

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

11th Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)

Tuesday, 19 March 2024

Evidence sessions on Scotland's railways

Introduction

1. The Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee has agreed to explore development on Scotland's railways at its meeting on 19 March. It will hear from two panels of witnesses comprised of rail industry stakeholders and operators. Ahead of this meeting, the Committee also agreed to seek written evidence from four trade unions for rail staff in Scotland and received three responses:

- [Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen](#) (**Annexe A**)
- [Unite the Union](#) (**Annexe B**)
- [National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers](#) (**Annexe C**)

2. The Committee has held evidence sessions on rail services annually since ScotRail entered public ownership in 2022. It has most recently heard from railway stakeholders and operators at its meeting [on 30 May 2023](#). Rail provision also formed part of a wider discussion the Committee held with the then Minister (now Cabinet Secretary) for Transport on her ministerial priorities [on 12 September 2023](#).

Background to Scotland's railways

3. While the Scotland Act 1998 defined the provision of rail services as a reserved matter, the Scottish Government is responsible for the letting and management of Scottish passenger rail franchises – currently ScotRail and Caledonian Sleeper.

4. The national rail infrastructure across Great Britain is owned by Network Rail, a public owned body of the UK Department for Transport. The Scottish Government are responsible for setting a high-level strategy and providing funding for the maintenance and enhancement of Network Rail infrastructure in Scotland over multi-year “control periods” which are established through a “periodic review” process.

5. Between 1993 and April 2022, passenger rail services in Scotland were provided by private operators. This meant that Scottish passenger services were provided by a Train Operating Company (TOC) awarded a franchise by the Scottish Government. Prior to public ownership, ScotRail services had been operated since 2013 by Abellio ScotRail, a subsidiary of the Dutch national rail operator Nederlandse Spoorwegen (NS).

Transfer of ScotRail and Caledonian Sleeper into public ownership

6. In March 2021, the then Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, Michael Matheson MSP, [announced that the Scottish Government would terminate](#) Abellio's ScotRail franchise when the contract ended on 31 March 2022.

7. Since 1 April 2022, ScotRail services have been provided within the public sector by ScotRail Trains Ltd, under the auspices of its holding company, Scottish Rail Holdings Ltd. Both organisations are private limited companies owned by, and operate on behalf of, the Scottish Ministers. The boards of both companies are appointed by the Scottish Ministers. Details of this management structure are set out in [a Framework Agreement](#).

In March 2023, the then Minister for Transport, Jenny Gilruth MSP, [wrote to the Committee](#) to set out the Scottish Government's decision to also transfer the franchise arrangements for the Caledonian Sleeper services into public control from 25 June 2023.

8. As with ScotRail franchising arrangements, Caledonian Sleeper services are operated by Caledonian Sleeper Ltd as a private company wholly owned and managed by Scottish Rail Holdings Ltd on behalf of the Scottish Government. Further details can be found on [Transport Scotland's website](#).

Meeting on 19 March and next steps

9. The Committee will first hear from witnesses representing the Office for Road and Rail, an independent economic and safety regulator for services across Britain, and Transport Focus, an independent watchdog for transport users. It will then hear from a panel of Scotland's current operators of railway services. The names of all participants are listed on the meeting agenda.

10. The Committee has also received written submissions from—

- [Office of Road and Rail \(Annexe D\)](#)
- [Transport Focus \(Annexe E\)](#)

11. This is a one-off session but forms part of the Committee's rolling scrutiny of Scotland's rail sector over this session. It will also feed into future Scottish Budget scrutiny by the Committee, amongst other matters. The Committee will discuss the evidence at the end of the meeting.

Clerks
Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

Annexe A: Submission from Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF), 7 March 2024

Colleagues

ASLEF SUBMISSION DEVELOPMENTS ON SCOTLAND'S RAILWAY

Introduction

Scotland's railways represent a vital part of national infrastructure. An efficient railway system that is attractive, accessible and affordable for the Scottish people is vital if Scotland is to grow its economy, tackle inequality and meet its climate targets.

In the absence of a Scottish Government published vision for Scotland's railways, ASLEF alongside the other rail unions presented the report 'A Vision for Scotland's Railways' prior to ScotRail returning to public ownership.

In that report we outlined how Scotland's railways can be improved to make them the world class service that Scotland needs. Up until now the Scottish Government has not set out in any comprehensive or detailed way their vision for Scotland's rail services, nor have they officially responded to the vision set out by the four rail unions. To this day our report remains the only comprehensive and properly thought out vision for the future of rail services in Scotland.

Sleeper/ScotRail public ownership

We campaigned for both ScotRail and the Caledonian Sleeper to be taken back into public ownership and are obviously extremely pleased that both are now back under public ownership after the failed franchises of Abellio and Serco.

We believe that these two services should be combined and come under the same ownership model as part of the same entity. It makes no sense financially or operationally for them to be run separately. The fragmentation of our railways as a result of the failed privatisation of our railways has been an unmitigated disaster.

The Government should commit to ScotRail and the Caledonian Sleeper being placed permanently in public ownership bringing the 2 train operating companies together. There would also be instant savings with only board required, given the level of Executive pay in place this would provide significant annual savings.

Currently, many of the operational functions of both are subcontracted to private firms. This has resulted in Abellio and Serco remaining involved and still profiting from Scotland's railways in spite of their failures. Other private companies are also benefiting from the contracting out of operational functions.

The continuing involvement of Abellio and Serco in Scotland's railways after their previous failure must be ended. The operational capability of both ScotRail and the Caledonian Sleeper should be enhanced and the profiteers removed from Scotland's rail services and all operational services and functions brought back in-house. If we are serious about building a financially sustainable rail service in Scotland then we

must ensure that all investment is going into our rail services and not paid out in dividends to private shareholders.

Climate Targets/Social Policy

Attracting people (and freight) onto trains is a fundamental requirement for Scotland to meet its climate targets. Transport is the greatest driver of co2 emissions and road travel is the biggest contributor to these emissions. It is critical that the Government does all that it can to make trains as attractive and accessible as possible. This must mean greater investment in rail services, for instance in staff, stations, trains and lines.

Scotland must continue to invest and make trains attractive to all our citizens by making them as safe as possible, accessible and affordable. We have to do more, to help shift people from road travel to rail and ensure that Scotland delivers on its climate targets.

