

Respondent Information Form and Questions

Please Note this form **must** be returned with your response to ensure that we handle your response appropriately

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3. Permissions - I am responding as...

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Please tick as appropriate

(a) Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site)?

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(b) Where confidentiality is not requested, we will make your responses available to the public on the following basis

Please tick ONE of the following boxes

Yes, make my response, name and address all available

or

Yes, make my response available, but not my name and address

or

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(c) The name and address of your organisation **will be** made available to the public (in the Scottish Government library and/or on the Scottish Government web site).

Are you content for your **response** to be made available?

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(d) We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?

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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:

A dual-focus franchise could be interpreted as relegating the social railway to a second rate standard, and is therefore not advised.

However, we recognise that the ScotRail network covers three distinct types of service groups. There could be separate financial and performance targets for each of the three groups:

Inter-City and Regional Express Network: Where there is a significant travel market, giving the franchisee **freedom to develop service, fares and marketing initiatives** could bring benefits. However, service levels in the early morning, evening, and at intermediate stations would need to be protected. The Edinburgh-Glasgow-Aberdeen-Inverness InterCity routes could be treated as economic, as would the main Regional Express routes (Ayrshire-Glasgow, Fife-Edinburgh, Stirling-Glasgow/Edinburgh, Helensburgh-Bathgate-Edinburgh), though even these train services would be unlikely to be fully viable unless a grant was made to cover some track access charges.

Urban rail services within around 15 miles of Glasgow should be specified in consultation with SPT with the objective of developing a strategy for a more appropriate, fully integrated metropolitan transport network incorporating urban rail, bus and subway services. Urban metro or tram/train technology should be assessed on some lines as a longer term possibility. This network would be **operated for an agreed annual fee** which could be channelled as a ring-fenced budget through SPT. This would incentivise SPT and local councils to review and rationalise the current train service patterns, and develop an integrated transport policy maximising usage and revenue of the urban rail network and Subway system, with co-ordinated bus services. The objective would be to improve public transport throughout Greater Glasgow which includes areas of high road traffic congestion, pollution and social deprivation. **Priced options should be obtained from franchise bidders for variations in service level which could be invoked during the franchise.**

On **rural lines** (Stranraer, West Highland, Kyle, Far North), the need is to maximise the potential of Scotland's scenic rail routes to assist economic regeneration by attracting more tourists, as well as providing transport links for remote communities. Rural services would **be operated for an agreed fee**. The franchisee should be required to establish regular contact with an interest group for each line, which could be formed from existing volunteer groups (eg SAYLSA, Friends of the West Highland Lines etc) plus tourist organisations, and local business representatives. These interest groups would assist the franchisee to develop strategies to promote each line, and attract additional revenue. **Revenue would return to Transport Scotland. It would be important to be able to add extra services during the franchise, if subsequently found to be justified, for additional fees that should be agreed as optional extras at the franchise bidding time.**

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

Q2 comments:

A long-term franchise of up to 15 years could encourage the franchisee to invest in trains and infrastructure upgrades, and develop service initiatives. It would also eliminate the hiatus and cost of re-franchising every few years.

If a short-term franchise is decided, it would be important to agree residual value terms for any investment in trains or infrastructure made by the franchisee. Otherwise, the franchisee would be unlikely to invest in upgrades.

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

Q3 comments:

Given the current risk aversion of financial markets, perhaps the lowest cost franchise bids would be obtained if the government accepts most of the risk from its own franchising procedure.

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

Q4 comments:

We believe that a profit share mechanism should apply, but this should be structured to link to the achievement of specific objectives – see Q6 below. The failure of two East Coast franchises suggests that revenue growth projections should be realistic rather than over-optimistic.

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

Q5 comments:

The West Coast Railways Fort William-Mallaig “Jacobite” train has shown that open access operators can develop niche markets highly successfully. Operation of seasonal tourist services by third parties could provide additional peak capacity on tourist lines by using heritage trains with relatively low capital costs.

On other routes, the issues of revenue abstraction and track capacity could limit opportunities for third party operation.

