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Race is on to run new generation of franchises

04 Jan 2012 by [Jonathan Webb](#) in [Franchise News](#), [Rail News](#) 0 Comments

Expressions of interest in running the new Thameslink, Essex Thameside and Great Western rail franchises have been invited by the Department of Transport.

The Thameside and Great Western franchises will run for 15 years, starting in May 2013 and April 2013 respectively.

Bidders for the new generation of longer franchises will be expected to shoulder the responsibility for station improvements, the integration of infrastructure improvements and, in some instances, the procurement of new rolling stock.

Both franchises include a profit share mechanism.

The successful Thameside bidder will take on repair leases for all c2c stations and have to supply a performance bond of £6 million.

It is likely that the successful bidder for the Great Western franchise will be expected to procure electric trains that will be in full service by 2018, as part of the network's electrification scheme.

They will also take on the repair lease for a number of non-Network Rail managed stations.

The Thameslink franchise, which will commence in September 2013, is being offered on a much shorter 7 year contract, with the possibility of a 2 year extension, because of the major timetable changes in connection with the rebuilding of London Bridge station and the completion of Thameslink Programme Key Output 2.

All services currently operated by Southern will be taken over by the new franchise at some time between 2014 and 2017, with a number of First Capital Connect and Southeastern routes being taken over in 2014.

Expressions of interest in all 3 franchises are due in by 9th February.

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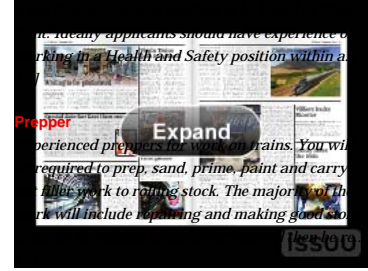
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