seriously considered.

When travelling as a tourist from London I enjoy the cross-border services as an easy and hassle-free way to see remote parts of Scotland.

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 – if cross-border services terminate at Waverley, flying will become a much more appealing mode of transport with associated environmental impacts. Tourism in Glasgow and the West Coast will be affected, since a simple sleeper service at present allows for weekend trips to remote parts of Scotland. If cross-border services terminate at Waverley tourists will not be able to make weekend train-based trips to the West Coast.

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: Restaurant and bar facility, as at present, on sleeper trains.

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: Availability of wi-fi services will make train travel preferable to air travel for many business people.

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 comment

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

Q35 comments: the number of alcohol-related public disorders which have happened, as a percentage of all train travel (I suspect this is very low).

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

Q36 comments: no comment

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: You should certainly continue to specify sleeper services. This may not be a fully commercial prospect, and it is essential to both business and tourist travel to Scotland that the sleeper service continues.

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: No – it should be part of 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?

Q39 comments: Services to Fort William and Inverness are essential, and should be kept up. The appeal of the Caledonian Sleeper is great – efficient, low carbon and minimal hassle. Excellent service, at a good price.

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