Investing in rail services and infrastructure also helps grow the economy. Evidence from a Railway Industry Association report published in 2021, showed how for every £1 spent on rail travel £2.50 is generated for the wider economy. Trains move goods, transport people for work and leisure, boost economic activity across Scotland's towns and cities and create and sustain jobs.

Rail services also help advance social policy goals. Reducing the cost of fares will contribute to addressing economic inequality as a result of people having more disposable income. Rail services also connect people and therefore help tackle the social isolation that is a real and growing concern in our communities. If we make our stations safer and more accessible we will also encourage more women (especially at night) and elderly and disabled people to travel by trains. This can only be achieved with more, not less, staff and giving confidence to the travelling public through having a more and increasing visible staff presence at stations and on trains.

Affordable Fares/Peak Fares

Attracting people on to trains requires rail travel to be much more affordable. Fares for too long have been too expensive. In the 'Vision for Scotland's Railways' we argued that peak fares are an additional tax on workers and should be permanently abolished. We were delighted when the Scottish Government listened to our calls and introduced the scrapping of peak fares as a pilot scheme. It was a signal that the Scottish Government appeared to agree with ASLEF, and the other rail unions, that making fares affordable is a fundamental prerequisite to encourage people onto trains.

However, we have very real concerns that the Government is not committed to making the abolition of peak fares permanent. Should the Scottish Government reintroduce peak fares it would be a retrograde step that would send exactly the wrong message at the wrong time.

The Government is obviously right to acknowledge that Scotland has to play its part in tackling climate change. The Scottish Government also has a duty to help grow

the economy and protect the citizens of this country when it is able to. Scrapping peak fares is a clear step in the right direction on both those fronts.

Indeed, we believe that the Scottish Government must go further. We believe that Scotland needs a ticket pricing system that is integrated and linked with other forms of transport, and one that incentivises people to use trains and reduce road travel. This is entirely consistent with Scottish Government policy that wants to achieve a 20% reduction in car kilometres by 2030.

Ticket prices must be reduced to a level that is on par with the cost of travelling by car and the charging system made more transparent. We also believe that fares should be made free for under 24's and over 60's just as they are with bus travel.

In making fares affordable in the ways mentioned above it will help people get into the habit of travelling by train and travelling less by car. It is an obvious approach to take and would be worth every penny of public money spent.

Rolling Stock/HS2

ASLEF is clear that the HST fleet of trains must be replaced as soon as is practically possible. The decision to lease old, heavy polluting diesel engines was in our view a backward step. During the research for A' Vision for Scotland's Railways' our drivers described the HST's as 'notoriously unreliable', an 'unmitigated disaster' and that using them is 'tantamount to environmental vandalism'.

ASLEF has previously and repeatedly made clear our view that HST trains are not fit for purpose and need to be taken out of service. In our view the HST's are not crashworthy and do not meet modern safety standards. Their fibreglass cabs with wooden frames bolted on were built in the 70's and are not fit for purpose for speeds of up to 125 mph. As such our members who drive these trains have little or no confidence in them.

ScotRail's dependence on privatised rolling stock companies for the leasing of their trains is a wider concern that should be recognised and ultimately changed. Rolling stock companies receive significant public funds. As a virtual monopoly they are engaged in excessive profiteering and make huge profits from Train Operating Companies like ScotRail. The Scottish Government should look at ending the stranglehold of rolling stock companies, which sees huge amounts of money flowing out of the industry. Publicly owned rolling stock would leave more finance available to be reinvested into rail services.

Anti-social behaviour on trains

Anti-social behaviour is a growing concern that must be tackled. Staff assaults and assaults on passengers come against a context of cuts to British Transport Police budgets over recent years, more lone working on trains and unstaffed stations.

Already this year we know that the number of assaults on railway workers (including those that see staff lose time and those where they don't) already exceed thresholds. Moreover, we also know that 'passenger on passenger assaults' are stubbornly high as is general anti-social behaviour on trains.

Considering these figures as a whole suggests that Scotland needs more BTP officers, more staff and every train having a safety critical guard on board. This means greater staff and BTP visibility on our trains, which would make them safer and ultimately more attractive for passengers particularly women and disabled people.

Industrial Relations

Industrial relations since ScotRail was taken back into public ownership industrial relations have improved. We are encouraged by the constructive approach now taken by ScotRail management. They have both taken a more positive attitude towards trade unions and appear to value the workforce more, and in a way that was not apparent from either Abellio who took a much more confrontational approach and who clearly did not value the workforce in the same way.

Pay

The best and most accurate measure of how train operating companies value their workforce is through pay. We have negotiated satisfactory deals with ScotRail since being taken back into public ownership. We will be entering new negotiations in April with ScotRail and expect them to take a similar approach, and value the workforce appropriately, this time around too.

Network Rail Cuts

Over the next 5 years Network Rail is planning a cut of £1.2bn to track and infrastructure renewals work. In Scotland this equates to a £315m cut to the budget that was in place for the previous five years.

The renewal work includes, off-track, signalling, level crossings, earthworks, drainage, buildings, electrification and fixed plant, and telecommunications.

If the cuts go ahead, there will be an increased risk to public safety, railway workers and overall efficiency of the service. As the Carmont crash showed we cannot ever take any chances or risk with health and safety and we find it unfathomable that this cut is taking place and will compromise health and safety, as well as making ScotRail more unreliable.

Conclusion

Our railways have made real and significant progress in the past 2 years. Taking ScotRail and the Caledonian Sleeper back into public ownership and demonstrating the benefit of public ownership by introducing a pilot to scrap peak fares are real achievements and should be rightly celebrated.

However, we are very much at the start of the journey and have some way to go before we reach our desired destination that brings the world class rail services that Scotland needs.

If the Scottish Government is serious about this they must commit to making peak fares permanent and similarly ensure and commit to ensuring ScotRail and the

sleeper are kept in public ownership for the long term and that they are brought together as one public rail company.

Rail travel is a vital part of our national infrastructure and a critical tool if social and environmental policies are to be successful. Making trains more affordable, well staffed, safe, attractive and accessible is critical if people are to change their travel habits and make the shift from road to rail. This necessitates consistent and long term investment. The Scottish Parliament must remain vigilant to ensure that Scotland is steadfast in its commitment to improving our rail services.

Yours in Solidarity

Kevin Lindsay
District Organiser
District 2

Annexe B: Submission from Unite the Union, 5 March 2024

Unite response to the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee call for written evidence on Scotland's railways since Public Ownership

Unite the Union Scotland represents around 152,000 working people and their families throughout Scotland. Unite is the UK's largest trade union with 1.4 million members in a range of industries including transport, construction, financial services, manufacturing, print and media, the voluntary and non-profit sectors, local government and the NHS.

Scotrail in public hands

The commitment from the First Minister Humza Yousaf to categorically commit to keep Scotrail and the Sleeper Service in public ownership is a very important step in achieving an accessible and affordable train service for the people of Scotland and this decision was welcomed by Unite. Nevertheless Unite would wish to highlight some areas of concern that we would wish the Scottish Government to consider.

Skills

Scotrail must continue to recruit and invest in apprenticeships and to provide support to increase and update the skills of the workforce. Reskilling and retraining programmes are essential to ensure the workforce have the skills and competence to carry out the role now and in the future.

It is no coincidence that we are seeing a 'cliff-edge' of skills within the rail service particularly within Engineering. There is a clear and present danger that Scotland will not be able to service and maintain trains within Scotland for the current Scotrail fleet, let alone the new fleet of trains scheduled for 2028. The projected demographic profiling of the workforce in Engineering is that 33 per cent of a *500 strong Engineering Workforce* will approach normal retirement age within the next 5 years. This coupled with a current intake of only 8 apprentice (1.6 per cent) of the workforce on a 4-year apprenticeship programme, clearly demonstrates a huge void in skills, knowledge, and experience in the next 5 years.

We need action now to address this. Unite is calling for a massive in-house upskilling programme to address this skill cliff edge. There needs to be a coherent robust upskilling plan that incorporates the following:

1. *Diversification of Apprenticeships to cover both Electrical & Mechanical disciplines.*
2. *Significant Increase in Modern Apprenticeship numbers, to correlate with the potential retirement numbers.*
3. *Reintroduction of the Unite/Scotrail Adult/Accelerated Apprenticeship model to upskilling B Grades to A Grades.*
4. *Skilled to Technical Progression Path Upskilling Programme.*

Unite requires a cast iron commitment from the Scottish Government that the repair overhaul and Maintenance of the Scotrail fleet of trains existing and New Fleet proposed will be maintained inhouse within Scotrail and not subcontracted to 3rd party employer either in Scotland or elsewhere.

During pay talks there was a collective recognition that there will be inevitable engineering skills gap created by the demographic changes in the ScotRail workforce over the coming years. We recognise that some progress has been made on backfilling vacancies and that there has been partial progress on increasing the number of entrants to the traditional apprenticeship scheme, particularly on moving from 8 apprentices to potentially 24 for 2024. However more needs to be done by Scotrail to commit to the re-introduction of an accelerated (adult) apprenticeship scheme as there has been no progress made on this.

Investment

Unite also believes that there requires to be considerable and ongoing investment in the rail system to ensure it is part of a sustainable and successful transport network which will also contribute to our climate change ambitions. Unite believes that the investment that is required should be more in line with the funding provided for the road network given the trains credentials as more environmentally sustainable.

As a comparator, the cost of the Aberdeen periphery ring road was around £1 billion;¹ and the Queensferry crossing final costs are estimated to be £1.3 billion² whereas the rail has received a fraction of these figures despite running a network covering the whole of Scotland. This shows the glaring lack of funding of the rail network under privatisation, with profits being distributed to shareholders and not into improving the network, improving rolling stock, delivering affordable fares, or into workers pay, terms and conditions or skills development, as recent industrial disputes have highlighted.

The rail network however does not stand alone in Scotland's transport infrastructure and inter-connectivity must be the next important phase in building a successful transport system. As the First Minister has indicated, we would all want to see a safe, reliable, affordable and accessible public transport system for Scotland and trains will be vital in that mix, as are ferries and buses. For that reason Unite has also called for public ownership of the bus network. The combination of different modes of transport under public ownership, providing an integrated system that works for the people of Scotland is, Unite believes, the best outcome for the travelling public and Scotland's economy.

At present we look on with envy at some of our closest neighbours in Europe's largest cities and see publicly owned, accessible, affordable, inter-connected trains with high and consistent passenger numbers. We must learn from these successes and rather than cutting the workforce, or reducing investment, the Scottish

¹ <https://www.insider.co.uk/news/aberdeen-bypass-opening-costs-route-13690486>

² <https://www.heraldscotland.com/opinion/18230861.decision-go-new-forth-bridge-flawed/>

Government through Scotrail, must work to deliver a truly world-beating rail network that invests in people and infrastructure.

Unite is optimistic that with decent levels of investment through public ownership of transport, and by improving the rail infrastructure, cutting ticket prices, increasing services, integrating the service with other modes of transport and importantly, investing in the workforce, Scotland will be able to deliver a quality travel experience that could potentially be the envy of other countries.

Anti-social behaviour

The increase in anti-social behaviour, physical and verbal assault, as well as incidents of sexual harassment has brought attention to the cuts in staff which it could be argued, has perpetuated such behaviours. This highlights the urgent need to increase onboard staff on trains, as well as ensuring sufficient staffing of ticket offices in order that those that seek to cause chaos or distress to others may think twice about doing so when there is a visible presence.

Climate change targets

Trains are one of the most environmentally sustainable modes of transport available and should receive investment that reflects that. Indeed, if we don't invest in trains Scotland will fail to meet the targets set of a reduction in carbon emissions of 75 per cent reduction by 2030, and a 90 per cent reduction by 2040. A report published in by Common Weal titled: *A public future for Scotland's Railways*³ stated that:

With regards to the environment, the most effective means of securing a reduction in emissions from the transport sector – now the single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Scotland – would be to achieve a modal shift in transport usage away from the roads and towards the railways. Given that rail travel is over twice as carbon efficient as travel by car, every 1% of current car passenger kilometres shifted onto the railways could be expected to reduce emissions by around 22KtCO₂e. In addition, each tonne of freight transported by rail produces 76% less CO₂ emissions than the equivalent HGV journey, while further electrification of Scotland's railways would increase the efficiency of v both passenger and freight transport even more.

