

Consultation Questions

The answer boxes will expand as you type.

Procuring rail passenger services

No response

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

Q9 comments: Only penalise bad. The suggestion that good should be 'incentivised' smacks of a bonus culture. All performance should be 'good' as a matter of contractual obligation.

Q10 comments: Actual routes

Scottish train services

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: At present, this is a significant failing of Scotrail services. Transfer times to suburban services from , eg, West Highland Line services are poor (c. 25 mins at Dalmuir for Hamilton trains, eg).

Q17 comments: Government must direct provision, otherwise rail services would become similar to bus services – virtually non-existent in non-urban conurbations.

Scottish rail fares

Q20 comments: Efficiency *and* effectiveness – in reducing reliance upon road transport. There is a significant need to increase utilisation in off-peak / Highland services, and the example of, eg Deutsche Bahn in Germany provides ample evidence of possible solutions (Group cards for up to 5 for EUR 30 per day, etc) that could be used to fill seats. Your review should consider how other successful European systems operate rail services, rather than focusing upon a market-driven model as occasionally suggested in your review.

Q21 comments: ALL fares should be subject to government regulation: the market cannot – at least outside the Glasgow-Edinburgh conurbation – determine this equitably.

Q22 comments: this question is meaningless without detailed data (eg factoring-in of the cost to the public purse of each road death; the 'cost' of CO2 pollution, etc)

Q23 comments: see answer to Q 20 : there can be a meaningful distinction to fill up train seats.

Scottish stations

Q24 comments: My answer refers to the opening of new stations. Again, some imagination is needed to encourage train take-up. Or basic commonsense. In Fort William, for example, population and service 'drift' towards Lochybridge suggests that a new (and simple) stop could be provided. New stations on the Larkhall line have reflected population levels. Why can't this be done elsewhere?

Q27 comments: encourage more to use train services!

Q28 comments: Simple halts with a simple shelter and a telephone (and a CCTV camera if necessary) may be all that are necessary – see eg West Highland Line stops.

Rolling stock

Q31 comments: I regret I cannot understand the rationale for this question. Rolling-stock is where passengers sit. If the rolling-stock is past its use, could it not be refurbished as a matter of contractual responsibility?

Q32 comments: Toilets that flush; seats that are not needing replacement;

doors that close to maintain comfortable heating levels. I strongly suggest you force the Minister for transport and the senior management to travel regularly on the West Highland Line in winter. This rolling-stock is an absolute disgrace for a line being marketed as a major tourist attraction. Top tips: 1. Take blankets with you; 2. When the train is approaching Crainlarach, wait at the carriage door to allow you fast access to platform toilet facilities. The stock is a scandal. Why, too, the excellent staff on this service are forced to make do with these conditions is beyond most passengers. This rolling-stock is much worse than the Inverness- Kyle of Lochalsh trains. Why this is so is also a mystery.

Passengers – information, security and services

Q33 comments: Introduce these when you have dealt with the issues identified in q 32, and possibly also introduced electric sockets in trains carrying passengers for more than say 3 hours.

Q36 comments: Go to Germany and see how this should be done. The main problem in Scotland is the complete lack of integration with other public transport – this exercise does not seek to address this. Surely at the most minimum train times could display connection times to other services [rail and bus]? This is a standard feature in German ICE trains. Germany, too, operates the ‘train bus’ (ie, integrated connections involving bus travel but sold as part of the train ticket – eg, Kinlochleven to Glasgow on the one rail ticket.)

Caledonian Sleeper

Q37 comments: Continue to specify services – unless you wish to see these disappear forever from the Highlands, Inverness and Aberdeen.

Q38 comments: Main Scotrail franchise – with the hope/expectation that better connections are offered by the franchisee.

1. 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: Appeal: timeless. This service is VITAL. First, not everyone can/will fly (I was unable to do so for 3 months on medical advice). Second, late-arriving flights into London from Europe necessitate sleeper connections to Scotland. Third, business connections outwith Glasgow/Edinburgh would be curtailed severely. Fourth, tourism would suffer unduly. Fifth, and from an environmental perspective, train is much better than air.

As for Fort William over Oban, it surely makes sense for the main gateway to the NW Highlands to continue to be served. There is an excellent bus service to/from Oban from Fort William, but not from Oban to, eg Skye, Mallaig, etc.

But the rolling-stock has ceased now being in any sense 'quaint'. The 1970s décor (?) is much in need of a refurbishment. Facilities for disabled (from what I could see) are just about adequate. The showering-facilities in London are occasionally out of commission. Last time, the heating was stuck. If this is designed for business and up-market leisure, again a visit to the Continent is strongly suggested.