

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing in response to the specific suggested possibility that trains coming up from England should terminate at Edinburgh, thereby obliging passengers travelling further north to change to Scotrail services, and those from the north.

Such a course of action would seriously disadvantage a significant number of travellers. It would particularly affect older persons and those with disabilities, most of whom travel by train between Scotland and England because of the convenience of direct trains.

As an older person myself I would find it very difficult to transfer myself and luggage to another train and it would also be extremely difficult for parents with children. Why should the

considerable number of those living north of Edinburgh be disadvantaged in this way? As someone living in life I can easily access Edinburgh airport and that, I suspect, is what many of us would do should this change be forced upon us.

While I am writing can I comment on the form of the response questionnaire - which is, incidentally, very difficult to access on line. Three quarters of the questions are not geared to ordinary passengers being far too demanding of specific commercial and train service-related knowledge. Where the questions are answerable by the general public, as opposed to experts, there is insufficient space to reply adequately.

It would be a tremendous pity if the existing good service between Scotland and England which currently benefits so many travellers were to be stopped. Train travel is environmentally friendly and to be encouraged. A serious diminution in the direct service would oblige many travellers to defect to air travel.

yours faithfully,

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

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:

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: *this already happens where there are good services.*

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

Q28 comments *Ticket purchase and toilets.*

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 - by providing ease of travel and saving time for passengers.*

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: *Not all trains travel onwards to Edinburgh but those people who would find it difficult to disembark and move to another train choose the direct trains.*

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:

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:

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 comments:

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:

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:

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:

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

Q35 comments:

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

Q36 comments:

this seems adequate except when services are affected by engineering works.

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:

Sleeper services offer a very convenient and time-saving way to travel.

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:

See 37. Services provided are adequate and good though additional toilet & washing facilities would be useful.

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: