



Passenger Focus' response to Network Rail's Scotland Route Utilisation Strategy Generation Two Draft for Consultation

January 2011

Passenger Focus is the official, independent consumer organisation representing the interests of rail users nationally and bus, coach and tram users across England outside London. Created by the Railways Act 2005, Passenger Focus is the operating name of the Passengers' Council. We are funded by the Department for Transport (DfT) and our independence is guaranteed by an act of Parliament.

Our mission is to get the best deal for Britain's passengers. We have two main aims: to influence both long and short term decisions and issues that affect passengers; and to help passengers through advice, advocacy and empowerment.

With a strong emphasis on evidence-based campaigning and research, we ensure that we know what is happening on the ground. We use our knowledge to influence decisions on behalf of rail passengers and we work with the rail industry, other passenger groups and Government to secure journey improvements.

Our vision is to ensure that operators, funders and regulators of transport systems and Government are always

‘putting passengers first’

This will be achieved through our mission of

‘getting the best deal for passengers’

Contents

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| Executive summary | 4 |
| 1. Introduction | 5 |
| 2. Recommendations | 7 |
| 3. Analysis of gaps and options | 8 |
| 3.1 Glasgow conurbation | 9 |
| 3.2 Edinburgh conurbation | 11 |
| 3.3 Strategic gaps – interurban | 12 |
| 3.4 Strategic gaps – rural | 14 |
| 3.5 Strategic gaps – network availability | 15 |
| 3.6 Strategic gaps – freight | 16 |
| 3.7 Terminal capacity | 16 |
| 4. Summary table of Passenger Focus' responses to RUS options | 17 |
| 5. Appendices | |
| A. List of consultees | 19 |
| B. Bibliography | 20 |

Executive summary

The number of people travelling by rail is increasing, with over 76 million passenger journeys on ScotRail services and over six million passenger journeys on cross-border rail services¹ in 2009/10. Performance on the railways is steadily improving, with the latest Public Performance Measure (PPM) at over 90%². Passenger satisfaction is also rising with overall satisfaction with ScotRail services at 90%³.

Passenger Focus expects the programme of Route Utilisation Strategies across the rail network to build on this; specifically, to allow for continued passenger growth, to further improve performance and passenger satisfaction.

The Route Utilisation Strategy (RUS) objective is defined as: *“The effective and efficient use and development of the capacity available, consistent with funding that is, or is reasonably likely to become, available during the period of the RUS and with the licence holder’s performance of the duty⁴.”*

This RUS is a second generation RUS, building on the first Scotland RUS established in May 2007, and looks in detail to 2024. This is the first second generation RUS by Network Rail and Passenger Focus welcomes the opportunity to be involved in the process. There are a number of RUSs and second generation RUSs which are currently in progress and it is important that the strategies help deliver improved capacity, performance and passenger satisfaction with rail services.

Passenger Focus has a wealth of research on what passengers want and this evidence informs our input to each RUS consultation. Drivers of passenger satisfaction change over time, but punctuality and reliability have been the main drivers of passenger satisfaction since the National Passenger Survey (NPS) began in 1999.

Passengers in Scotland have told us that their top three priorities⁵ for improvement are value for money, performance and service frequency. These, coupled with seats/capacity in fourth place, emphasise the importance passengers place on the ‘core product’ and should be a major consideration that influences the final RUS document.

¹ Transport Series Statistical Bulletin, August 2010

² Network Rail and ScotRail Performance Briefing, October 2010

³ National Passenger Survey, Spring 2010

⁴ Extract from Office of Rail Regulation Guidelines on RUSs, June 2005

⁵ Passengers’ priorities for improvements in rail services, March 2010

1. Introduction

Passenger Focus welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Scotland RUS second generation. Passenger Focus supports the broad objectives behind the RUS process and welcomes both the formal and informal consultative approach adopted by Network Rail.

The table below shows the top 10 passenger priorities for improvement in 2009 compared to those in 2007. It also shows the relative importance of each attribute ranking relative to punctuality – the higher the score, the greater priority passengers assign to that service aspect.

Table 1: Passengers’ priorities for improvement 2007 and 2009

| Passengers’ Priorities for Improvement | 2007 | 2009 | 2009 ‘Score’ |
|---|------|------|--------------|
| Price of train tickets offer excellent value for money | 1 | 1 | 1.08 |
| At least 19 out of 20 trains arrive on time | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Sufficient train services at times I use the train | 2 | 3 | 0.98 |
| Passengers are always able to get a seat on the train | 4 | 4 | 0.86 |
| Company keeps passengers informed of train delays | 5 | 5 | 0.79 |
| Information on train times/platforms accurate and available | 7 | 6 | 0.75 |
| Maximum queue time no more than 2 minutes | 6 | 7 | 0.69 |
| Trains consistently well maintained/excellent condition | 8 | 8 | 0.69 |
| Seating area on the train is very comfortable | 9 | 9 | 0.67 |
| Station staff are available whenever required | 17 | 10 | 0.67 |

Passengers in Scotland have told us that their top three priorities⁶ for improvement are value for money, performance and service frequency. These, coupled with seats/capacity in fourth place, emphasise the importance passengers place on the ‘core product’ and should be a major consideration that influences the final RUS document.

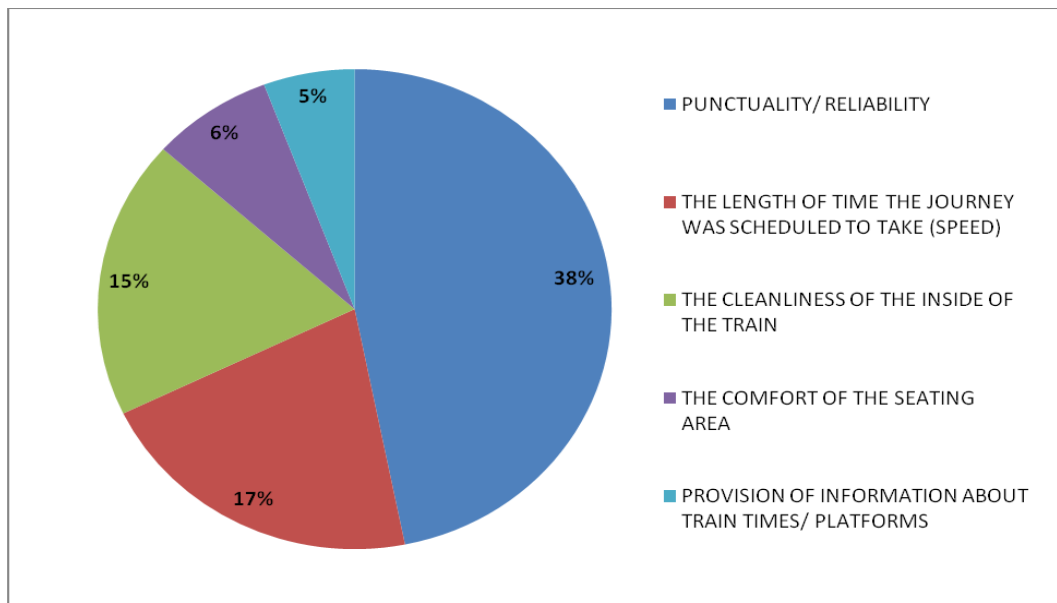
The RUS should address those ‘core products’ and our response to the various gaps and options are based on passengers’ priorities.

Our research into what drives passenger satisfaction⁷ shows that for passengers in Scotland, the top driver of satisfaction is punctuality and reliability of train services which accounts for 38% of overall passenger satisfaction. Speed of the journey is the second driver (17%) and cleanliness of the inside of the train is the third highest driver of satisfaction (15%). Data for the top five drivers of satisfaction for passengers in Scotland is shown in Figure 1.

⁶ Passengers’ priorities for improvements in rail services, March 2010

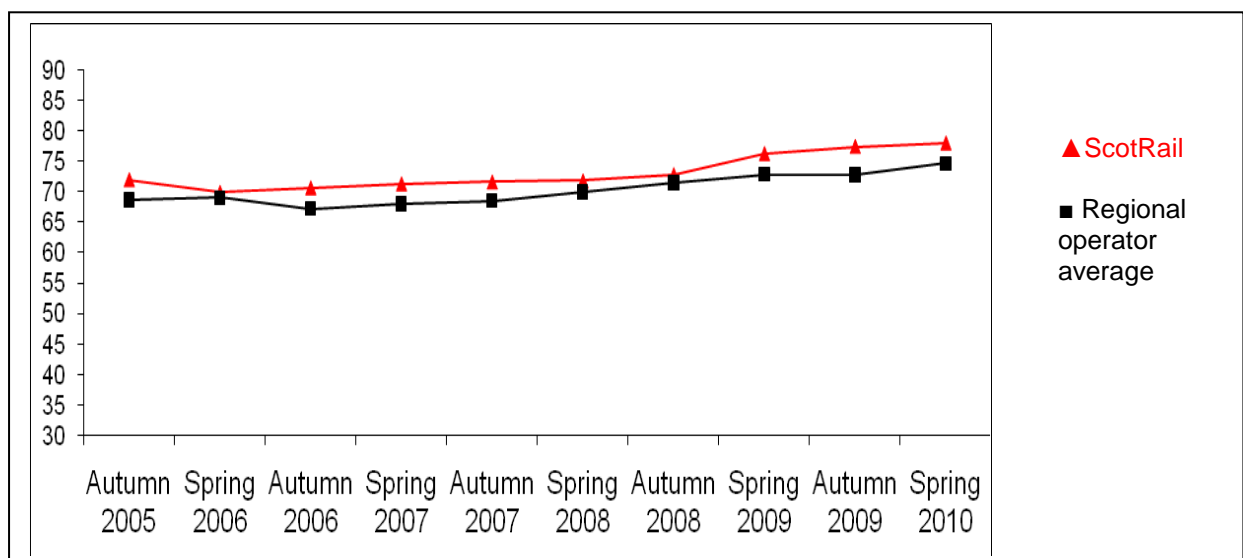
⁷ National Passenger Survey, Spring 2010

