

Transport Scotland
Buchanan House
58 Port Dundas Rd.
Glasgow G4 0HF.

14/2/12

Dear Sirs.

Review of Scottish Railway System

I refer to your notice posted at several local railway stations, requesting views on the future of Scotland's railways & in this connection, I submit the following observations.

- 1) The primary aim of our railways, is to maximise the diversion of traffic from the road system, thereby reducing our 'carbon imprint' whilst providing an efficient transport system for freight & passengers.
- 2) Freight enhancement should cover both bulk loads & smaller container traffic - with the latter the greatest potential for expansion. In this exercise transport to remote areas must not be overlooked, as the road system in these parts is generally less suited for heavy lorry traffic, & port facilities are few & far between.
- 3) Whilst not an advocate of business subsidies, I feel that in this case some government assistance, especially to provide freight facilities is necessary, & it is likely that this will prove less expensive than the alternative of substantial highway improvements.
- 4) Passenger services must not be reduced below their present levels. In my opinion the considerable growth has largely been due to increased frequencies & quality of trains, & any re-trenchment will result in a drop in passenger numbers.
- 5) Through services to England, including sleepers, must not be reduced, & enhancement should be considered, including possible re-introduction of 'motorail' services during the tourist season.
- 6) Within Scotland, recent introduction of 'through' routes has been welcome (i.e. Edinburgh - Helensburgh). Other routes of this nature should be considered, such as Edinburgh - Ayrshire (via the St Enoch link), Dundee - Glasgow (via Fife) & Edinburgh to Inverness via Aberdeen.
- 7) Frequencies on all Edinburgh & Glasgow - Inverness & Inverness - Aberdeen services, should be increased to at least hourly.

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- 8) Enhancement of commuter services round/in our Cities is very necessary. Aberdeen is very congested, & re-opening & part of the Deeside line & the Ellon to Peterhead line via Boddam would considerably ease problems here. The Dundee - St Andrews link would help relieve queues on the Tay road bridge, & round the Inverness Glasgow & Edinburgh there are many opportunities for enhancements.
- 9) Much improved interchange with other transport modes, including bus services, airports & ferries, is required. All Scotland's major airports lie close to railways, & provision of suitable halts with linking minibus shuttles is necessary. A similar arrangement at Stranraer/Cairryan is required for traffic to Ireland.
- 10) Finally, whilst perhaps not part of your present exercise, I feel that the present free transport on buses for senior cardholders (of which I am one!) is wrong, & not sustainable in the long term. I am of opinion that these 'pamers' should involve payment of a reduced fare - say $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{3}$ full fare, & should be useable on rail & ferry services, as well as buses. An additional bonus of a change of this nature, would be the transfer of some traffic from road to rail.
- 11) I also feel that all abandoned rail alignments should be protected from development, to permit future re-opening should this ever become desirable. Routes in this category include Taseedbank - Carlisle, the Strathmore route via Forfar, Dyce - Fraserburgh, the Moray Coast line, & number of other routes in our more heavily populated areas.

I trust that the above views are of interest to you, in connection with your present exercise.

Yours faithfully


N.I. THOMSON. A.R.I.A.S.