



New Cross Country Franchise Consultation

NESTRANS Response

About NESTRANS

NESTRANS is the statutory Regional Transport Partnership for Aberdeen City and Shire. It was constituted as the North East of Scotland Transport Partnership in December 2005 under the Transport (Scotland) 2005 Act, but builds on four years of public-private sector joint working as a voluntary Regional Transport Partnership. In 2003 NESTRANS published its 2011 Regional Transport Strategy - the Modern Transport System - which sets out an integrated package of transport measures to improve the economy, accessibility and environment of the north east. A new statutory Regional Transport Strategy to 2021 is currently being developed, to build on the existing strategy and reflect the national framework set by the National Transport Strategy.

Rail forms a vital element of the region's connectivity to other parts of the UK, for leisure and business trips. It is the normal mode of transport for many north sea oil and gas workers who live in other parts of the UK and "commute" every week or fortnight through Aberdeen for spells working on offshore installations. The Cross Country service fulfils a vital role for these journeys.

Comment on Franchise Consultation Document

NESTRANS welcomes the continuation of the Cross Country Franchise which has over recent years provided vital intercity links directly from Aberdeen and via Dundee/Edinburgh to the North West, Midlands and south of England. The continuation of the existing one train a day direct service between Aberdeen and Birmingham is also welcomed.

Whilst recognising the need for DfT to secure best use of the rail network NESTRANS is concerned at the proposed withdrawal of Cross Country services via the West Coast main line to Glasgow and Edinburgh with the re-routing of Scottish services from the west to the east coast. Notwithstanding the stated intentions to introduce additional West coast and Trans Pennine services servicing Scotland the implications will inevitably be a downgrading of rail links to Scotland and the loss of important direct rail connections to places such as Preston, Manchester, Crewe and Wigan.

The re-routing of the Scottish Cross Country connections to the east coast effectively duplicates the existing ECML services for Scotland and must place a question mark over the long term continuation of two intercity franchises operating over the same track for much of their routes.

If you wish further information or clarification of any points raised please contact either Peter Cockhead or Rab Dickson at the address below:

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