It is important that paths allocated to open access operators should not block the possibility of developing regular interval timetables by the main franchisee.

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

Q6 comments:

The different service groups within the ScotRail franchise have distinct social objectives. For instance, commuter services have the prime objectives of giving socially inclusive access to employment, education, shopping and entertainment while reducing road congestion and pollution. Rural lines have important roles as transport links for people in remote areas while also attracting tourists to visit destinations. Commercial inter-city routes have the potential to generate traffic growth and profit.

The franchisee should be judged against each of these objectives, with the profit sharing mechanism designed to have three elements reflecting the achievement of each of these three targets.

Greater vertical integration of track and train could reduce costs, with the ScotRail franchisee having a closer relationship with Network Rail in Scotland.

With the current high subsidy requirement for the ScotRail franchise, train service patterns should be analysed to identify if reductions in train mileage and costs can be made, particularly in the SPT area, without significantly affecting revenue or service.

Given the relative isolation of the ScotRail network from other parts of the British rail system, some of the functions of the ORR could also be reviewed with a view to further simplifying the organisation and reducing overhead costs. It may be appropriate for the ORR role on the ScotRail network to be confined to safety issues.

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

Q7 comments:

As the cost of these will increase the cost of the franchise bids, these financial constructs should be kept to a minimum. Setting high performance bonds and company guarantees is likely to increase costs and give an advantage to bids by foreign state-owned rail companies.

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

Q8 comments:

The franchise should be terminated if the franchisee fails to fulfil commitments, after suitable warnings.

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments:

Poor performance should be penalised, good performance should be the expectation

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 should be aligned with actual routes. This will inject a sense of competitiveness between staff on different routes.

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

Q11 comments:

The main objective is to achieve as punctual a railway network as possible.

An over-complex and artificial performance regime will increase overheads and information gathering and could produce bizarre scheduling decisions.

For instance, replacing train delay minutes with passenger delay minutes could lead to late running, fully loaded commuter trains being given precedence over long distance trains carrying fewer passengers. This could lead to missed connections and would not reflect the true overall network impact of the delay any better than the current system.

Measuring lateness to the nearest minute (rather than classifying trains as late if more than 5 or 10 minutes late) would increase the temptation to add extra minutes to the published journey times to avoid penalties for slightly late trains. Penalties should only be applied for significant delays.

The suggestion in the Consultation Document that rural/tourist train service delays are less important than commuter train delays is wrong. Connections with onward train, ferry or bus services tend to be important for passengers on rural/tourist lines, so punctuality is important.

The current system incentivises ScotRail to despatch trains from interchange stations on time, even when connecting train or ferry services are late. The performance regime should recognise the importance of taking intelligent decisions to maintain connections where practical.

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

Q12 comments:

Overall journey times need to be as competitive as possible to maintain and increase rail's market share. Published journey times should not be padded out to artificially hide unpunctual performance.

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:

SQUIRE should apply to factors managed through the franchise.

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

Q14 comments:

Train reliability could be included in the performance assessment. Statistics on train failures (see Modern Railways, January 2012) suggest that ScotRail trains are significantly more unreliable than similar trains maintained by some of the train operating companies in England.

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:

On inter-city and rural trains, seats should be available for the predicted loading of all services.

On short distance city commuter routes worldwide, standing at peak times is not unusual. In Scotland, commuter services within about 15 miles of Glasgow could be operated by "Metro" trains with high capacity. There would be no need for toilets on these short distance routes, giving extra space for seating or standing areas. Wide doors would speed up boarding and alighting. Fares could be kept affordable to increase rail market share and cut road congestion while keeping train capital costs and operating costs as low as possible.

On Regional rail routes, standing for up to 15 minutes could be acceptable at peak hours only.

At weekends, there is normally no shortage of trains. Operating overcrowded, short trains at weekends to save fuel and track costs is a short-sighted economy which will damage the market for optional travel. The franchisee should be penalised for overcrowded trains at weekends, except on special occasions, eg major sporting fixtures involving large crowds.