Peak Fares Pilot

Public ownership enabled the Scottish Government to introduce a pilot scheme which scrapped peak fares and this was warmly welcomed by Unite and other trade unions as well as the travelling public. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that the scrapping of peak fares during the pilot has been a success. The pilot may also have contributed to reducing the number of cars on the road as people shift from car to rail even in the short term, to benefit from lower fares, contributing in some way to lowering carbon emissions and ultimately in helping Scotland in some way to achieve its climate goals.

³ <https://commonweal.scot/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/A-Public-Future-for-Scotlands-Railways.pdf>

It is clear that passenger numbers are increasing as people return to rail as a mode of transportation following the fall-off in passenger numbers since Covid. Given this increase, Unite believes that the financial costs of running the pilot have provided value for money and we are therefore disappointed and surprised that the Scottish Government has yet to make peak fares a thing of the past.

Unite would urge the Scottish Government to scrap off peak fares permanently which would encourage more people to choose train travel as an affordable option, saving them money at a time when the cost of living continues to rise; helping the economy through increasing opportunities for consumer spending and also in contributing to lowering carbon emissions as car use falls.

Annexe C: Submission from National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT), 11 March 2024

NZET Committee – Rail Services in Scotland – Written evidence from the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT)

RMT is the largest specialist transport union in Scotland, we have thousands of transport members in Scotland employed by companies including ScotRail, Caledonian Sleeper and Network Rail. We welcome the opportunity to give written evidence to the Committee and would be happy to give oral evidence to the Committee on this subject.

RMT welcomed the decisions to take the ScotRail and Caledonian Sleeper franchises into public ownership and believes that this is vital if Scotland's railway is to work for passengers, rather than profit.

However, we do also have concerns about the approach that the Scottish Government is taking, with cuts to rail services and infrastructure funding and the ongoing threat of ticket office cuts and Driver Only Operation (DOO). We believe that the Scottish Government must rethink its approach to running its rail services, and instead recognise the benefits for passengers, the economy and the environment of investing in rail.

Driver Only Operation

RMT is currently opposing proposals by ScotRail to extend Driver Only Operation (DOO, also sometimes referred to as DCO) on the Barrhead, East Kilbride and Kilmarnock lines.

These routes are currently operated with a safety critical guard on board all services who is responsible for despatch and RMT resolutely believes that extending DOO to these lines would worsen passenger safety, security and accessibility.

A crucial difference between conventional guard operation and DOO is that under DOO, the driver has full responsibility for despatch and services can, and do, run without a second member of staff on board. DOO, therefore, removes the **guarantee** that there will be a second member of staff on board all services.

The company and Scottish Government have attempted to obfuscate matters by arguing that what they are proposing is not DOO because they will still roster a second person on all services, but it is simply not true that this isn't DOO. Whilst a second person would be rostered on all services, if they are unavailable, the train can still run as the requirement on ScotRail is only to take 'reasonable endeavours' to have a second member of staff on board.

There would also be no requirement for the second member of staff to be safety critical. ScotRail has confirmed that the training for ticket examiners (i.e. the second member of staff on board services that are already DOO) does not include a number of areas that guards (conductors) receive as this role is not safety critical.

On the parts of the network which are already DOO, our members report that services often run without a second person on board. Information released to RMT via an FOI request reveals that from October 2022 to January 2024 a massive 19,000 ScotRail train services ran without a second member of staff on board.

As well as being the eyes-and-ears of the rail network at the crucial Passenger/Train Interface, as guards are safety critical, they are trained to comply with the railway rulebook which equips them to deal with numerous safety and key operational functions. In the case of emergencies or difficulties they can step in to make sure the public are safe when travelling.

Furthermore, DOO has a significant impact on the accessibility of the railway. Because it removes the **guarantee** of a second member of staff on board, this restricts disabled and older passengers' ability to exercise their legal right to Turn Up and Go, particularly at unstaffed or partially staffed stations. Furthermore, DOO risks denying passengers assistance services on board during their journeys. For these reasons, disabled peoples' organisations have consistently opposed DOO where it has been proposed elsewhere on the railway.

Retaining a guard on these services is particularly important given that 70% of stations along the three affected routes are unstaffed (this is significantly higher than the national average of 45% stations being unstaffed). This means that if DOO were rolled out on these routes, passengers at the majority of stations along these lines would be faced with what the UK Government's own Disabled Persons' Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) has called the 'toxic combination' of unstaffed stations and DOO. The reality is that there could be no staff available to assist them.

There is already a high prevalence of anti-social and violent behaviour on Scotland's railway and this stands to increase if guards are no longer guaranteed on these services. Our guard members report regularly intervening in instances of ASB and abusive behaviour, and situations would undoubtedly escalate if there was no staff on board to assist.

It is very disappointing that the Scottish Government, which now owns and manages ScotRail has even permitted these proposals to be tabled. Not only that, but it is trying to maintain that this is an 'operational matter'¹ for ScotRail, which is absurd. The Scottish Government has control of ScotRail and it can instruct the company to withdraw these damaging proposals at any time.

Furthermore, it is of significant concern that both the Scottish Government and ScotRail are attempting to ignore a collective agreement between ScotRail and the RMT from 2016, which was agreed as a result of a dispute over DOO at the time. The agreement is clear that any future electrified lines would be 'guaranteed a conductor (guard) on every new electrified train' and that 'the conductor (guard) will retain their full competency (rules, track safety, evacuation) and that 'ScotRail services will continue to be dispatched under existing arrangements'. The agreement was signed in 2016 and states that 'these arrangements transfer over as per all other collective agreements at the end of the franchise'. It is harmful and damaging that

¹ <https://www.parliament.scot/chamber-and-committees/questions-and-answers/question?ref=S6W-22622>

the publicly owned operator and the Scottish Government are approaching industrial relations in this way.

At a time when show be growing passenger patronage, it is unfathomable that the Scottish Government is pursuing a policy that will likely deter passengers from using the rail network.

Whilst the current proposals relate to the three routes named, there's nothing to suggest that if ScotRail was successful in extending DOO to these routes that it would stop there. It is therefore of vital importance for all of Scotland's railway that the proposals are scrapped.

