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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:

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: Journey times in Scotland are a complex function of geography and Network Rail's tunnelling capability, and the aspiration to minimise journey times is irrelevant for one-way trip distances less than 50 miles. Every effort should be made to improve punctuality and reliability.

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 the 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: The franchisee shall have the option of advertising on private vehicles for nominal fees.

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:

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:

Passengers would benefit from fewer permutations of ticket prices. Higher prices improve revenue but discourage uptake; lower prices encourage uptake but decrease revenue. Suggest a notional rate of £8 per 10 miles travelled, with a peak-time multiplier of 1.6 and a multiplier of 0.9 for every ticket whose total one-way distance is greater than 100 miles. The basic rate will track the RPI, and peak periods are defined as Monday to Saturday 0730-0930 and 1600-1800. No peak period set for Sunday.

Scottish stations

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

Q24 comments:

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: Stations must remain in public ownership and operation. This will enable facilities to be modified and upgraded in line with Government policy. A privately funded station will keep public sector requirements at arms' length.

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:

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: Covered and floodlit bicycle and motorcycle parking shall be provided at every station for a minimum of 10% of total passengers per day.

The parking shall be located centrally wherever practicable, and not at the extremities of station concourses. Where this may not be reasonably provided, signage shall be installed at regular points and its effectiveness shall be reviewed every three months by internal audit and passenger responses. Signage will conform to Department for Transport specifications. Spacing of cycle racks shall be not less than 800mm between centres.

Automatic ticket machines shall be available at every station.

Passenger lifts where installed shall accommodate bicycles of a length not less than 2.0 metres.

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: Every train must be able to carry bicycles, which shall include tandems and recumbents, and trailers. Tricycles shall not be refused outright because they may be used by rail passengers who have balance problems or other disabilities such as MS or blindness. The franchisee shall be obliged to carry cycles free of charge, with booking of spaces optional and to be recommended for all one-way trip distances greater than 100 miles.

Rolling stock shall be designed to carry a minimum of two bicycles per coach, using at least one flexible space of a length not less than 2.75 metres and the full height of the coach and rectangular in plan. The flexible space shall include tip-up seats for use by passengers when bicycles are not present. These requirements shall be mandatory for all new rolling stock, and all existing rolling stock shall be upgraded within 12 months of the franchisee taking control.

The franchisee shall not require passengers with cycles to leave a train if the number of cycles in a coach is greater than two and the space requirements are clearly adequate.

The exterior end panels of each train operated by the franchisee shall include arrows indicating the position or location of cycle storage and accessible toilets to assist passengers and to help reduce platform movements during peak periods.

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:

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: There shall be no first class service on any train whose one-way trip distance is less than 125 miles.

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 consumption of alcohol shall be banned on all trains operated by the franchisee.

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

Q36 comments: All trains operated by the franchisee shall include, in addition to an illuminated 'next station stop' sign, a similar sign indicating the number of miles and the currently estimated time remaining to the next station stop. This will reduce anxiety of passengers gathering their belongings in time to leave the train, particularly where passengers are travelling to unfamiliar areas.

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:

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:

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:

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: The franchisee shall develop and report quarterly on targets to reduce in absolute terms the direct greenhouse gas emissions from its rolling stock and station operations, in accordance with Defra guidelines.

The franchisee shall monitor and report annually on the activities it is taking to increase the number of passengers arriving at its stations by walking and cycling, and to decrease the number of passengers and services arriving at its stations by private car or van.