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 between trains at the major nodes of Glasgow Central and Queen St, Waverley, Aberdeen and Inverness is as expected for any rail network

Changing at Partick, Dumbarton etc is between trains serving different routes (in the case of Partick, also to subway and bus). Seamless interchange between modes for urban journeys should be encouraged through multi-operator smartcard tickets to make more journeys possible by public transport

Development of good interchanges (eg with the Edinburgh Tram at Gogar and Edinburgh Park) is welcome, but should have no impact on operation of through rail services which normally start or finish in the main cities.

There is an opportunity to reduce the number of direct bus services into major cities by developing good bus/rail interchanges. This would help to reduce the

unacceptable levels of bus traffic, detrimental to the health and safety of citizens, passing through city streets like Hope Street/ Renfield Street in Glasgow, and Princes Street in Edinburgh. Many continental cities have created civilised pedestrian-friendly city centres by designing public transport networks where buses from the suburbs and outlying settlements feed into rail or metro railheads for environmentally friendly onward travel off-street into city centres. The Scottish Government's Cities Strategy should develop this approach to improve the environment in the main Scottish cities. The new ScotRail franchise is an opportunity to start this strategy.

Reducing the number of direct rail services into Scottish cities would on the majority of routes inconvenience passengers and give no operational benefit.

However, on some rural routes, it may be possible to provide a higher frequency of service economically by using interchanges. For instance, the low frequency (3 trains per day) on the Oban-Glasgow line could be improved economically by amending the West Highland timetable to provide additional Oban-Crianlarich services connecting with through Mallaig-Glasgow trains at Crianlarich at some times of day.

Arrangements for connecting between trains, or between train and bus, should be as convenient as possible, avoiding steps where practical. Train operation should be planned to provide cross-platform connections where feasible. This may need some track or station modifications, eg at Perth.

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:

Recommended frequency, and the time of first and last services, should be specified on all routes to protect passengers.

Inverness and Aberdeen should be linked hourly with each other, and with other cities, with the necessary infrastructure upgrades brought forward to allow this to be introduced by 2015 at the latest. On other inter-city routes, franchise bidders would be expected to specify half-hourly or higher levels of service. This would give franchise bidders an opportunity to innovate with new patterns of service.

On regional and urban routes, minimum frequencies at stations during peak and off-peak hours should be specified, along with first and last train times, but the actual timetable pattern to deliver these services could be left to the franchise bidders.

On rural routes, our Association recommends a move to regular interval or standard departure time departures, as already introduced in Wales. The maximum interval between trains would be set. For instance, Glasgow-Dumfries-Carlisle trains would have a minimum frequency of trains every 2 hours. On longer distance routes (the Far North, Kyle and West Highland lines), maximum interval between trains would be likely to be as much as 4 hours, which is commensurate with the existing train frequency.

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

Q18 comments:

The specification should be less detailed than at present.

Services offered by the successful bidder should be agreed in the contract, but there should be flexibility to, in future, buy additional services (see Q19 below) which have been introduced experimentally and have proved successful.

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

Q19 comments:

Detailed timetable specification is not needed in the franchise specification.

To encourage future expansion of train services, some train operating charges (eg track access charges) should not be increased when extra trains are added to the timetable, to reduce the marginal cost of providing additional services. This would need an agreement between Transport Scotland and Network Rail, which would also take account of future NR efficiency savings.

Transport Scotland could allocate an innovation fund to allow extra services to be added to the timetable for a period, without committing the franchisee to ongoing additional costs. This would address the problem where actual usage of new services is often much higher than predicted.

There should be a mechanism for RTPs to bid for funding from Transport Scotland for additional services to meet local needs for better transport.

To support Scotland's important tourist industry, the franchisees should be required to submit a "Tourism and Trains" strategy, with market development plans for Scotland's world-class scenic rural routes. Targets should be set, and monitored, for traffic growth on the rural routes.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments:

The fundamental objective should be to increase use of the rail network while reducing the cost to the taxpayer, ie getting better value for money. This means encouraging modal shift from car, and also making public transport more affordable for those lacking easy access to cars,

Rail transport has high carrying capacity, though ScotRail trains carry fewer passengers on average than other UK trains. Greater use of rail in Scotland will help to reduce road traffic, CO₂ emissions, pollution in city centre streets, dependence on oil, and road accidents. Fares policy must therefore not jeopardise these benefits. Setting fares too high risks losing passengers, revenue, and rail's benefits to transport and the environment.

The ability to buy "walk up" rail tickets on the day of travel at a reasonable price is essential if rail is to offer a realistic alternative to travel by car.

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:

The consultation document considers deregulation of inter-city fares would give the franchisee commercial freedom to create incentives to grow revenue and demand.

But ScotRail already has commercial freedom to offer cheaper advance purchase fares on longer distance trains.

Deregulation of inter-city fares could create more anomalies compared with regulated fares for shorter journeys not classed as "inter-city" on the same route. For instance, Glasgow-Croy and Falkirk-Edinburgh commuter tickets would continue to be regulated, while if Glasgow-Edinburgh is classed as "inter-city" this fare would be deregulated.

Some routes between cities are major commuter routes (eg Edinburgh-Glasgow, Stirling-Edinburgh/Glasgow), so deregulation of fares on these routes could cause hardship to those travelling to work if the franchisee decided profits could be increased on these busy routes by raising fares substantially at peak times.

As ScotRail already has commercial freedom to offer advance tickets at reduced rates on all longer distance routes, including inter-city routes, dependent on the loading of individual trains, there would be no obvious advantage in deregulating inter-city return fares. We therefore recommend:

- peak-hour fares on commuter lines, and season tickets, to be regulated
- anytime returns and singles to be regulated in order to maintain affordable "walk-up" fares
- advance single tickets for longer distance journeys to be deregulated
- off-peak fares on commuter lines to be deregulated (but capped below the peak regulated fare)

This strategy would increase ScotRail's commercial freedom to attract additional use of off-peak trains, while protecting commuters and longer distance travellers from the possibility of unreasonable fare increases.

Regulation of rail fares should seek to ensure that maximum ticket price for an individual journey does not exceed the cost of car use (fuel + parking charges).

In the Strathclyde area, adoption of smartcard ITSO-compliant ticketing is essential if a properly integrated public transport network is to be developed. Users of London's Oystercard are well aware of the advantages of this system. There are also savings in staffing levels at booking offices. However, incentives or regulations will be needed to ensure bus operators co-operate in this scheme. The best interests of transport users should prevail over any objections from individual bus companies.

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:

We recognise that the cost to the taxpayer of providing rail services is high. However, increasing fares at a significantly higher rate than inflation (eg RPI+3%) will reduce usage of the railway, which is counter-productive.

The focus should be on reducing costs through ScotRail and Network Rail efficiency improvements, and increasing revenue by attracting more passengers, particularly at off-peak times, and on rural lines where there is potential to attract more leisure travellers through greater marketing and service initiatives

We recommend regulated fares rises should be limited to RPI %, but with RPI+1% possible on routes where significant improvements in service are implemented (eg through EGIP).

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:

There already is a very large differential between peak and off-peak fares on some routes, eg the Edinburgh-Glasgow line where an off-peak day return costs £12.10 and a peak (anytime) day return costs £21.00, a 74% uplift. This differential should not be raised. On commuter routes, rail has the greatest potential to reduce road congestion at peak times. Pricing travellers off the rail network by charging excessive fares for peak hour commuter journeys would be counter-productive to overall transport policy.

Many people, due to their terms of employment, cannot change to off-peak travel.

For longer distance journeys, market pricing of advance tickets should continue to be used to spread the load across services.

On rural lines in the Highlands, continued availability of discounts for local travellers (Highland Railcard) should be a franchise commitment, allowing higher fares to be charged to tourists while recognising that the low speed of trains on the Far North, Kyle and West Highland Lines merits some compensation for regular local travellers.

Free concessionary bus travel distorts the travel market and adversely affects the cost of the ScotRail franchise (in addition to costing the taxpayer £200 million per year in payments to bus companies). ScotRail's Club 55 scheme addresses this market defect to a certain extent, but Transport Scotland should address this problem which Audit Scotland has highlighted as a budgetary problem that will escalate over time. Solutions could include:

- restricting free bus travel to local bus (and tram, train and subway) journeys
- expanding free concessionary travel to off-peak rail services

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

Only around 10% of the population live within walking distance of existing stations, so policy should seek to extend accessibility to the rail network by:

- identifying potential new station sites for housing areas not well served by rail
- encouraging co-ordination of local buses with trains, with interchange and bus turning circles provided for agreed schemes
- expanding P+R provision at strategic railheads on trunk roads serving housing areas outwith walking distance of stations
- considering re-introduction of passenger trains to towns not served by rail but where railway lines exist, eg Grangemouth, Levenmouth

On local suburban routes around Glasgow passing through densely populated urban areas (eg Cathcart/Neilston/Newton lines), stations are further apart than on many Light Rail systems, so introduction of "Metro" trains could allow consideration of additional local stops to widen accessibility to rail services. The issue of stations within 1 mile of each other is irrelevant for urban areas, but there may be some cases where stations could be relocated.

We agree the future of existing stations with very low usage could be reviewed. However, rather than specifying a minimum usage figure, we recommend that the local circumstances and bus service alternatives should be assessed. Some low-usage rural stations in inaccessible areas may, for instance, have greater significance to the locality than an underused station in an urban area.

The cost of maintaining low-usage stations in rural areas could be reduced if Scottish rural stations could get a derogation from national UK-wide standards for platform length, lighting etc. The McNulty Report recommended a more flexible approach to reduce costs on rural lines. If selective door opening is installed on trains on rural lines, some low usage platforms could be shortened to reduce maintenance costs. A less onerous Scottish rural station standard could also cut the capital cost of new stations, for instance Conon Bridge.

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:

We are in favour of local services and stations being proposed, promoted and funded by Regional Transport Partnerships as part of their regional transport and land use plans. This will require a change to the transport funding framework to channel more funding through RTPs. The current system of rail funding is centralised, does not encourage local co-ordination schemes, and compares badly with development of city region transport in England (eg Transport for London, Transport for Greater Manchester). A budget for local urban train services in the Strathclyde area could, for instance, be transferred from the central Scottish Government budget, to be channelled through SPT for procuring local "Metro" services as part of developing a co-ordinated bus/subway/train metropolitan transport network.

Contribution to new local stations by commercial or housing developers should be encouraged where a justifiable case can be made.

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:

On balance, we agree that the franchisee, which has direct interface with the passenger, should be responsible for station management and maintenance, with the exception of Glasgow Central and Waverley where, due to the multiplicity of operators, Network Rail should continue to be responsible.

It is important that the residual value of investments should be sufficient to encourage the franchisee to upgrade stations and facilities.

However, in the Strathclyde area, development of the "Metro" concept with smartcard ticketing could logically lead to transfer of stations to SPT, as is already the case for Glasgow Subway stations. This would avoid the hiatus involved in transferring assets at the end of each ScotRail franchise.

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

Q27 comments:

ScotRail's Adopt a Station scheme has already succeeded in improving many stations.

Local line support groups (see Q1) should also be encouraged to co-operate in improving stations.

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

Q28 comments:

While many stations fall naturally into one category, most "interchange" stations are also "destination" stations (eg Partick, Motherwell, Haymarket). "Interchange" should also include bus/train (eg Croy), tram/train (eg Gogar), ferry/train (eg Oban, Ardrossan Harbour), and plane/train (Prestwick).

We suggest a simpler set of four station categories:

Principal (Glasgow Central, Queen St, Waverley, Aberdeen etc)

Destination/interchange station (Haymarket, Paisley, Partick, also Oban, Fort William, Thurso etc)

Commuter (eg Whitecraigs, Polmont)

Rural (eg Brora, Dalmally)

The scale of facilities within each of these categories would depend on station location and usage.

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:

Through Anglo-Scottish trains from Aberdeen, Dundee, and Inverness benefit those passengers who prefer not to have to change trains, particularly elderly or disabled passengers or those with luggage.

CrossCountry trains from Glasgow via Edinburgh provide the InterCity link between Glasgow, Newcastle, York, Leeds and Sheffield. Breaking this link would be bad for business connectivity, and would conflict with the environmental policy of encouraging modal shift from air to rail.

Anglo-Scottish trains provide capacity on some busy journeys within Scotland which would otherwise require additional ScotRail rolling stock to be procured for use only on peak hour journeys. For example, the 16.32 Edinburgh-Inverness, 18.11 Edinburgh-Aberdeen, and 17.11 Edinburgh-Motherwell-Glasgow. The cost of leasing or buying extra ScotRail rolling stock used only at peak times could be uneconomic, very possibly greater than the additional revenue gain to the ScotRail franchise.

Anglo-Scottish trains on the East Coast and CrossCountry routes operate to DfT-specified regular interval timetables which are unlikely to change often. If it is not possible to integrate these trains into the ScotRail internal timetable north and west of Edinburgh, it could be equally difficult to provide convenient ScotRail connectional services from Edinburgh.

We would prefer a negotiated agreement between DfT and Transport Scotland to continue Anglo-Scottish services north of Edinburgh, and CrossCountry services from Glasgow via Edinburgh.

An alternative option would be for the ScotRail franchise to include Anglo-Scottish services from Aberdeen and Inverness operating as Open Access services south of Edinburgh. But this could raise capacity issues in England.

An additional Anglo-Scottish train from Inverness via the West Coast Main Line to Birmingham could be useful. This could operate via Edinburgh as an extension of the Birmingham-Edinburgh service.

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:

There are already opportunities for connections between Anglo-Scottish trains and some ScotRail trains at Edinburgh.

The concept of hub airports is not fully analogous with the rail situation, as trains can serve multiple destinations (eg London-Edinburgh-Dundee-Aberdeen) whereas most flights are point-to-point, with connecting flights in hub airports needed to reach onward destinations.

There are no benefits in forcing cross-border rail passengers to Aberdeen or Inverness to change at Edinburgh Waverley.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments:

Accelerating the electrification programme could replace more diesel trains (many of which are not DDI compliant) with electric trains which are less expensive to buy, maintain and operate. Some very minor electrification schemes (for instance the 4 mile single track Corkehill-Paisley Canal line) would allow more Class 156 diesel trains to be replaced by electrics.

Standardisation of train design, and orders grouped with other UK franchises, could help.

As previously mentioned, providing lightweight electric trains without toilets and with high density seating for "Metro" urban journeys within around 15 miles of Glasgow could cut the capital cost per seat, the operating costs, and the track access charges for these services. Re-organising rail services in Strathclyde into "Metro" and Regional services could allow lightweight Metro trains (perhaps 2-car heavy rail high voltage trains of similar capacity to Newcastle Metro trains) to be procured at relatively low cost. This would allow some Class 318, 320 and 332 3-car electric units to be transferred for regional EGIP services, for instance to Dunblane and Alloa.

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

Q32 comments:

The comfort of seating is important on inter-city and longer distance regional and rural trains. Comfort covers a number of aspects including spacing between seats, standard of upholstery, temperature etc.

Trolley catering is currently provided on most daytime inter-city trains and longer distance rural services. This should continue, though we believe it is not currently a mandatory franchise specification.

All inter-city trains, and longer distance rural trains, should have effective air conditioning. Class 156 units with draughty windows and doors are unsuitable for long distance rural lines, given the increasingly cold and windy conditions.

Adequate provision of retention toilets is needed on inter-city and longer distance trains, including the West Highland Line.

On scenic routes, visibility is important, so seats should line with windows where possible, and seat backs should not create a claustrophobic feeling. Multi-lingual audio commentaries should be available on tourist trains.

Rural trains should be able to accommodate up to 6 bicycles. On commuter trains, priority should be given to maximising passenger capacity.

Class 170 trains are acceptable for most journeys, as are the Class 158 refurbished "Invernet" trains. But higher quality trains may become available for the prime intercity Aberdeen/Inverness-Edinburgh/Glasgow routes.

Class 156 trains are acceptable as short distance commuter trains, but the cramped seating, draughty interiors and shortage of toilets (non-retention) make these trains unsuitable for use on longer distance tourist routes.

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:

Mobile phone service should be the responsibility of mobile service providers, without impacting on the cost of the rail franchise. Wi-Fi should be available on prime inter-city business routes (Edinburgh-Glasgow-Aberdeen-Inverness). However, it should be remembered that use of mobile phones (and noisy personal stereos) on trains can be an annoyance to many other passengers. A quiet coach (with mobile reception blocked and personal stereos banned) should be provided on each train, as part of the franchise specification.

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:

With the projected 37 minute Edinburgh-Glasgow Queen Street journey to be achieved through electrification, it is debatable whether 1st class accommodation is essential on such a short journey. First Class is offered on the Glasgow Central-Edinburgh leg of Anglo-Scottish CrossCountry services, although these operate only every two hours. It would be feasible to supplement this with an accelerated ScotRail Glasgow Central-Edinburgh service via Shotts or Motherwell, also offering 1st Class, allowing the Edinburgh – Glasgow Queen Street service to be operated as essentially a high capacity standard-class commuter service. But this very much depends on the views of the business community.

We recommend retention of 1st Class on the longer distance routes from the Central Lowlands to Aberdeen and Inverness, though this will depend on demand, and the views of the business community.

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

Q35 comments:

The impact of banning alcohol on the sales and viability of train catering trolleys should be assessed. Would a ban on alcohol also mean no coffees? The quiet coach (see Q33) could also be made alcohol-free. Alcohol is now banned on trains to football events and this should continue.

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

Q36 comments:

Existing sources of information (web, email, text messages etc) are useful, provided the information is updated regularly and accurately.

Better and more coherent rail travel information on the BBC, eg “Good Morning Scotland”, would also be useful, though this is not under ScotRail control.

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:

Sleeper services need to be specified, as they appear not to be profitable. However, lack of detailed usage, costs, revenue and growth figures hamper comment on this sleeper section of the consultation.

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:

A separate franchise for the Caledonian Sleepers could attract bids from a lower cost specialised operator.

On the other hand, the Highland and West Highland sleepers are an integral part of the ScotRail daytime timetable (providing a morning commuter service into Inverness, and a return journey from Edinburgh to Fort William). These daytime services should be preserved, with full ticket inter-availability with ScotRail tickets. There could be opportunities to more efficiently integrate sleeper and daytime train crew rosters if the sleeper remains with ScotRail.

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 gives early arrival at the destination. Traffic on Glasgow/Edinburgh -London sleepers could in the longer term be affected by faster daytime rail journeys. Use of the Highland Sleeper is likely to increase, as daytime rail journeys are quite lengthy, and flights are infrequent.

We understand the sleeper cannot operate to Oban due to weight restrictions.

En-suite (toilet/shower) facilities should be available in 1st Class, with the 1st class charges justified by the better standard of facilities. The £100M grant offered by the UK and Scottish Governments for new coaches is welcome. Study of the European City Night Line overnight trains would give ideas on the facilities that could be provided.

En-suite facilities take up space and will reduce the number of berths. So both the Lowland and Highland sleepers should continue, assuming traffic continues to grow. But a review of operation may identify ways of optimising the efficiency. This may necessitate changes to the departure and arrival times at some of the destinations.

With London Euston now due to be rebuilt, Eurostar platforms at London Waterloo should be re-commissioned for the Caledonian Sleepers, with dual-voltage Class 92 locomotives employed..

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:

Emissions: Modal shift from cars and buses to electric trains should reduce CO₂ emissions and unhealthy atmospheric pollution in city centre streets. Rail emissions should also be reduced where possible, but it is important that measures to reduce emissions from trains do not increase rail costs to the extent of reducing rail's competitiveness with road traffic, thereby losing the overall environmental advantage.