RMT Guard Survey

The vital role of the guard and the impact of ScotRail's proposals are clearly exemplified by the findings of our survey of our guard members working on the affected routes. The survey found that, in the past two years:

- *Nearly 50% of RMT guard members had intervened to prevent a passenger being sexually harassed and/or assaulted, and more than 80% of those had done this multiple times.*
- *100% of RMT guard members had witnessed anti-social and/or violent behaviour, with 40% of those witnessing it most shifts. 75% had intervened during a violent or anti-social incident.*
- *Over 40% of RMT guard members had responded to an emergency incident and 75% of those had done this multiple times.*
- *100% of RMT guard members had provided assistance to disabled and older passengers, with 80% saying they did this most shifts.*
- *100% of RMT guard members said they think passengers feel more safe and secure on services when there is a guard on-board.*

We asked our guard members what they thought the impacts of ScotRail's plans for DOO would be on passengers.....

- *98% said that they thought the incidence of sexual harassment and/or sexual assaults would increase and 100% said they thought anti-social and violent behaviour would increase.*
- *98% said that passenger accessibility would worsen.*
- *100% said that passenger safety and security would worsen.*

RMT believes that the Scottish Government must take responsibility for its rail passenger services and instruct ScotRail to permanently withdraw its proposals for DOO on the Barrhead, East Kilbride and Kilmarnock lines, and commit to no further extension of DOO on the ScotRail network.

Ticket Offices

Former ScotRail operator Abellio consulted on cutting ticket office hours at the majority of its ticket offices in a flawed consultation in early 2022, just months before its franchise contract ended. The cuts proposed equated to a reduction in hours across the affected stations of around a third, or around 3200 hours per week. RMT remains significantly concerned that the Scottish Government continues to not rule out these cuts to ScotRail ticket offices despite the proposals being overwhelmingly opposed by passengers during the public consultation.

As ScotRail transferred into public ownership in April 2022, the decision about whether to proceed with the ticket office cuts sits with the Scottish Government. Previous Rail Ministers have sat on the issue, and last time the Rail Minister Fiona Hyslop MSP gave evidence to the Committee regarding rail services, she stated:

“The issue is whether staff will always be behind and ticket desk or whether they will support other work in stations. Work on that is on-going, and we are looking to review it and bring it to a conclusion to give certainty to staff.”

This suggests that the Scottish Government is still considering cuts to ScotRail ticket offices, despite this being counter to what passengers want.

The Scottish Government has been quick to point out that it is not closing ticket offices, and whilst that is true, many of the cuts being proposed would have the same effect. It is also the case the company is already trying to cut ticket offices by stealth and is regularly failing to open ticket offices for their advertised hours.

Information released to RMT by ScotRail via an FOI reveals that from April 2022 (when the franchise entered public ownership) to December 2023, ScotRail ticket offices were closed for more than 150,000 hours when they should have been open.

The attacks on ticket offices are further evidenced by ScotRail’s performance in the Service Quality Inspection Regime (SQUIRE). Under SQUIRE, ScotRail and Caledonian Sleeper are inspected on a monthly basis and given a score from 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) for a range of criteria. Two of the criteria that ScotRail is assessed on are ‘station staff’ and ‘ticket offices’. The reasons that ScotRail would score a ‘fail’ for ticket offices is if the ticket office isn’t open when it should be, or the full range of tickets can’t be retailed. The reasons for a fail on station staff is again if the ticket office is closed, there isn’t a member of staff available, or a member of staff isn’t wearing their correct uniform or name badge. Since April 2023, ScotRail has scored 1 (i.e. the lowest score) for both ‘station staff’ and ‘ticket offices’ during every inspection. This strongly suggests that on many occasions ticket offices were closed and/or staff were not present when they should have been. The fact that these criteria received the lowest possible scores throughout the period suggests that this reflects systemic understaffing rather than ad hoc closures as a result of unplanned absences.

Cutting ticket offices is completely at odds with what passengers want, as exemplified by the 2023 proposals by the Westminster Government managed train companies to close around 1000 ticket offices. The result of these consultations was an unprecedented 750,000 responses, with 99% in opposition. RMT had opposed the closures on various grounds, including that they would worsen passenger

service, safety, security and accessibility and we have the same concerns around cutting ticket office hours, as had been proposed by ScotRail.

The passenger watchdogs objected to all of the planned ticket office closures, and the UK Government instructed the train operators to withdraw the plans in their entirety. The public consultations for ScotRail and the UK Government train operators send an undisputable message that passengers value ticket offices and ticket office staff.

ScotRail's proposals involved moving ticket office staff from a number of stations to mobile roles around the network. RMT opposed this model on the ground that it would have significant detriments for passenger safety, accessibility and service and would mean that passengers could no longer guarantee when staff would be present at the station when the ticket office was closed.

The concerns about the roving model were reflected in passenger watchdog Transport Focus' recent responses to the ticket office closure consultations. For instance, in response to Northern Train's proposals, which involved moving staff to mobile roles in over more than 100 stations, Transport Focus said:

"this would mean that passengers lose a permanent, physical staff presence at the station....this will have an impact on the provision of specialist retail advice, the provision of information (including during disruption) and perceptions of personal security at the station. This would also have an impact on disabled passengers' ability to 'turn up and go'".

Importantly, the regulations governing ticket office opening hours, Schedule 17, are the only statutory regulation of station staffing. Should ScotRail proceed with cutting ticket office opening hours, there would be no future mechanism for consulting passengers about future changes to staffing hours and there would be nothing to commit ScotRail to honouring any commitments it makes about staffing provision.

This issue also came through in the watchdogs' responses to the ticket office closure consultations, with Transport Focus stating 'the public consultation feedback highlighted a widespread concern that if ticket offices are closed and 'Schedule 17' regulation no longer applies, there will be no ongoing requirement to consult on any future changes' and that 'many passengers fear that train companies will make further cuts to staff if existing regulations are removed and even that any mitigations promised, or commitments made, as part of the current consultation could quickly be lost'.

It is clear that passengers place a high value on staffed ticket offices and want to see these retained and properly staffed. The fact that some two years after the public consultation, which was conducted by the former private operator at a time when passenger numbers were still recovering from Covid, the Scottish Government still has not ruled out cutting ticket offices, is of significant concern. We believe the Scottish Government must draw a line under this issue and rule out any cuts to ScotRail ticket offices, and instead ensure that there are sufficient staff employed to adhere to its existing regulated ticket office hours.

