

Serco picked to run Edinburgh to London sleeper service



Great news for those who find it a bonus to go out for dinner in London after a business day and then sleep their way home on the train overnight.

Serco has this week been selected by Transport Scotland to manage and operate the new and prestigious Caledonian Sleeper franchise.

The franchise, which is worth up to £800m over the 15-year contract period, begins in April 2015 and will see Serco manage all aspects of the Sleeper service including marketing, sales, the on-train hospitality service, vehicle maintenance and the provision of facilities at stations for Sleeper passengers. The franchise has been split from the main ScotRail franchise to meet Transport Scotland's vision of transforming the Sleeper service into a truly emblematic and guest focused service for passengers travelling between Scotland and England.

At the heart of the transformation is the aim of creating an outstanding hospitality service that the company say will be emblematic of the best of Scotland. Combining Serco's extensive transport and tourism experience with the expertise of leading Scottish hotel business Inverlochy Castle Management International (ICMI) and Michelin-starred chef Albert Roux OBE KFO, Serco plans to promote and support Scottish enterprise by sourcing local products and produce from small and medium-sized businesses.



These images show the pods and recliner seats Serco

have put in the NorthLink Ferries, and they will use similar ones on sleeper trains

A fleet of new carriages will be introduced in 2018 which include a range of new features; ensuite berths, Pod flatbeds – used for the first time in rail, and a brasserie-style Club Car. Passengers will also benefit from a new website to book their tickets and will be offered a much broader range of fares, earlier boarding of trains and the ability to manage their journey virtually. £100m will be invested in the new fleet which is part funded by a £60m capital grant from Scottish Ministers. Built by leading rolling stock manufacturer Construcciones y Auxiliar de Ferrocarriles (CAF), the fleet will be supplied by Beacon Rail – a rolling stock leasing company.



Serco is already one of Scotland's largest employers with 3,000 employees working to provide a range of services, including: NorthLink Ferries connecting the Scottish mainland to the Shetland Islands and Orkney islands; the management of Scatsta Airport; provision of marine support services for the Royal Navy in the Clyde; facilities management at Forth Valley Royal Hospital and Wishaw hospital; Customer Service Contract centres in Glasgow, Fort William, Dingwall and Brora; and the provision of ICT and property services for Glasgow City Council (ACCESS).

Jamie Ross, Business Development Director for Serco's Transport business said: "We are thrilled to have been selected to run the Caledonian Sleeper service and feel privileged to have the opportunity to work with Transport for Scotland to achieve their aspirations for a truly emblematic service that encompasses the best of Scotland. Serco has a strong track record in running transport operations all over the world from the Dubai Metro and Northern Rail, the UK's largest passenger rail franchise, to the Great Southern

Railway in Australia and NorthLink Ferries in Scotland. We are looking forward to transforming the iconic and prestigious Caledonian Sleeper service into an outstanding and world class experience for passengers.”

Norbert Lieder, Managing Director of ICMI, said: “The Caledonian Sleeper is an under-used asset for Scotland’s business and leisure travellers. We have worked with Serco to bring our knowledge of running luxury hotels in Scotland to the Sleeper customer experience with a focus on interior design, catering and service. “We look forward to developing what will become a world-class leisure destination in itself, bringing significant benefit to Scotland’s economy.”