

Rail 2014
Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Road
Glasgow G4 0HF

Rail 2014 – Public Consultation

I am writing in response to the above consultation and specifically to give my comments on the following matters:

Cross-Border Services

If passenger interests are indeed to be at the heart of future provision then it is essential to retain cross-border train services which extend beyond Edinburgh and Glasgow. It is not acceptable that people travelling beyond these stations, especially if they are disabled or travelling with children, should be expected to transfer themselves and their luggage to another platform and train. This may well involve using lifts or stairs, perhaps against time constraints, and probable difficulty with the more limited luggage space in the smaller Scotrail trains.

Sleeper Services

The existing sleeper services must also be retained. For people travelling to or from Scotland (and especially Northern Scotland), whether on business or pleasure, these services are essential to ensuring that they can arrive at their town or city centre destinations in the early morning.

Accessibility

It is very disappointing that the consultation has so little to say about the problems confronting disabled people and, in many similar ways, elderly people and those travelling with children. For disabled people all trains should have timely visible and audio warnings of approaching stations. Stations also should give timely warning of train arrivals or changes of platform. A number of stations remain inaccessible, or near-inaccessible, to disabled people. Non-automatic entrance doors are one problem, exposed and hazardous footbridge crossings to platforms are another.

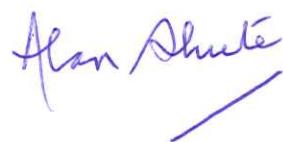
The Environment

Given the Government's commitments to reducing carbon emissions, it seems to me

that not enough is being done to promote the use of Scotland's railways, particularly the benefits of the cross-border and sleeper services referred to above, as a preferable alternative to motoring or travel by air.

Lastly, I would welcome a commitment from Government to dualling of the railway tracks north of the Central Belt where delays often occur while one train waits for another to pass.

Yours sincerely,


Alan Shute