

I wish to respond to Q29-30 and 36-38 of the Public Consultation.

Q29

Yes, a reasonable range of cross-border services should continue: three to four in each direction on weekdays. These provide quicker and direct links from Aberdeen to London, important for business, professional and private travellers. Trains calling at Leuchars, Dundee and Aberdeen also serve students from England and Wales and from the European Union and the wider world. Services should be specified by the Dept of Transport in conjunction with the Scottish Ministers.

Q30

It is not clear to me in what way the loss of cross-border service north of Edinburgh can benefit travellers. It is not likely that a Scottish franchise holder would replace the lost services with additional ones of its own.

Q37/38

The sleeper services should be retained, with any further feasible rationalisation. If it were to be a separate option for a Scottish franchise holder, it is likely that it would be axed. Its justification can only be made on public benefit grounds.

Q39

It is the only way one can spend a whole working day in London, starting in reasonable shape after a night's rest. Early/late conventional trains are not a substitute. I do not see how an Oban service could serve travellers from Fort William, Inverness and Aberdeen. A glance at the map tells us that "connectivity" is a meaningless notion in this context.

The facilities provided are in my experience appropriate.