
Intercity East Coast franchise consultation launched

by DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, GREAT MINSTER HOUSE, 33 HORSEFERRY ROAD, LONDON SW1P 4DR
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Rail passengers who travel between London and Scotland via the North East and Yorkshire are on track to get a host of improvements to their services, including a fleet of brand new trains and better stations.

Launching the InterCity East Coast franchise consultation today, Rail Minister Theresa Villiers invited passengers, local councils and anyone with an interest in improved services on the East Coast Main Line to send in their views on what they want from the next franchise.

Theresa Villiers said:

“There are exciting changes on the horizon for the East Coast Main Line. It is set to receive a brand new fleet of InterCity Express trains. The next franchise will be up to 12 years in length giving the operator greater opportunities to invest in improvements that will benefit passengers.

“The consultation outlines what we expect the next operator to deliver, including better service quality, improvements to stations, the roll out of smart-ticketing technology and good levels of punctuality. Bidders will need to share with us their plans to improve the passenger experience.

“The East Coast Main Line is a key part of our nation’s transport infrastructure providing heavily used and economically significant services between north and south. Before we let this franchise, we want to hear from the people who use East Coast and listen to their ideas on better services. This consultation will help us make decisions on how we get the most from the improvements planned for the line over the coming years.”

The winning bidder, which will operate services on the East Coast Main Line from 2013, will need to deliver a number of different improvements including in relation to service quality and provision of information to customers, particularly during times of planned engineering works and unplanned

disruption. The new franchisee will be responsible for ensuring that overall passenger experience improves throughout the life of the franchise.

The successful bidder is expected to oversee the introduction of new InterCity Express trains on the route, providing more capacity than the High Speed Trains they are planned to replace on much of the franchise. We also want to hear bidders' ideas on how they will improve stations and make them more attractive gateways to rail services.

Related documents

- [InterCity East Coast franchise consultation, 26 June 2012](#)

Notes for editors

1. The InterCity East Coast Franchise Replacement consultation, which starts on Tuesday 26 June and closes on 18 September 2012. The Department for Transport will produce a summary of the consultation responses alongside the Invitation to Tender, which will be published in January 2013. The winning bidder will be announced in August 2013 with the new franchise planned to start in December 2013.
2. The new operator will be expected to manage the franchise alongside planned upgrades to infrastructure and services, including introduction of Intercity Express Programme trains.
3. The consultation document confirms the Coalition's continuing support for through services between London and destinations north of Edinburgh.
4. The new franchise will return the operation of ICEC services to the private sector, replacing operation by Directly Operated Railways on behalf of the Secretary of State for Transport following early termination of the previous franchise.
5. A copy of the consultation document is available on the [DfT website](#).

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