Waste: Use of trains with non-retention toilets is an environmental issue that should be resolved, particularly on longer distance lines in scenic countryside.

TRANSPORT SCOTLAND : RAIL 2014 Factsheet 1

: A Comment by Scottish Association for Public Transport

This newly published Transport Scotland Factsheet deals with stations less than 1 mile from other stations with similar levels of service. It lists 11 such stations in the Glasgow conurbation and 3 in other parts of Scotland. The difficulties with this Factsheet are that

- (a) it is wrong by a substantial margin on the number of stations less than 1 mile apart
- (b) usage at most of the listed stations has been rising, but this is not indicated
- (c) the main public interest is in the reasons why some stations might be suggested for closure, for relocation or as new stations on sites not at present easily accessible but with prospects for delivery over the years to 2020

A revised Factsheet dealing with these issues would be a more useful contribution to the RAIL 2014 consultation. Transport Scotland should publish this as a matter of urgency since the RAIL 2014 consultation is scheduled to end on 20 February 2012. Expansion and extra rolling stock should replace a focus confined to possible closures. A few closures may, following further investigation and consultation, be acceptable. But the emphasis should be on increasing rail usage, improved interchanges and initiatives to cut station maintenance costs.

Transport Scotland list of Stations under 1 mile apart with similar services (14 in all)

Factsheet List 1) Glasgow Conurbation

Airbles*
 Ashfield*
 Barnhill
 Duke St
 Gilshochill*
 Kelvindale*
 Kennishead
 Maryhill*
 Mosspark*
 Nitshill
 Paisley St James

2) Elsewhere in Scotland

Invershin
 Ardrossan Town*
 Golf St (Angus)

* indicates stations opened since 1979

List of Other Stations under 1 mile apart with similar services, omitted in Transport Scotland list

Thornliebank	Jordanhill or Hyndland	Brunstane*
Busby	Garscadden	Kingsknowe
Crosshill	Dumbarton East	Balmossie (Angus)
Pollokshields East	Dalreoch	
Pollokshields West	Hillfoot	Ardrossan South Beach
Shawlands	Greenfaulds*	Prestwick or Prestwick Airport*
Hillington East (or West)	Coatdyke	
Bogston or Cartsdyke	Hamilton West	
Drumfrochar *or Whinhill*	Dalmarnock*	* indicates stations opened since 1979
Argyle St*	Mount Vernon*	
High St (Glasgow)	Merryton*	
Fort Matilda		

Many of these stations are well-used despite being close to other stations. Others have practical geographical difficulties making easy access to alternative stations difficult. This may explain why the Factsheet List omits them. But why were the 14 stations on the list selected? This requires additional information. The Factsheet also omits relocations and other new stations which appear to justify further study.

Possible Relocations or New Stations

A revised Factsheet should indicate possible sites which are considered likely to justify new or relocated stations.

Possible relocated stations

- Holytown/Carfin consolidation on a new site linking well to Ravenscraig
- Cumbernauld to a new site to north-east OR an extra Abronhill station
- Neilston to site east rather than west of present road bridge
- Invergowrie to a more accessible Dundee West station site some half-mile to the east
- Stranraer Harbour to a bus/rail interchange closer to town

New Stations suggested by SAPT – GREATER GLASGOW CONURBATION

Up to 20 new stations or halts by 2020 on routes raised to Metro style quarter-hourly frequency or better (including Glasgow Airport, Yorkhill (on Queen St Low Level Line) with SECC access, Garngad, Robroyston, Parkhead, Mossend, extra stop between Hairmyres and East Kilbride)

ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND

(exclusive of planned Borders Rail and Edinburgh tram stations and halts)

Ayr South	Gogar-West Edinburgh Interchange	Halbeath or Ferrytoll
Ardrossan North	Ingliston/Newbridge interchange	Sinclairtown
Mauchline	Greenhill/Bonnybridge	Windygates
Thornhill	Stirling South	Levenmouth
	East Linton	Kintore
	Reston	Dalcross (Inverness Airport)
	Grangemouth	Conon Bridge

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