Anti-social behaviour and violent behaviour on Scotland’s railway We remain concerned about the prevalence of anti-social and violent behaviour on the railway in Scotland and believe that these issues will undoubtedly be exacerbated by the policies currently being pursued by the Scottish Government (i.e DOO and ticket office cuts).

A Transport Scotland report into women and girls’ safety on public transport which was published in March 2023 highlighted the vital role that staff play in supporting feelings around safety when travelling. The report highlighted a *‘consensus from women and girls of all ages that being in spaces that were staffed or had a staff presence made women feel safer, and this included staffing at interchanges as well as on board public transport’* and went on to recommend that the Scottish Government look at increasing staffing at stations and on trains.

Concerns around safety on public transport are also shared by our women members. In November 2023, we surveyed our women members at ScotRail to ask about their experiences. The survey² found that 1 in 3 had been sexually harassed at work in the past year and 75% thought sexual harassment on Scotland’s railway is becoming more of a problem. More than 70% had experienced workplace violence in the past year and 98% said that more action needs to be taken against the perpetrators of violent and abusive behaviour towards rail workers.

Following the publication of its report, the Scottish Government convened a roundtable meeting, which RMT attended, in December 2023, bringing together various stakeholders to examine the report’s recommendations around improving women and girls’ safety on public transport in Scotland. Whilst this was, of course, welcome, this must lead to meaningful action from the Scottish Government to address the issue, including a reversal of plans around DOO and ticket office cuts.

RMT believes that additional legal protections are needed for transport workers to help tackle the prevalence of abusive and anti-social behaviour faced. Legislation has existed in Scotland since 2021 which creates a specific offence of assaulting or abusing retail workers. RMT believes that equivalent legislation is urgently needed to protect transport workers as well. In early 2024, data was published that showed that reported assaults on retail workers in Scotland had increased 50% year on year since the standalone offence was introduced, which shows that specific legislation clearly has an impact. We have raised this issue a number of times with the Scottish Government and believe it should take the necessary steps to provide these additional protections to transport workers in Scotland.

Scotland’s railway and climate change

Domestic transport is the largest contributing sector to Scotland’s carbon emissions, and as part of Scotland’s carbon reduction commitments, the Scottish Government has a target of reducing car kilometres by 2030 by 20%. Undoubtedly, significant modal shift to public transport is needed to reach this target. However, the latest transport statistics for Scotland show that driving remains dominant, with 55% of journeys in 2022 taking place via car or van. Just 2% of journeys were undertaken by

² <https://www.rmt.org.uk/news/publications/women-and-girls-safety-on-scotlands-railway/>

rail in 2022, no change from 2019. There is clearly a long way to go in shifting journeys from car to rail if the Scottish Government is going to have any chance of meeting its 2030 target. Policies are needed to support this. This must include investment to improve and enhance the rail network in order to enable passengers to shift to rail for their journeys.

The Scottish Government's 'route map' to achieving the 20% car reduction target by 2030 acknowledges that journeys need to switch to public transport but appears concerningly low on targeted actions to achieve this. As we set out in detail below, as we approach the next five-year control period for Network Rail funding, RMT has significant concerns about the planned level of infrastructure spending in Scotland.

Furthermore, ScotRail is currently running c13% fewer services than before Covid. We believe that service reductions are at odds with the Scottish Government's climate change targets and the need for modal shift. The Scottish Government should not only be reversing the cuts to ScotRail services implemented since Covid-19, but it should be expanding service provision to make it easier and more convenient for passengers to make the switch from cars to rail.

We welcome the Scottish Government's off-peak fares trial but remain concerned that it has not committed to making this permanent. With fares due to rise by 8.7% in April, if the off-peak trial is not made permanent, then from June, passengers will not only be faced with not only the more expensive peak fares returning, but at significantly higher costs than when they were withdrawn for the trial. This will undoubtedly deter passengers from rail and hinder modal shift.

One of the interventions listed in the 'route map' is the publication of the 'Fair Fares' review. This was originally announced in 2021 and has still not reported. Concerningly, there has been no public consultation as part of the review, and the trade unions were not given any opportunity to contribute.

Infrastructure Spending in Scotland for Control Period 7

RMT believes that neither Network Rail Scotland's strategic business plan for CP7 adequately recognises the combined crises of climate change, extreme weather conditions, record high inflation and ageing infrastructure and assets facing our railway. We believe that this represents a government policy of managed decline on our railway. For a railway that is still emerging from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, we believe the current and future cost-cutting at Network Rail poses increased risks to health and safety, to asset and train performance which will have a negative effect on both passengers and railway workers.

On 31st October 2023 the Office of Rail and Road (ORR) Published its Final Determination³ for Control Period 7 (CP7). This final determination provides details on the proposed Network Rail Strategic Business Plans⁴ for the next five-year period

³ https://www.orr.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-10/03-pr23-final-determination-overview-england-and-wales_0.pdf

⁴ <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Scotland-CP7-Strategic-Business-Plan.pdf>

(CP7) from 2024 to 2029. ORR acts as the financial and safety regulator for our railways and oversees the process of holding Network Rail to account and secures value for money for users and funders of the railway.

The ORR Final Determination shows that Network Rail's CP7 expenditure in Great Britain will be approximately £43.065 billion in the five-year control period starting from 1 April 2024 and ending on 31 March 2029 (CP7). This is a 1% cut on total CP6 funding for Great Britain down from £43.470 billion to £43.065 billion.

This is a £1.7 billion cut in the original £44.8 Billion Statement of Funds Available (SOFA) included in ORR's Draft Determination which ORR explain is "primarily because of higher than anticipated inflation."

The Final Determination shows that Network Rail's CP7 expenditure in Scotland will be approximately £4.553 billion in the five-year control period starting from 1 April 2024 and ending on 31 March 2029 (CP7). This is a 1% cut on total funding for Scotland down from £4.598 billion to £4.553 billion.

Network Rail Scotland's overall CP7 spend has reduced from £4.8 billion in ORR's draft determination to £4.6 billion in the final determination, a reduction of £0.2 billion. ORR claim this is to do with higher inflation which reduces the value of the CP7 settlement in real terms.

