

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: No merits whatsoever that I can see.

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

Q2 comments:

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

Q3 comments: No comment

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

Q4 comments:

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

Q5 comments: Under no circumstances.

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

Q6 comments: This implies the Govt wishes in fact to cut services. Boo!

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

Q7 comments: I do not believe in these as a compulsor of performance – parent companies would seek to evade liability.

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

Q8 comments: Heavy fines, threat of reassigning franchise, proper compensation to passengers (at present ScotRail's main aim seems to be to irritate people and avoid paying compensation if possible. But really this wd

be better if the Government would renationalise the railway.

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: Penalise poor performance, in particular First Scotfail's repeated economy with the truth, especially their claims re punctuality.

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 system for the whole of Scotland

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

Q11 comments: I have no response to make to the 'management speak' in your brochure.

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

Q12 comments:

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: Yes. All aspects, ideally.

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: No one should be standing on any train, at any time.

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: No. This would reduce service quality overall, and make some journeys even longer.

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: If left to franchisee, services would disappear as witness First's abandoning of bus services in some areas.

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

Q18 comments: No comment.

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

Q19 comments: I would rather penalise than incentivise, given the inadequacies of First ScotRail.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: To sustain established communities, encourage the sustainability of rural and deprived areas, and generally encourage greater use of rail.

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: All fares should be regulated by government, and SPT should be abolished, as a failed, incompetent and self-serving organisation which has no meaningful claim to represent even the whole of 'Strathclyde', an area which has no real meaning and which ceased to exist as an entity nearly 20 years ago. I lost my job at the start of the recession, required to take a post in Edinburgh and have been paying as much as 15% - 20% of my net salary to travel to work by train, where there is no possible public transport alternative. Only the Glasgow-Edinburgh via Falkirk line should be set on a purely

commercial basis. On this point, I deprecate the proposals to upgrade what is already an efficient line at a cost of £1bn, when many parts of Scotland have little or no worthwhile provision. I live hardly more than 30 miles from Edinburgh, but try getting there, by train, quickly, cheaply and easily (which is the only available means of public transport). !

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: It is in no way feasible to do that. There is a public benefit to be derived from mobility of labour, and the shops and other facilities in Edinburgh in particular benefit from my working here. Higher fares on most lines will simply act as a deterrent, and may produce an equivalent of 'fuel poverty', where people are spending disproportionate % of their income on getting to/from work,

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: About 25 – 33%. I think so, yes.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: there should be a presumption that all stations should remain open. I have lived near stations on the Cathcart Circle, and if any stations there closed, then passengers would simply abandon rail – people would not switch I believe from say Pollokshields West to Maxwell Park. Less stations = fewer passengers. Closing stations would be a false economy – more stations are needed, not fewer!

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 am wary of this, given the appalling quality of SPT, and its indifference to everything outside the Glasgow conurbations. There is a risk of fragmentation, and ultimately the collapse of services, also I have concerns re accountability. Business won't maintain lines or stations seen as 'uneconomic' and local authorities are not to be relied on – South Lanarkshire sees Clydesdale as a cash cow, and transfers its resources to the likes of Hamilton, EK and Larkhall. This would impair economic development, rather than enhancing it.

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: Yes, but the facilities should be leased from Government, and kept in perpetuity in public hands. Ideally the service should be renationalised though I accept this would perhaps require legislation via Westminster.

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

Q27 comments: apart from having organisations like 'Lanark in Bloom' put flowerboxes in stations, this should be for Government to arrange. I suspect this really means further privatisation. However, possibly encourage local businesses to take over unused facilities.

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

Q28 comments: All stations should have proper toilets and at least reasonable protection from the elements. Too few stations have any facilities at all, and some, like Motherwell, should be razed to the ground – a complete cowp.

How come stations were better equipped etc in the 1960s and 1970s?

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: No., they should not go north of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and the Scottish Government should not subsidise them to go beyond these locations. However, it wd be beneficial if more East Coast/Cross Country/Virgin services stopped in other locations e.g., Motherwell.

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: Terminate Edinburgh Waverley AND/OR Glasgow Central. I see no real benefits from an 'Edinburgh Hub'.

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 which are clean and which remain unlocked – too many are out of service, too often. More refreshment facilities. IT access.

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: Get other things right first. In some areas, there is not much ability to use mobile phones, e.g. around Carstairs but that may down to the telecoms providers. It is good to have the ability to use a laptop or phone, but I don't see that this should involve any great subvention from public funds. This is not to be 'prioritised', at any great expense.

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: First class services are barely viable anywhere in Scotland (except possibly Queen St – Waverley) and are an insult to everyone else, especially when as often happens there are free seats in First class which are not available to others. Ireland moved to a single class many years ago. Why not us? The number of really wealthy commuters in Scotland is not that great, unlike in the SE of England.

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

Q35 comments: No issues require to be considered – there should be an immediate ban. I have suffered too often from the behaviour of drunks on trains, especially on Saturday evenings travelling from Glasgow. The behaviour of Rangers fans in particular is frequently loathsome, and is never addressed by Scotfail staff, and hardly ever by BTP. I suppose this stricture should apply to drugtaking as well, but that is not always so readily detected. The consumption of hot food should also be banned – it creates a great deal of mess, and usually smells disgusting.

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

Q36 comments: By telling the truth to passengers! Real announcements rather than pressing buttons to broadcast pre-recorded messages. Apps and phone updates may be helpful. Info at stations on boards etc is often poor.

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: is there really a significant saving to be made here? On balance yes, I believe so, including to/from the Highlands.

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: No. the service should remain an entity and not be broken up.

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: OK apart from the frequency – more trains required.

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: Obviously vital to reduce carbon emissions – better recycling facilities on trains/at stations wd help. I couldn't believe it many years ago on seeing Canada, a country with forests coast to coast, making proper and well directed efforts to collect and recycle papers and magazines. Otherwise, I'll leave this to people more expert like Friends of the earth.

Lastly: I am appalled by the failure of train coys to run services late at night and on Sundays. My wife sings in a choir, in Glasgow, and cannot get there on Sundays unless she stays overnight, as the first train leaves Lanark about 10..12 a.m.

Abandon the Queen St – Edinburgh upgrade and use the money wisely elsewhere, as by extending the Alloa line, building a station in St Andrews, and reinstating Lanark to Edinburgh. And what about Angus, where I have lived in the past, and whose public transport is poor. o