Figure 1: Drivers of satisfaction for passengers in Scotland



The NPS⁸ is carried out twice a year and this shows that passengers in Scotland have consistently rated their satisfaction levels higher than the average for regional train operators over the last 10 surveys. In order to maintain this trend it is vital that the 'core products' discussed above are at the centre of all future plans for this RUS.

Figure 2: NPS satisfaction trend for passengers in Scotland



⁸ National Passenger Survey, Autumn 2005-Spring 2010

2. Recommendations

Our key recommendations for inclusion in the final RUS are:

- options that provide the maximum amount of capacity to address both current needs and future growth forecasts
- options that can be phased to match demand as it grows
- options that identify potential opportunities for improvements in capacity and line speeds arising from infrastructure renewals
- options that meet passengers' need for greater frequency and more reliable services
- options that drive a real step-change in improved passenger services in terms of journey times
- options that maintain existing connections and increase further connectivity
- options that increase passenger perceptions of value for money

3. Analysis of gaps and options

Our response to the options in the Scotland RUS follows in the order of the options as presented in the Draft RUS document. Our response is supported by the following research:

- Passengers' priorities for improvements in rail services, 2010
- National Passenger Survey, Spring 2010
- Designing the Future Rolling Stock Design, October 2010

2.1 Glasgow conurbation

Option 1.1 – Increase capacity on the Paisley corridor by operating inner and outer-services

It is a recognised fact that capacity constraints exist on this route. The Draft RUS acknowledges that trains are at full capacity during peak times.

A timetable recast to provide inner and outer-services is supported in principle dependent on future passenger consultation on the detail. This would increase capacity on this route and meet passengers' priorities for improvements in rail services.

Passenger Focus supports the inclusion of option 1.1 in the final RUS.

Option 1.2 – Removing Kilwinning stops from Ayrshire services

It is recognised that capacity constraints exist on this route and with growth expected to continue, as Ayrshire is anticipating a need for between 3500 and 11,400 new homes by 2025⁹; the option proposed needs to address the existing and future crowding problems on this route.

This option proposes better alignment of capacity to demand which as a result, could save rolling stock.

Passengers prioritise service frequency as a 'core product' and as long as service frequency is maintained by introducing additional services for Kilwinning passengers, Passenger Focus can support the inclusion of option 1.2 in the final RUS.

Option 1.3 – Train lengthening Argyle line

Option 1.4 – Additional services on the Argyle line

Option 2.1 – Earlier services on the Argyle line

The three options will deliver the 'core product' of improved frequency and additional capacity, and as such are supported. Providing earlier services in the morning recognises changing economic and work patterns. We recognise that train lengthening will not resolve the anticipated passenger growth.

We note the impact on connectivity for passengers travelling to north-west Glasgow and that timetable planning should provide for a seamless interchange.

Option 1.5 – Additional capacity on the Whifflet line

It is recognised that during the period covered within the RUS passengers on the Whifflet line will experience overcrowding. We therefore support the option of

⁹ Scotland Planning Assessment Part 1 Report Volume 2. Scottish Executive (October 2005)

examining the potential of electrification of the line to run electric units and thereby providing additional capacity.

Option 3.1 – Further electrification of the Glasgow conurbation network

This option is in line with the Strategic Transport Projects Review¹⁰ (STPR) Project Six, electrification of the rail network. This option is supported as it will improve capacity and reduce journey times.

¹⁰ Strategic Transport Projects Review, 2008

3.2 Edinburgh conurbation

Option 1.1 Fife train lengthening

Option 1.2 Additional stop in Fife services

Train lengthening will deliver additional capacity and revision of the stopping pattern shall improve connectivity and opportunities to travel, and as such is supported.

