

## 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 comments:

A dual focus will be the most cost effective franchise. Both business and community needs will be provided for and overall growth in rail travel could be stimulated. Having one franchise for Scotland would provide the opportunity for a Client/Franchisee partnership team to work together to jointly improve service provision.

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

Q2 comments:

The franchise length must support recovery of any agreed capital investment at a reasonable rate for both the taxpayer and franchisee. The strategy for the provision of rolling stock is crucial to the cost effective length of the franchise.

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

Q3 comments:

All Risks should be identified and shared. Targets need to be agreed and a 'joint incentive plan' with pain/gain reward mechanism should be put in place driving both parties to work together to achieve gain. In the event of pain losses should be shared. Pain and Gain to the Franchisee should be capped at an appropriate level to give lowest overall base cost ie the government shouldn't be paying the franchisee for risk up front but essentially a joint allowance for risk should be held in a 'risk pot' from which any gain is shared if the risks are managed well.

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

Q4 comments:

Profit/loss should be part of the overall target setting and shared pain/gain mechanism outlined in 3. above.

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

Q5 comments:

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

Q6 comments:

Joint targets with shared pain/gain mechanism as described in 3. above.

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:

Threat of nationalisation!

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

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

Q9 comments:

For the activities which are wholly the responsibility of the franchisee we should incentivise good performance but more importantly we should severely penalise poor and unacceptable performance.

A little carrot should be offered but a huge stick must be wielded to ensure a consistent reliable service is delivered.

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:

The performance regime must be aligned to routes or service groups.

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

Q11 comments:

Franchise targets should reflect passenger issues. The results of independent customer satisfaction surveys should form part measurement regime.

Ensure that cancelled trains are penalised far more heavily than minutes

delay in the performance regime. Cancellation must not be the easy way out.

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

Q12 comments:

A consistent comfortable reliable service must be the priority.

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:

Key elements should form part of overall Incentive regime described in 3. above

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

Q14 comments:

Passenger questionnaires and on train/on station 'interviews' . . .  
Public visibility of all comments forms submitted to franchisees.

### **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:

The 10minute standing time is only just acceptable.  
This should not be increased.

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:

Services should reflect passenger demands.

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:

For the ScotRail Franchise the Timetable should be agreed jointly in order that the performance regime can be jointly owned.

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:

Gain from the joint incentive plan must provide the incentive for innovation.

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments:

Fares should encourage rail use.

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:

For the ScotRail Franchise all fares should be jointly agreed by the Government and Franchisee in order that income targets can be jointly owned by both parties and form part of the Joint Incentive Plan.

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:

Fares must drive use and reduce car journeys.

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:

On routes where standing times are in excess of 10 minutes the difference between peak and off peak fares must be enough to incentivise people to travel off peak.

### **Scottish stations**

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

Q24 comments:

Integrated transport reviews.

Where there is a manned station I believe it should be staffed during the times that trains are timetabled to stop at that station.

Toilet facilities locked behind closed doors do not provide any service to passengers. Toilets must be available for use when passengers are waiting for trains. Toilets used to be available at Kingussie Station at all times. The toilets have recently been refurbished to provide disabled access but are now locked when the station is closed at circa 3.30pm each day. If you arrive for a train after this time there are no toilet facilities at all. This is unacceptable.

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:

Increased use of service should be of benefit to all.

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:

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

Q28 comments:

Categories must include

- i. Unmanned, no facilities
- ii. Manned with waiting room and toilet facilities
- iii. Major Station

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### **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:

Cross-border services must continue to go north of Edinburgh. These services provide crucial links to/from Inverness, Aberdeen and Fort William that

- i. compete with air travel
- ii. help families visit one another without using road vehicles.
- iii. ensures elderly or young travellers can complete cross-border journeys without having to change trains
- iv. have appropriate levels of comfort for long distance journeys (ride quality, toilet facilities, wifi, restaurant etc. Ride quality provided by the Intercity coaching stock being the most important element.)
- v. encourage tourists to visit Scotland by rail

These services have the biggest impact on people who live and work in Scotland and the Scottish economy so I believe that they should be specified by The Scottish Government. Agreement must be reached with the Department of Transport as some of these services will be part of an East Coast Franchise.

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:

Some cross-border services must continue to go north to Inverness, Aberdeen and Fort William.

Many cross-border services already terminate at Edinburgh Waverley. An Edinburgh hub of sorts is already in existence. Changing platforms in Edinburgh is never easy. When allocating platforms for use by cross-border services greater consideration of the age profile of passengers and levels of luggage being transported must be made. London and Birmingham services should terminate in the main concourse ie Platforms 11, 19, 1etc to avoid passengers having to do lots of steps/ lifts to change trains or take a taxi. The current operation in which East Coast trains terminate on distant platforms appears inconsiderate of passenger needs.

### **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 comments:

Provision of appropriate rolling stock at a reasonable cost is the first step required. The rolling stock currently in service on The West Highland Routes is life expired.

The market for rolling stock is very restricted. The Scottish Government should invest in its own rolling stock.

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

Q32 comments:

Where the average passenger journey is greater than 1 hour the following should be provided

- i comfortable seats. (not found on Class 156 sets making the 5 hour journey from Glasgow to Mallaig )
- ii Wifi
- iii toilets
- iv refreshments

## **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:

Wifi should be provided on routes where the average passenger journey is greater than 1 hour in length.

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:

The Class 156 rolling stock used on The West Highland Routes needs both additional seating capacity, increased level of passenger comfort, luggage storage and the provision of a first-class service. This route is regularly voted the Number 1 rail journey but the rolling stock is life expired and must be replaced.

Where a balance between additional seating capacity and first class services needs to be struck the 1<sup>st</sup> class compartment could be de-restricted on peak services.

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

Q35 comments:

BTP advice

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

Q36 comments:

Increase advertising in the national press/local press/local radio

## **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:

The Sleeper Services to Scotland must be maintained. A future sleeper service directly to Europe should be considered.



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 believe that a separate franchise would provide the necessary management focus to maintain and expand the Caledonian Sleeper service.

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 Caledonian Sleeper is really valued by those that use it. Those that don't use it generally don't know about it!

The Sleeper provides a direct connection from London to the Highlands and vice versa. The Sleeper

- i. competes with air travel
- ii. helps families visit one another without using road vehicles.
- iii. ensures elderly or young travellers can complete cross-border journeys without having to change trains
- iv. has an appropriate levels of comfort for long distance journeys (ride quality, toilet facilities, wifi, restaurant etc. Ride quality provided by the Intercity coaching stock being the most important element.)
- v. encourages tourists to visit Scotland by rail
- vi. provides the Highlands with stress free next day access to London

Fort William is the best known West Coast destination. Links to Skye are available. I think there would be an opportunity to route the service to Oban 2 days per week.

Wifi should be available.

**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:

Station Cleanliness, Train Cleanliness, Diesel Engine Omissions, Management and Disposal of On Train Toilet Waste.