Network Rail Scotland's Strategic Business Plan for CP7 has proposed to significantly reduce asset and core renewals over the course of the next five-year period which RMT believes will not only threaten services and safety on our railways but also thousands of skilled railway jobs across Network Rail and the wider supply chain. Renewals cover track, off-track, signalling, level crossings, earthworks, drainage, buildings, electrification and fixed plant and telecommunications. Total renewals expenditure in ORR's Final Determination for Scotland in CP7 is £2.147bn which is £315m or 13% lower than in CP6 (£2.462bn)⁵.

ORR state that "the funding available for CP7 reflects wider fiscal conditions and is constrained relative to the needs of the asset renewal cycle". This means that Network Rail will conduct fewer renewals, with more refurbishment, life-extending repairs and maintenance in comparison to CP6.

Network Rail Scotland also proposes to use operational controls, such as speed restrictions/go-slows to manage the increased risks posed by not undertaking renewals in CP7 but that this will result in an increase in service affecting failures of assets towards the end CP7 and a decline in its overall measure of asset sustainability.

In response to these proposed funding cuts for CP7 RMT launched a campaign entitled 'Rail Cuts Cost Lives'⁶ to highlight our deep concerns with cutting renewals funding on an ageing railway at a time of a rapidly changing climate.

⁵ P.17 <https://www.orr.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-10/04-pr23-final-determination-conclusions-and-settlement-scotland.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.rmt.org.uk/campaigns/rail/rail-cuts-cost-lives/>

Extreme weather and weather-related incidents

In Scotland RMT has significant concerns around the increasing numbers of weather-related incidents. Extreme weather poses significant risks to rail infrastructure and assets in Scotland.

It is important to note that the Rail Accident Investigation Branch⁷ report into the disaster at Stonehaven, Carmont, where three people lost their lives found that the failure to ensure inspections were carried out on a drainage system directly contributed to railway engineers not identifying a construction fault which ultimately led to the derailment. RMT remains deeply concerned about the programme of renewal and maintenance for earthworks and drainage for CP7 and believes the funding provided in no way reflects the risks posed by ill-constructed earthworks and drainage systems and the increase in climate change related extreme weather events.

A recent Freedom of Information request⁸ found that there was a total of 5,750 weather related incidents on Scotland's railways between February 2023 and February 2024. Compared to February 2018 to February 2019 there was 3,833 weather related incidents which is a 33% increase in just 4 years. This highlights the need for significant increases in funding for renewals, earthworks and drainage to mitigate the risks posed by a rapidly changing climate but instead Scotland's railway is facing cuts to renewals.

RMT is demanding that the funding for safety critical renewals over the next five-year funding period, Control Period 7 (CP7) is restored to at least the same levels in the previous five-year funding period.

Modernising Maintenance

Network Rail's overall maintenance expenditure is planned to increase by approximately 8% in CP7 to £1.135 billion an increase of £82m (£1.053) in CP6. Network Rail state this is to compensate for the reduction in spending on core and asset renewals but this approach is also dependent on Network Rail's Modernising Maintenance programme which ORR recognise is a "critical enabler of increased maintenance effectiveness in CP7".

However, the programme that is currently being implemented is largely untested. With no final timeframe for full implementation ORR state that "it will take some time for the new ways of working to become fully embedded." RMT is deeply concerned that Network Rail's approach to maintenance in CP7 is intrinsically linked to the Modernising Maintenance Programme which will also not be fully implemented when the CP7 period begins in April 2024.

7

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/62274fe0e90e0747a49c94ca/R022022_220310_Carmont.pdf

8

https://www.whatdotheyknow.com/request/railway_infrastructure_failuresi?nocache=incoming-2574414#incoming-2574414

Recently ORR⁹ wrote to Network Rail about the failure to comply with structure examinations meaning a backlog of thousands of structures on our railway being left with little or no examinations over many years. The letter states how this poses a clear safety risk if the backlog remains but with no clear plan of how Network Rail will clear this backlog at the same time as uncertainty surrounding the Modernising Maintenance programme and significant cuts to renewals funding.

12. RMT is deeply concerned that a significant amount of risk is being placed upon Network Rail's maintenance functions at the same time as they are essentially imposing a new Modernising Maintenance agenda that does not have full agreement or buy-in from maintenance workers and will ultimately lead to job losses and a significant reduction in headcount. RMT believes it is highly reckless for Network Rail to be cutting renewals and then expecting the maintenance functions to mitigate the health and safety risks of this whilst simultaneously imposing their Modernising Maintenance programme.

Contact – Sophie Ward, National Policy Officer

⁹ <https://www.orr.gov.uk/search-news/network-rail-required-clear-backlog-examining-structures>

Annexe D: Submission from the Office of Rail and Road, 8 March 2024

The Office of Rail and Road (ORR) has been invited to give evidence at a meeting of the Scottish Parliament's Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee on Tuesday 19 March.

The Committee is looking to take stock of developments in Scotland's rail industry over the past year, with a specific focus on how ScotRail and the Caledonian Sleeper have organised and delivered rail services since the transfer of operations into public ownership.

Recognising that this is our first formal appearance, we thought it may be useful to submit a note to the Committee in advance of the evidence session, setting out who we are and our role in relation to train operators and Network Rail. This information is set out below.

About the ORR

The ORR is the combined economic and health and safety regulator for Great Britain's rail network. We are also responsible for monitoring and enforcing the performance and efficiency of National Highways (England only).

As a regulator we operate within the framework set by UK legislation and are accountable through Parliament and the courts.

In Scotland, our core purpose is to protect the interests of rail users - improving the safety, value and performance of railways today and in the future.

Our Consumer role

The ORR's Consumer Team focuses on passenger-facing work, where we want to ensure passengers feel confident about the experience they can expect when travelling by rail.

Our work is focused on four areas and is underpinned by requirements set out in consumer law and conditions in the licences that we issue to passenger train and station operators, this includes:

- **Ticket retailing and passenger rights:** we want train and station operators to be fair and transparent in all their interactions with passengers, enabling passengers to make well-informed decisions and access their statutory rights as customers.
- **Passenger information:** we want passengers to have accurate and timely information about their travel options, so that they can plan and make journeys with confidence, including during disruption.
- **Accessible travel:** we want to empower confident travel by all, including disabled passengers, whether their journeys are made independently or with assistance.

- **Complaints and redress:** we want passengers to receive appropriate redress where things go wrong, and for operators to learn from those experiences to drive continuous improvement in the passenger experience.

Relevant publications: [Annual rail consumer report 2023](#)

Holding Network Rail to account

Network Rail operates under its network licence, which requires it to comply with the licence conditions set in the public interest. These licence conditions underpin our approach to holding Network Rail to account and in monitoring and assessing compliance.

Network Rail has three core obligations within the licence, relating to:

- Securing the operation, maintenance, renewal and enhancement of the network in order to satisfy the reasonable requirements of its customers and funders.
- Engaging with all stakeholders in ways appropriate to their reasonable requirements.
- Providing information to enable train operators to meet their obligations to passengers, so that passengers can plan and make their journeys with confidence.

We will take direct action to address poor performance where necessary. We will always aim to take action to resolve concerns and secure improvements promptly without the need to resort to formal enforcement, particularly to minimise harm to passengers or freight customers. However, ultimately we can use our statutory powers (which include imposing financial penalties) as a last resort.

Relevant publications: [Network Rail Annual Assessment 2023](#) and [Network Rail Annual Finance and Efficiency Assessment 2023](#)

Our safety role

We regulate health and safety for the entire mainline rail network in Britain. We want to make sure that our railways are safe; not just a safe mode of transport but also a safe place to work.

Our team of safety inspectors and professionals have significant powers of enforcement.

Our safety role includes:

- providing health and safety guidance and conducting research to promote continuous improvement.
- publishing reports on the rail industry's health and safety performance.

- carrying out inspections to ensure that the train and freight operating companies and Network Rail manage both passenger and occupational health and safety risks appropriately.
- investigating breaches of health and safety regulation on the railways.
- taking informal and formal enforcement action, including improvement notices and prosecutions.

Relevant publications: [ORR Annual Health and Safety report 2023](#)

Annexe E: Submission from Transport Focus, 8 March 2024

Background

The Committee is looking to take stock of developments in Scotland's rail industry over the past year by holding evidence sessions with industry stakeholders and rail operators. The Committee will explore a wide range of issues relating to the rail industry to gain a greater understanding of how ScotRail and the Caledonian Sleeper have organised and delivered rail services since the transfer of operations into public ownership. In doing so, the Committee is seeking to ascertain how these services have changed over recent years and whether they are delivering value for money for users and taxpayers.

What matters to passengers?

We asked over 15,000 rail passengers¹ across Great Britain to tell us what is important to them. The research provides an importance ranking for twenty-five aspects of rail services and also shows how passengers think the railway is performing in each of those areas. This gives a clear view on what matters to passengers and where the railway should target investment and effort to meet passengers' aspirations.

In Scotland the research found passengers' top two priorities for the railway – well ahead of others – are the 'price of train tickets offers value for money' and 'reliability and punctuality'. This reaffirms that what matters most to passengers is a punctual and reliable railway that delivers on the timetable's promise at an acceptable price.

The railway must maintain its focus on this. Passengers' other key priorities also reflect an emphasis on the railway getting the basics right. Passengers want sufficiently frequent trains and accurate and timely information about train times and any delays. They want a seat on board a clean train and, of course, they need to feel safe. These are not the only things that matter, but passengers will judge the railway on how effectively it delivers its 'core product'.

ScotRail

Our Rail User Survey² asks a representative sample of 2000 people across Great Britain about their public transport use. Those who used rail in the last seven days are asked about their overall satisfaction with their most recent rail journey and with aspects such as value for money, punctuality and cleanliness.

The results for the main twenty-two train companies on overall satisfaction and satisfaction with six key aspects of the journey, indicate that ScotRail score relatively highly with other operators on five key aspects:

- overall satisfaction (89%)

¹ Britain's railway: what matters to passengers (December 2022)

² Rail user survey – train operator results (February 2024)

- punctuality/reliability (85%)
- level of crowding (82%)
- information during journey (80%)
- value for money (64%)

Scores on frequency of trains on route and cleanliness are relatively average when compared with other operators.

Caledonian Sleeper

In conjunction with Transport Scotland and Caledonian Sleeper, Transport Focus set up a guest satisfaction survey³ which has been used to set the benchmarks against which customer satisfaction with the service will be measured.

The survey is continuous and reports on the booking process, boarding and station facilities, accommodation and train facilities and the overall experience.

The trend in the overall rating of experience stands at 85% satisfied.

Network Rail

As Network Rail enters Control Period 7 (CP7), we welcome the requirement in the High Level Output Specification⁴ (HLOS) requiring that the outputs of the network will be maintained in such a manner as to enable ScotRail to meet a Public Performance Measure (PPM) target of 92.5% for every year of CP7.

We know day-to-day delivery of a reliable service is of paramount importance to passengers. Maintaining the network to improve current levels of performance will drive improvements in passenger satisfaction.

Personal Security

In Britain's railway – what matters to passengers we asked rail passengers what is important to them when travelling by train. Out of a total of twenty-five considerations, 'My personal security on the train' comes in at number six and 'at stations' at number eight. The 'Insides of trains being clean and well maintained' sits in tenth position.

We believe our recent research What makes for a clean and safe railway⁵? will help focus attention on the things that really matter when it comes to cleanliness, maintenance and personal security, leading to a better passenger experience and higher levels of satisfaction.

In the research passengers note that CCTV and help points have the potential to make a valuable contribution to personal security. But even if passengers are aware

³ Caledonian Sleeper quarterly report (January 2024)

⁴ Scottish Ministers' High Level Output Specification Control Period 7 (February 2023)

⁵ What make a clean and safe railway? (December 2023)

of their existence, they still have concerns as to whether the technology is working and whether anyone is monitoring the systems. The presence of other passengers and, where provided, railway staff, is enormously reassuring. And after large public gatherings such as sporting events or concerts, a police presence is also welcome.

Focusing on hygiene factors can also be of benefit. A clean, well-maintained railway providing a safe journey environment is a basic passenger expectation. The railway should not expect massive thanks for getting these basics right on a day-to-day basis. However, renovating a run-down station, an occasional fresh coat of paint or brightening up the surroundings, perhaps with some plants, murals or pictures of local highlights, may help with overall satisfaction and propensity to travel.

What is clear is that failing to address these factors can contribute to a negative experience and have a detrimental impact on passenger satisfaction and likelihood of choosing to take the train.