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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:

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:

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:

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:

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments:

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 There should be a performance measurement regime covering all these but customer satisfaction should be more important than frequent statistical analysis

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:

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:

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:

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: fares should rise with inflation. Higher increases may be appropriate when services are significantly enhanced. Better first class sleeper berths could bear higher charges

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: The differences should be enough to encourage those that

do not have to travel in the rush hour to choose less busy times

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: Stations should not be closed on the basis of history alone. The future potential of each one should be examined.

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: Local groups may have a part to play

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:

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:

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:

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: Adequate toilet and trolley services are particularly essential on the longer journeys

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: These are important and should be provided with all new and refurbished rolling stock.

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: This is a commercial issue but First Class should be available on longer journeys and sleeper and cross border 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: Past experience

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

Q36 comments: All information to available online

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 should continue to be an integral part of the Franchise. More companies involved will add complexity and costs.

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: The sleeper services should be included within a single main Scotrail franchise.

Capacity for comfortably seated passengers from the Scottish Lowlands northwards should be a requirement on both the Fort William and Inverness sleeper services.

The requirement should be that the sleeper services runs at least 6 nights per week, but the operator should be given more flexibility over timing and other matters and this would be easier when the sleeper service is part of the overall franchise. There should be encouragement for the operator to increase capacity on services the Fort William service during peak times.

The costs of the sleeper service exceed the direct revenue but it should be clearly understood that the sleeper service provides a wider economic benefit for the Highland economy and transport infrastructure.

The very existence of the West Highland sleeper Service is a positive icon for the whole of Scotland. The London to Fort William journey is recommended "best train in Britain"

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 sleeper service saves a day's travel/ overnight costs. I have used it to leave London late in the evening for a morning meeting in Glasgow and return in the late afternoon.

The highland service provides the additional delight of leaving central London and waking up in the Highlands

I would consider switching holidays from Scotland to other parts of Europe

should there be no sleeper service to get to the Highlands – particularly with the improved European railways.

A better rail connection between the Fort William sleeper and Oban is needed. As a second choice an early and late bus connection should be provided year-round between Crianlarich if no train service is possible.

The Highland Sleeper should arrive in Scotland in time for onward connections. For other sleepers an arrival time around 7.30 is fine – not a lot earlier.

For the sleeper coaches

Ensuite toilets and maybe showers for 1st and maybe standard class with both single and 2 berth compartments.

Continental-style *courette* coaches containing Economy 2 /4/6 berth compartments.

Maybe family compartments for young children

The delightful lounge car should be retained – it is a positive and attraction feature of the travel experience– it is a much better facility than on some European sleeper services.

Replaceable door entry keys should be available

Power sockets should be provided in each compartment for computers and phone chargers – but retaining good sound insulation between compartments.

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: