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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: DK

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

Q2 comments: DK

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

Q3 comments: DK

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

Q4 comments: DK

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

Q5 comments: DK

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

Q6 comments: DK

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

Q7 comments: DK

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

Q8 comments: DK

Achieving reliability, performance and service quality

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

Q9 comments: Penalise poor performance. Although if incentives are used, should only be paid out at very high standards of performance/reliability (>95%).

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: Actual routes. Some routes run on time pretty much all the time, others slightly delayed almost every day.

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

Q11 comments: Are passengers currently asked what their issues are? If so I'm not aware of them and it might be better publicised, also what the feedback of any issue gathering exercise to passengers needs wider publicity.

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

Q12 comments: Punctuality/Reliability to be key indicator of performance and most important issue for consideration.

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: Retain SQUIRE. A self-monitoring system would be a disaster and a return to the failures of the old ScotRail where stations were neglected and on-train staff were non-existent.

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

Q14 comments: SQUIRE is a system that works. Evidenced by the fact ScotRail has focussed on areas where they did badly previously to improve and therefore not get as big a fine/less a reward.

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: Difficult question as standing time that is acceptable for one person would be unacceptable to another. 15 minutes would be acceptable for me. At moment peak trains I travel on everyday exceed ten minutes standing time for some passengers. Capacity should never peak above 105% on any route, this should be monitored and capacity increased to ensure never exceeding 105%.

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: Increasing interchanges beyond number currently would be a bad idea. This could mean journeys needing 3+ changes would increase. Every station should be connected to another within max 2 changes, with 80+% within 1 change (within reason, don't expect Wick to be connected to Stranraer in 2 changes!))

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: SG should direct all aspects. Otherwise profitability comes before service and therefore ruin the public transport network.

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

Q18 comments: Full specification. Targeted would allow franchisee to remove rural and less profitable routes. Private companies will remove these routes to maximise profit and will lead to less public transport available which will lead to people using cars and therefore higher CO2 emissions thus breaking the target set by the Scottish Government.

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

Q19 comments: Does the Railway need innovation? Better having the franchise focus on reliability/punctuality.

Scottish rail fares

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

Q20 comments: Passenger revenue not to exceed 25% of total cost provision (currently 26%). Where it does exceed use this excess this to reduce fares. Maybe a look towards the idea that is deployed in the ferries strategy (Road Equivalent Price) should be considered. I am sure there are some journeys that well exceed a road equivalent price.

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: I currently only travel on regulated price tickets, find them to be affordable. I once looked at how much a single was from Glasgow to Aberdeen and almost had a fit! £45 for a single, given that coach transport is substantially under half this price I feel that it is overly expensive. Clearly then when the fares are non-regulated they become unaffordable. If any changes are to be made there should be more regulated fares not less.

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 be continued to be linked to the RPI + 1% that way travel does not become too expensive. It is already unaffordable for people on low incomes, you will start to price out those on middle incomes too.

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: Shoulder pricing for Season tickets very good idea, but not for singles/returns. I don't think a big difference would be needed on the peak/off-peak ticket prices if shoulder season tickets were introduced. Smart ticketing which allowed people with "Shoulder Seasons" who wanted to travel on a high peak (on a one off occasion) and pay a small surcharge would allow the best flexibility/incentive to travel off-peak.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments: Distance between stations should not be used, the one mile rule. Passenger demand is key, if two stations are within a mile but there is a high demand at both then keep both. The stations mentioned that have less than 5 passengers a week seem more appropriate to close than ones within a mile. Although most of these will be on the Kyle of Lochalsh line that already makes savings by having request stops. Maybe an introduction of request stops on more lines especially at off-peak would be a good idea to save money.

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: Merits are that the local community would be best to know what they want from a station. Issues are money, who will have enough to build/look after the stations?

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: D/K

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

Q27 comments: Station Council/Board of Volunteers. To help look after maintenance and flowers etc. And also to raise any issues before they become expensive repairs.

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

Q28 comments: Agree with every point from 7.29 to 7.35

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: Not sure

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: If a hub is created the ScotRail connecting train will have to have the ability to call forward and make the Cross Border wait if delayed by <20 minutes. I have been on Scotrail Trains, Glasgow to Inverness, where they have been delayed and then held the connecting Kyle of Lochalsh train for the passengers to make the connection. This joined up thinking should be promoted with the cross-border services.

Rolling stock

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

Q31 comments: DK

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

Q32 comments: Toilet on all (as currently, except the Cathcart line as not long enough to need toilet). Cycle racks. Wi-fi.

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: High volume routes first then roll out as affordable.

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: Retain first class as subsidises cost of other passengers.

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

Q35 comments: Both benefits and drawbacks. Wouldn't withdraw it from cross-border services might be an idea to ban it on routes with known problems.

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

Q36 comments: Online services updated regularly. Journeycheck is really good but sometimes not updated enough on time.

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: Continue to specify.

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: Yes, might be a good idea to franchise separately then the company running it would focus on making it a good service. You feel ScotRail at moment feel like it's a bit of a bother to run, don't really advertise it well.

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: DK

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: Emission Reduction