

## Respondent Information Form and Questions

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

### 1. Name/Organisation

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### 3. Permissions - I am responding as...

Individual

/ Group/Organisation

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)?

Please tick as appropriate  Yes  No

- (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

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

- (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?

Please tick as appropriate  Yes  No

- (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?

Please tick as appropriate

Yes

No

## 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 detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q2 comments: On balance, we believe that there is more merit in a longer term franchise to help offer train operating companies the opportunity to invest in their business and to promote ownership from the franchisee.

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

Q3 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q4 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q5 comments: In general terms, we believe that the involvement of third parties in relation to the operation of rail services in Scotland should be explored, primarily because this could result in further investment in rail services in certain areas of Scotland and encourage more community involvement.

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

Q6 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q7 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q8 comments: A monetary sanction is probably the best tool to help ensure that commitments are fulfilled. However, we believe that there is also merit in exploring the issue of incentives so that you have a balanced approach.

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

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

Q9 comments: There would appear to be merit in incentivising very good performance and penalising poor performance.

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: It would be fairer and less complicated if there was one system for the whole of the country in relation to the ScotRail franchise.

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

Q11 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q12 comments: We suspect that the performance of rail services would be given a higher priority by the majority of the travelling public throughout Scotland. The reduction of journey times should be a continuing aspiration on all routes. However, in our opinion, the biggest cause of frustration is a heavily delayed or cancelled service.

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: A service quality assessment process is essential to the improvement of rail services within Scotland. Our belief is that any assessment regime should cover all aspects of station and services delivery, within agreed parameters. We also believe that the stations not covered in the franchise should also be working towards the same standards.

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

Q14 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

### **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: As a country we should be aspiring to providing a seat for all passengers on all routes, especially at peak times. There will be instances where standing is required, but we should not be increasing the time limit for standing at present.

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: The key to interchange is performance confidence levels. If a passenger is confident that the service they are travelling on is going to arrive at their destination on time and the following service will leave on time etc. they will more readily accept an interchange. As an aside, modal interchange and through ticketing should also be encouraged throughout the country, where it is appropriate and sensible to do so.

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: We would suggest a combined approach.

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

Q18 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q19 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

### **Scottish rail fares**

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

Q20 comments: Equality of the fare structure throughout Scotland should be an aspiration and value for money should also be a key consideration. At

present there appears to be an unequal pricing structure between the east and west of the country. We believe that the general public are unconvinced by the regular rises in train fares compared to value for money and improved services, especially at a time of financial austerity. We recognise that the ticket system was simplified in 2008. However, we would suggest that further simplification is required to the ticketing system to improve the journey experience and encourage more people to use the train.

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: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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: We would agree that the differential between peak and off-peak pricing needs to be increased to encourage people to travel out-with the peak periods, particularly where capacity is an issue on certain routes. Modelling work will obviously offer a reasonable indication of passenger behaviour. However, we would suggest that consideration be given to a greater percentage differential to help encourage greater off-peak travel along with highlighting when peak becomes off-peak which could benefit from better advertising.

### **Scottish stations**

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

Q24 comments: We believe that a review of station locations on the network and a possible reconfiguration may be beneficial. Obviously in some cases there will be a historical and social dimension to the positioning of existing stations on the network and without being aware of all the relevant details, the number of stations in Scotland that currently serve less than 20 passengers is a concern and the relevance of these stations needs to be tested.

We also believe that stations in close proximity to each other, offering similar services also needs to be tested, although it is acknowledged that a potential

rationalisation exercise would not be particularly easy to implement.

In the Scottish Borders we have no stopping services at present, although we look forward to the continuing development of the Borders Rail Project to the Central Borders. Another key development in our area is the potential for a local rail service between Edinburgh and Berwick-upon-Tweed utilising latent capacity on the ECML. There have been various studies undertaken in conjunction with East Lothian Council and SEStran and the case for a local service, along with potential new stations at East Linton (East Lothian) and Reston (Eastern Berwickshire) is positive and attracts widespread local and political support. We believe that a stopping service for this part of East Lothian and the Scottish Borders would offer substantial socio-economic benefits for this part of the country and would offer a sustainable alternative for commuters accessing the Edinburgh job market.

As part of this submission we would highlight the following issues in support of this proposal:

#### Social Aspects

- The population of East Lothian is projected to grow by 33% between 2008 and 2032;
- The population of Scottish Borders is projected to grow by 16% over a similar timescale;
- The social impacts of improving local services to Dunbar and Berwick with new stations at East Linton and Reston improves accessibility to Queen Margaret University and increases connectivity within the Council areas and beyond;
- The provision of a new local service will help to address elements of industry decline, rurality and the marginalisation of parts of East Lothian and the Eastern Borders.

#### Economic Aspects

- Investment in this local rail service would ease pressure on the A1 and A720 Trunk Road Network and especially the Old Craighall junction;
- A local service could be introduced to Dunbar and Berwick at relatively little capital cost as the infrastructure is already in place;
- Improved rail services will increase the market for rail-based tourism in the east of Scotland, therefore benefitting local businesses and creating employment opportunities;
- Additional rail services will provide more sustainable transport for the Edinburgh City Region and provide less strain on the capital's road infrastructure;
- The proposed developments in SESplan's Strategic Development Plan and existing Local Plan allocations in the area need to be factored into the long-term planning of rail services. Failure to do this may result in having to limit development in the area due to capacity issues on the road network.

We would therefore encourage Transport Scotland to include this proposal as part of any future improvements to the Scottish rail network.

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 believe that there could be benefits in delivering services with the help of third parties in certain areas of the country or on certain services and this should be explored. The danger is in a potential muddying of the waters in terms of service provision and lines of responsibility in an environment that many would say is already too complex.

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: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q27 comments: Current system appears to be fairly successful, therefore continuation of current scheme seems appropriate.

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

Q28 comments: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

### **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: We believe that this issue should be explored in more detail.

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: We believe that this issue should be explored in more detail.

### **Rolling stock**

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

Q31 comments: There may be some benefit in exploring the potential sponsorship of 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: No detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

### **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: Wi-Fi and mobile phone coverage is a key issue for rail users, especially business users and should be improved as a priority within the new franchise.

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: On highly congested routes it would be sensible to explore a reduction in first class provision.

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 detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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

Q36 comments: The key aspect of travel information that causes frustration with passengers is the lack of information when the service is disrupted and when the information provided is inaccurate. Travel information is vital in terms of our rail network and should continue to be improved. Real-time information in all trains and stations should be part of the normal service provision within the franchise.



## **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: Anecdotal information suggests that the sleeper service is valued and should be retained.

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 detailed comment from SBC on this issue.

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: We would suggest that the tourist market should be a higher priority for the sleeper service, especially in relation to London airport connections.

## **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: Carbon impact and savings should be reported in line with the Scottish Government's low carbon economy targets.