Option 1.3 Extension of Prestonpans service to Drem

Option 1.4 North Berwick as three or six-car operation

Both the above options are supported as they shall relieve capacity constraints for passengers on the North Berwick line.

3.3 Strategic gaps - Interurban

Option 1.1 Third high-peak train Stirling to Edinburgh

Option 1.2 Weekend train lengthening

Option 1.3 Stirling to Glasgow

The above options combined shall deal with the recognised capacity constraints between Stirling and Scotland's two principal cities. The options recognise the potential provided by the STPR Edinburgh to Glasgow rail improvements project and as such are supported for inclusion in the final RUS.

Option 2.1 Additional evening-peak service between Inverness and Dingwall

This option addresses passenger priorities for improved frequency and capacity. We note that this option does not produce adequate benefits to be recommended as part of the final RUS but passenger growth will not be delivered unless the anticipated capacity issues are resolved. Passenger Focus recommends that this option should be carefully reconsidered as part of the RUS process.

Option 2.2 Train lengthening of Aberdeen services

Option 2.4 Additional service between Stonehaven and Aberdeen

We note that option 2.2 is not recommended. Providing an additional service which is supported should relieve capacity constraints. The STPR of rail improvements between Aberdeen and Central Belt would also bring benefits to passengers. Although noting the constraints that the RUS has identified, careful monitoring of crowding is required with a view to providing a long-term solution.

Option 2.3 Additional services between Dyce and Aberdeen

We recognise that the ongoing assessment of improvements between Aberdeen and Inverness should as a consequence provide improved journey opportunities and address capacity constraints.

Option 2.5 Create Aberdeen North Bay platform

This option should lead to improved performance and is therefore supported.

Option 3.1 Improved journey times and frequency between Aberdeen and Inverness

We note that over the years, various studies and reports have recommended improvements to this line. Improved journey times and frequency of service would benefit existing passengers and be a driver for modal change. The Tier three workstream should identify proposals to make these long-held aspirations deliverable.

Option 3.2 Recasting Aberdeen to central belt as express services

Option 3.3 Recasting the Aberdeen to central belt timetable on improved infrastructure

Option 3.4 Review of Line-speeds

The above options have a direct correlation to STPR Project 23 to make rail improvements between Aberdeen and the central belt. To provide a faster journey between Aberdeen and the central belt, which also serves intermediate stations, will require significant infrastructure work.

Option 3.5 All day frequency between Glasgow and Dundee

Providing an all day frequent service between Glasgow and Dundee should also consider the Tay Estuary Rail Study (TERS), which has aspirations for a local Perth to Arbroath service. We note and support the need for further assessment of this option.

Option 3.6 Journey times and frequencies Inverness-Central Belt

This option should be taken forward in Tier 3 and also consider, where possible, the implications of the STPR for this route.

3.4 Strategic gaps – rural

Option 1.1 Saturday crowding on the Glasgow to Carlisle via Dumfries route

Option 1.2 Improved Sunday service on the Glasgow to Carlisle via Dumfries route

By lengthening the trains and providing an improved frequency of service; this should relieve the projected capacity constraints on this route.

Option 1.3 Service specifications on the Stanraer route

We are aware of the work being undertaken by ScotRail and Transport Scotland on recasting the timetable on this route. We are liaising with stakeholders, including the Regional Transport Partnership for South West Scotland to identify the best possible timetable to meet passengers' needs.

Option 2.1 Upgrade Bunchrew AOCL

Passengers on rural routes welcome shorter journey times and this option would result in a one minute reduction for passengers travelling between Inverness and Beaulieu. The analysis shows that the costs outweigh the benefits for this option to be included in the final RUS and Passenger Focus recommends that further analysis be carried out to improve journey times on such rural routes as part of future renewal works.

3.5 Strategic gaps – network availability

Option 1.2 Overnight service between Edinburgh-Glasgow

We note that passenger demand does not exist at present for such a service but we support the desire for earlier-morning services. Providing earlier services recognises changing economic and work patterns.

Option 1.3 Earlier West Coast Main Line services on Sunday mornings

This is an option that should be taken forward for consideration during the re-letting process of the West Coast franchise in 2011.

3.6 Strategic gaps - freight

Passengers will not accept having the number of passenger trains reduced to accommodate the demands of freight operators; therefore Passenger Focus welcomes the additional capacity recommended by the Draft RUS to accommodate freight traffic.

3.7 Terminal capacity

We support the interventions proposed at Glasgow Queen Street, Glasgow Central and Edinburgh Waverley to deal with passenger and service growth.

