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: I'm sorry I haven't read this part and don't know what it means

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

Q2 comments: 10 years – long enough to make it work, short enough so failures aren't landed on us for ever

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

Q3 comments: pilot period

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

Q4 comments: none

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

Q5 comments: that they have voting rights, when representing the public

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

Q6 comments: to make plans values-based: aiming for fairness, practicability, non-profiteering, for the public good

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

Q7 comments: not sure

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

Q8 comments: at the end of the pilot period, to review - and sack, if necessary

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: align with actual routes

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

Q11 comments: listen to passengers! Through focus groups, commuter groups, appropriate body representatives etc.

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

Q12 comments: are they not the same thing?

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: I don't think it should be required. If it were it should cover all aspects of stations and service delivery/

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

Q14 comments: what have you in mind?

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: 12 minutes would be better. And yes better use could be made of existing train capacity.

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: should probably be increased given that some more people are commuting further and further distances. Would bring land values up, too.

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: the latter (not govt)

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

Q18 comments: 10 years

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

Q19 comments: Cheer them up. Inspire them. Make them laugh. Be friends. Give them fun away days. Solely money just makes people meaner, in the end.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: don't be out to make as much profit as possible. Be generous.

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 hope both parties would have a say, and eventually agree.

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: I don't know

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: Yes I think the switch would help. More employers should offer rail vouchers, helping the difference between peak and off-peak fares be maintained as they are now.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: public consultation

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: I don't know

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: will leave this to others to answer

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

Q27 comments: local restaurants and especially small coffee shops, plus local facebook pages and websites should advertise for this support

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

Q28 comments: branch and mainline; at each, a ticket office and potential help e.g. for the elderly / disabled; a taxi rank; a fast ticket machine; interior seating and a hot drinks dispenser; toilets. The mainline stations only should add a newsagent and café and suite of toilets with a shower.

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: Definitely yes – the Inverness, Fort William and Aberdeen sleepers are especially useful, as well as the day trains.

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: Absolutely not. That would be disastrous, especially for Glasgow but also for Aberdeen – a major economic centre – the University of St Andrews, the forces station at Leuchars, Dundee University and Hospital, and Inverness.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: I don't know

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

Q32 comments: I like them as they are now – trolleys on regional services and intercity services, and restaurants on intercity services

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: top priority. Essential to get well paying customers, who are likely to be in business and to need the internet.

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: I don't know

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

Q35 comments: personally? I'd keep alcohol. You can police smoking with smoke detectors, but you cant really police alcohol consumption. You could make recommendations, like the quiet coach and not making a lot of noise (ie overtly encourage moderate drinking)

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

Q36 comments: web reach

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: oh please please keep them

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: I don't know

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: actually I use bargain berths a lot. I am a pensioner. But I love the sleeper and it means I get a good nights sleep and ready at the other end for a new day. I think we should pay £5 extra for breakfast as a supplement on the ticket, so they know how many to provide in advance – and hence give fewer people a better breakfast, ie less waste. It's pretty poor now – a mug of hot water with a teabag/sachet of coffee granules on the side, plus a biscuit.

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: green energy where possible