

## 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 There should be a social focus, as the rail service is vital to many rural areas, so any dual focus must include this as an essential element

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

Q2 Something like 5 years, so that the service can be reviewed

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

Q3

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

Q4 I think profits should be returned to the service itself

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

Q5

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

Q6

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

Q7

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

Q8 Contracts should make it clear that fines will be imposed under agreed conditions, and that these fines, when paid, will return to service improvement

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

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

Q9 Don't see why there would be a need to incentive 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 for the whole of Scotland, so that rural areas are fully included

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

Q11 There should be a way for passengers to comment directly on their travel experiences, perhaps through a website. Such comments or scores should be published and be part of planning and evaluation.

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

Q12 I think trains should be punctual, clean, and with working toilets – this is more important than knocking off a few minutes from a journey time.

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

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

Q14 Regular surveys

## **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: It would be good if additional coaches could be added for busy routes/periods. Train design currently does not seem to be flexible enough for this, and this is a downside on design issues.

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: I always try and get a direct service if at all possible. Especially if one has luggage, the last thing people want is the considerable inconvenience of changing train.

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 governments should have a say, certainly, but much of this could be left to the franchisee.

18. What level of contract specification should we use 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:

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments: It should be as simple as possible, and transparent. Fares seem to be high in this country compared to continental Europe – this should not be the case.

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:

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 Rises should generally be around the rate of inflation, and not more.

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 I don't think people who travel at peak times are really doing it out of choice – surely the vast majority of such journeys are to and from work/school/ etc.. So they should not be more expensive. I accept that the flexi-pass system is very good for the commuter and this should be continued.

### **Scottish stations**

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

Q24 comments: I suppose by consultation locally..

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 see a problem with this, though I do wonder about the funding.

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:

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

Q27 comments: Make the station itself more attractive – encourage local shops/cafes etc to take space in a station building at attractive rates.

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

Q28 comments:

### **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: For passengers, the ability to go further north directly (say

London to Aberdeen or Inverness) is especially attractive. I suppose these would need to be negotiated with the DoT and the Scottish ministers. The same applies for the southbound services.

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.

### **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 comments:

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

Q32 comments: Toilets that work and remain usable after an hour into the journey!

Good provision for cycles, especially in tourist areas.

Flexibility to add coaches at busy times.

### **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:

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: Is first class even necessary?

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

Q35 comments: I doubt it would be possible to make such a ban, and I'm sure such a rule would be broken frequently. It would also need a British Transport police officer (or two) to be on every train.

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

Q36 comments: Board signage has improved a lot in recent years. Where improvements are needed is when there is a problem, and the passenger does not get enough information to judge what to do, eg, to take alternative transport.

### **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, absolutely - you should specify sleeper services. And in particular to/from Inverness and Aberdeen – this is a far superior way of travelling a long distance (eg to London); it would be hugely inconvenient to have to travel to Edinburgh/Glasgow to catch the sleeper south. You should indeed be encouraging people to use the sleeper by having a better fare structure for it.

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:

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: The Highland sleeper is excellent – a journey I actually look forward to making. Inverness and Aberdeen are essential services. Improved rolling stock would be nice, with a larger café area. Prices need to be kept reasonable or people will use alternative arrangements.

### **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: Waste reduction and recycling targets. Rubbish collection could be split into recyclable and otherwise.