4. Summary table of Passenger Focus's responses to RUS options

| Gap | Option | RUS conclusion | Passenger Focus opinion |
|-----------------------------|--------|--|---|
| Glasgow conurbation | 1.1 | New timetable being developed | Support |
| | 1.2 | New timetable being developed | Support in principle |
| | 1.3 | Not recommended | Support |
| | 1.4 | Recommended subject to analysis confirmation | Support |
| | 1.5 | To be considered by Tier three work stream | Support |
| | 2.1 | Recommended | Support |
| | 3.1 | To be considered by Tier three work stream | Support |
| Edinburgh conurbation | 1.1 | Recommended | Support |
| | 1.2 | Recommended | Support |
| | 1.3 | Recommended | Support |
| | 1.4 | For long-term review | Support |
| Strategic gaps – Interurban | 1.1 | Incorporated into the base EGIP timetable | Support |
| | 1.2 | Recommended | Support |
| | 1.3 | Under review | Support |
| | 2.1 | Not recommended | Reconsider for inclusion in final RUS |
| | 2.2 | Not recommended | Monitoring of crowding required to provide long-term solution |
| | 2.3 | Not recommended | Support |
| | 2.4 | Recommended | Support |
| | 2.5 | Recommended | Support |
| | 3.1 | To be considered by Tier three work stream | Support |
| | 3.2 | Not recommended | Support |
| | 3.3 | Not recommended | Support |
| | 3.4 | For future consideration | Support |
| | 3.5 | Further assessment required | Support |
| | 3.6 | To be considered by Tier three work stream | Support |
| Strategic gaps - rural | 1.1 | Recommended | Support |
| | 1.2 | Recommended | Support |
| | 1.3 | Final RUS to report | Support |

| Gap | Option | RUS conclusion | Passenger Focus opinion |
|---|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | 2.1 | Not recommended | Further analysis to be done |
| Strategic gaps – network availability | 1.2 | Recommended | Support |
| | 1.3 | Further work to be done | Franchise issue |

Appendix A: List of consultees

A meeting was held with Rail User Groups and local stakeholders in December, in conjunction with Network Rail, as part of the formal consultation period. This gave the opportunity for interested parties to have their say and share thoughts on the draft RUS proposals.

We also invited comment on the draft for consultation, reminding groups that comments should be sent directly to Network Rail and/or copied into Passenger Focus.

This is a list of all groups and individuals who we consulted with as part of this RUS process.

| Organisation |
|--|
| Capital Rail Action Group |
| COBRA |
| Cumbernauld Commuters' Association |
| Dornoch Rail Link Action Group |
| Friends of the Far North Line |
| Friends of the Far North Line |
| Friends Of The West Highland Lines |
| Friends Of The West Highland Lines |
| Friends Of The West Highland Lines |
| Scottish Association for Public Transport |
| Stranraer to Ayr Line Support Association (SAYLSA) |
| TRANSform Scotland |
| Nith Valley Line Promotion Group |
| SRPS Railtours |
| Railfuture Scotland |
| Rail Action Group East of Scotland |

Appendix B: Bibliography

| |
|---|
| Designing the Future Rolling Stock Design, October 2010 (Available on request from Passenger Focus) |
| Extract from Office of Rail Regulation Guidelines on RUSs, June 2005 http://www.rail-reg.gov.uk/ |
| Network Rail and ScotRail Performance Briefing, October 2010 http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/rail/rail-franchise/service-quality |
| National Passenger Survey, Spring 2010 http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/news-and-publications/document-search/document.asp?dsid=4094 |
| Passenger Focus response to Network Rail's Scotland RUS Draft for Consultation http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/news-and-publications/document-search/document.asp?dsid=720 |
| Passengers' priorities for improvements in rail services, March 2010 http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/news-and-publications/document-search/document.asp?dsid=4476 |
| Passengers' priorities for improvements Scotland, March 2010 http://www.passengerfocus.org.uk/news-and-publications/document-search/document.asp?dsid=4477 |
| Scotland Planning Assessment Part 1 Report Volume 2. Scottish Executive (October 2005) http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Transport |
| Strategic Transport Projects Review, 2008 http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/strategy-and-research/strategic-transport-projects-review |
| Transport Series Statistical Bulletin, August 2010 http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/08/23082229 |



© 2010 Passenger Focus

Passenger Focus
FREEPOST (RRRE-ETTC-LEET)
PO Box 4257
Manchester
M60 3AR

0300 123 2350
www.passengerfocus.org.uk
info@passengerfocus.org.uk

Passenger Focus is the operating
name of the Passengers' Council