

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: Keep whole of Scotland as one franchise as at present

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

Q2 comments:at least 7-10 years to give the franchisee time to expand and improve services

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

Q3 comments:Present rail system must not be reduced and support should be made available to keep lesser used lines open

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

Q4 comments:Profits should be reinvested back into providing better rail services/infrastructure rather than in dividends to shareholders

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

Q5 comments:Operating and providing support at smaller stations, community groups who can determine the need for rail services in their area etc.

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

Q6 comments:

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

Q7 comments:

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

Q8 comments: Penalties for continual repeated bad performance or failure to provide an adequate service

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: Reward good performance, penalise bad 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: Both, but if a particular route is offering a poor service this will need to be addressed separately

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

Q11 comments:

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

Q12 comments: Keeping to published times is the most important

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:

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

Q14 comments:

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: Passengers should have a seat within 10 minutes. Standing should only be on short local services. If there is a continued problem with a lack of seating on particular services, then extra train services or longer trains

should be provided.

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: Interchange stations are important for connecting services, particularly for bus services to places not served by rail. However the use of interchange stations should not be used at the expense of long distant services. The majority of rail passengers prefer NOT to change trains on their journeys, particularly if they have luggage. The present direct train services from Inverness/Aberdeen/Dundee to London should be maintained together with similar services from Inverness/Aberdeen/Dundee to Plymouth/Penzance via Birmingham and Bristol. Connections via London are inconvenient due to station changes, but connections at Birmingham and Bristol can be made without changing stations.

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: All stations should have adequate and usable services. The practice of running services only at inconvenient times (thus showing a station as not being used) should not be allowed

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

Q18 comments: A high level specification

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

Q19 comments: Encourage new and improved services where needed

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: Avoid complicated fare structures. Avoid anomalies where it is cheaper to buy two separate tickets rather than one ticket for the same journey

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: Off peak fares should be cheaper to encourage use of the off peak services and to encourage flexible travellers to use the off peak services.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: No stations should be closed. Little used stations are more than likely not used because the level of service provided is not adequate. If services are provided at the right times then all stations should be viable.

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: Local authorities and others should be able to promote a station

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: Stations will be used if reasonably prices services are provided at the right times

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: See Q16 above. Through rail services from places north of Edinburgh to London and the South West of England should be maintained

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: Edinburgh is a hub interchange already for many services. The larger Scottish cities such as Aberdeen, Dundee and Inverness should still have direct services to England

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: There should be adequate luggage storage facilities and space for bicycles. Transport is needed to/from stations at each end of a journey and therefore a bicycle can often provide this. There should be a toilet on all trains. Refreshments should be available on longer distance 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:

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: Provide easy to read timetables and information at all stations. Take extra care to provide correct information on platforms and on trains particularly where trains going to different destinations are using the same platforms or if trains are dividing en route. Provide platform number information in reasonable time prior to departure. (I have often encountered situations when the departure platform is not displayed until about 5 minutes prior to departure and then there is a rush of passengers boarding the train and finding their seats creating congestion on board the train)

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:

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 FortWilliam, 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: single travellers whether travelling first or second class should be able to specify the use of a cabin to themselves. The thought of sharing cabins with strangers may put off many from using the sleeper services. Perhaps in both first and standard class there could be a pricing structure – 1. A berth in a shared cabin price
2. An exclusive cabin price standard class as well as first class

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: