SPICe Briefing
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Transport in Scotland: subject profile

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This subject profile provides an introduction to walking, cycling, rail, road, air, maritime and bus transport in Scotland. It also highlights issues around transport and climate change and describes the roles of Transport Scotland and the seven Regional Transport Partnerships.

Contents

Introduction

This subject profile examines six categories of transport in Scotland, these are:

- Walking and cycling

- Rail

- Road

- Aviation

- Shipping

- Bus and coach

Each mode of transport is considered under a separate heading below, with each section highlighting legislative and administrative frameworks, main agencies and organisations, key statistics, and major ongoing developments. In addition, there are short sections on transport and climate change and the roles of Transport Scotland and the seven Regional Transport Partnerships.

All statistics quoted in this briefing are taken from the following major Transport Scotland statistical publications:

- Scottish Transport Statistics: No. 38 2020 Edition [1]

- Transport and Travel in Scotland 2019: Results from the Scottish Household Survey [2]

New editions of these documents are published annually.

Walking and cycling

Walking and cycling are healthy and environmentally friendly forms of transport; they produce zero carbon emissions, minimal noise and require little road space. They are particularly suited to shorter journeys.

Legislative and administrative framework

Walking: As might be expected, walking is not subject to many legislative constraints. The regulations that do exist govern the operation and use of zebra, pelican and puffin (pedestrian light controlled crossing where the lights are on the same side as the crossing user) crossings and ban walking on motorways except in an emergency. These regulations are set out in the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the provisions of which are reserved.

The Scottish Government published Let's Get Scotland Walking: The National Walking Strategy [3] on 18 November 2014. The strategy sets three strategic aims, which are:

- Create a culture of walking where everyone walks more often as part of their everyday travel and for recreation and well-being

- Better quality walking environments with attractive, well designed, and managed built and natural spaces for everyone

- Enable easy, convenient, and safe independent mobility for everyone.

Cycling: Bicycle design and the health and safety of cyclists are reserved matters. Cyclists using public roads are subject to the provisions of the Road Traffic Acts, which govern all road users, the subject matter of which is reserved.

The Scottish Government published the third iteration of the Cycling Action Plan for Scotland in 2017 [4] . This reiterated the vision of 10% of everyday trips being made by bike by 2020 made in earlier versions of the plan. In 2019, the latest year for which figures are available, just 1.2% of all trips and 2.7% of commutes were made by bike.

Walking and cycling: The construction of new footways, footpaths, cycle paths and cycle lanes are devolved to the Scottish Parliament and are regulated through the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984.

In addition to the walking or cycling policy documents mentioned above, Transport Scotland published A Long-Term Vision for Active Travel in Scotland 2030 [5] , which sets out the Scottish Government's long-term ambitions for the development of walking and cycling as means of transport until 2030. Transport Scotland also published its Active Travel Framework [6] in February 2020. This sets out the approaches being pursued by Transport Scotland, and active travel stakeholders, to increase the uptake of walking and cycling in the period up to 2030.

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Main agencies and organisations

Transport Scotland: Scottish Government agency responsible for national policy on cycling and walking.

Local authorities: responsible for local, and regional, transport policy and the development and maintenance of footways, footpaths, and cycle paths plus associated infrastructure.

Cycling Scotland: a Scottish Government funded organisation which aims to encourage cycling.

Sustrans: charitable organisation which distributes Scottish Government funding for walking and cycling projects to local authorities, provides policy and design expertise to local authorities, develops the National Cycle Network, and helps promote sustainable travel.

Spokes (Lothian), **Go Bike** (Strathclyde), **Highland Cycle Campaign** , **Aberdeen Cycle Forum** and **Cycling Dumfries** : Regional cycle campaign organisations.

Living Streets Scotland and **Paths for All** : charitable organisations promoting walking in Scotland.

Statistics

During 2019, 22.1% of all trips in Scotland were made on foot and 1.2% by bike. It is worth noting that these Scotland-wide statistics hide some significant local differences, e.g. the proportion of trips made on foot ranges from 39% in Dundee to just 11% in East Renfrewshire. During 2019 some 34% of Scottish households had access to one or more bikes that could be used by an adult.

2.7% of people cycled as their usual method of travel to work and 12% walked, again this varied across the country, with 9% of trips to work in Edinburgh being made by bike down to 0% in several authorities. The proportion of trips to work made by foot varied from 29% in Argyll and Bute to just 2% in East Dunbartonshire and Clackmannanshire.

Ongoing developments

During 2021/22, the Scottish Government will invest £115m in walking and cycling and is working with Sustrans, local authorities and other partner organisations to deliver new and upgraded cycle and walking infrastructure. This is the highest annual level of Scottish Government investment in walking and cycling and a significant increase on the £40m invested annually at the start of Session 5.

In the Climate Change Plan update, the Scottish Government committed £50m to the development of active travel freeways, which will connect city and town centres to outlying neighbourhoods, and to other major trip attractors.

Rail

Railways are best suited to transporting:

1. high numbers of passengers between larger population centres over relatively long distances at high speed

2. very high numbers of people within a city region through metro-style services.

Railways also carry a significant amount of freight, with the majority of UK rail freight being either shipping containers or heavy bulk goods such as grain, gravel, sand, and biomass. There is also growing interest in moving parcels and other goods into city centre locations by rail.

The Scotland Act 1998 defines rail transport as a reserved matter. However, the power to let and manage Scottish passenger franchises (currently ScotRail and Caledonian Sleeper) and provide the strategic direction, and funding, for the maintenance, renewal and expansion of Network Rail owned rail infrastructure in Scotland has been devolved to Scottish Ministers. In addition, the Scottish Parliament can consider Bills for the construction of new rail lines entirely within Scotland, e.g. the Waverley Railway (Scotland) Bill (2006). However, it is likely that any new rail lines would be approved under the Transport and Works Order system established by the Transport and Works (Scotland) Act 2007.

Legislative and administrative framework

The current privatised railway system was established by the Railways Act 1993, which has been substantially amended by the Transport Act 2000 and the Railways Act 2005.

Key documents which relate to Scotland's railways include:

High Level Output Specification (HLOS) [7] **:** This document sets out what 'outputs' Scottish Ministers wished to purchase from the rail industry for "control period 6" (April 2019 to March 2024). The funds available for the delivery of these outputs are set out in the associated Statement of Funds Available.

Rail enhancements and capital investment strategy [8] **:** This document sets out the Scottish Government's approach to planning and funding rail enhancement projects.

ScotRail franchise agreement [9] **:** This sets out the terms of the franchise agreement between Scottish Ministers and Abellio, governing the operation of the ScotRail franchise. The franchise commenced on 1 April 2015 and is due to run until 31 March 2022.

Caledonian Sleeper franchise agreement [10] **:** This sets out the terms of the franchise agreement between Scottish Ministers and SERCO, governing the operation of the Caledonian Sleeper franchise. The franchise commenced on 31 March 2015 and is due to run until 31 March 2030.An entirely new fleet of sleeper rolling stock was introduced in 2019.

Rail decarbonisation action plan: Pathway to 2035 [11] : This plan anticipates that Scotland's passenger rail services in 2035 will operate using three possible traction

options:

1. Overhead electrification.

2. Alternative traction as a transition between diesel traction and electrification – such as bi-mode (diesel and electric) or battery electric.

3. Alternative traction as a permanent solution – such as battery electric or hydrogen fuel cell, principally on rural and lightly used lines where the cost of electrification cannot be justified.

Main agencies and organisations

Transport Scotland: Transport Scotland, acting on behalf of Scottish Ministers, is responsible for the letting and management of the ScotRail franchise, currently operated by Abellio, and the Caledonian Sleeper franchise, currently operated by SERCO. It is also responsible for setting the high-level strategy for the maintenance and enhancement of the Scottish rail infrastructure by Network Rail. In common with other national rail networks, the Scottish rail network cannot cover its costs through fare and freight carriage revenue alone, so the Scottish Government provides funding to ScotRail, Caledonian Sleeper and Network Rail to allow them to carry out their respective tasks.

Department for Transport: The Department for Transport (DfT) is responsible for UK rail policy and the letting and management of English and cross-border rail franchises (excluding the Caledonian Sleeper services), including the east and west coast mainline and cross-country franchises which extend into Scotland. Network Rail is an arms-length public body owned by the DfT, which provides funding to Network Rail for operations in England and Wales and is responsible for drafting HLOS and SOFA documents covering the network outside of Scotland.

Train Operating Companies (TOCs): Six passenger TOCs operate in Scotland, these are:

- **ScotRail:** Currently operated by Abellio, a commercial offshoot of Nederlandse Spoorwegen (Dutch Railways). ScotRail operates approximately 95% of passenger rail services in Scotland.

- **Caledonian Sleeper:** Currently operated by SERCO, the Caledonian Sleeper provides overnight rail services linking northern and central Scotland with London.

- **London North Eastern Railway (LNER):** LNER operates intercity services between Scotland, the north of England and London along the East Coast Mainline. LNER is owned by the DfT.

- **Avanti West Coast:** Avanti West Coast operates the West Coast Mainline services between Glasgow/Edinburgh, the north west of England and London. Avanti West Coast is a joint venture between First Group and Italian national train operator Trenitalia.

- **CrossCountry Trains:** CrossCountry provides inter-regional rail services across the UK. CrossCountry is part of the Arriva Group, which is owned by German national railway operator Deutsche Bahn.

- **First TransPennine Express:** TransPennine Express operates services between Edinburgh/Glasgow and destinations in northern England. First TransPennine Express is a subsidiary of Aberdeen based First Group.

Freight Operating Companies (FOCs): Seven FOCs are licensed to operate on the UK rail network, the largest of which are DB Cargo UK, Freightliner and GB Railfreight.

Rolling Stock Leasing Companies (ROSCOs): Most of the rolling stock operating on British railways is leased by TOCs and FOCs from three major ROSCOs. These are Porterbrook, Eversholt and Angel Trains .

Network Rail: Network Rail owns, operates, and maintains the national rail infrastructure, which includes track, signalling, bridges, tunnels, and stations. Network Rail is also responsible for the development of the national rail timetable and long-term planning for the development of the rail network. Network Rail is an arms-length body of the UK DfT. Scottish Ministers remain responsible for specifying and funding Network Rail operations in Scotland.

Office of Rail and Road (ORR): The ORR is the economic and safety regulator for the British rail industry. Its main tasks are:

- To ensure that Network Rail manages the network efficiently and in a way that meets the needs of its users

- To encourage continuous improvement in health and safety performance

- To secure compliance with relevant health and safety law, including taking enforcement action where necessary

- To develop policy and enhance relevant railway health and safety legislation

- To license operators of railway assets

- To set the terms for access to the network and other railway facilities by operating companies

- To enforce competition law in the rail sector.

Statistics

In 2018-19 Scotland's rail network extended to 2758 kilometres, of which 902 kilometres were electrified. There were 359 passenger railway stations in Scotland, all of which are owned by Network Rail, except Prestwick Airport station, which is owned by the airport operators – currently the Scottish Ministers.

ScotRail carried 96.42 million passengers in 2019-20, a fall of 1.36 million passengers from the all-time high of 97.78 million passengers in 2018-19. 4.28 million tonnes of freight was lifted by rail in Scotland during 2019.

Ongoing developments

The following rail schemes are currently under development or in preparation:

- Levenmouth Rail Link, which will see the 5 miles of abandoned railway between Thornton North Junction on the Fife Circle line rebuilt and reopened, with new stations at Cameron Bridge and Leven.

- Enhancement and electrification of the line between East Kilbride and Glasgow.

- Highland Main Line scheme which aims to deliver an hourly service between Perth and Inverness, with average journey times reduced by around 10 minutes and an increase from 11 to 15 journeys each way per day.

- Aberdeen to Inverness upgrade which aims to deliver to deliver shorter and more frequent journeys and news stations at Kintore and Dalcross

- New stations at Reston, East Linton and Winchburgh

- Improvements to Stirling, Inverness, Perth, Aberdeen, and Edinburgh Waverley stations

There are also well-established campaigns to reopen the railway lines between Leuchars and St. Andrews () and Tweedbank and Carlisle (Campaign for Borders Rail).

Scottish Ministers have chosen to terminate the current ScotRail franchise, held by Abellio, at its first end date of March 2022. Michael Mathenson MSP, then Cabinet Secretary for Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity, stated on 17 March 2021 [12] that:

> " …from the expiry of the current franchise, ScotRail services will be provided in public hands through a company wholly owned and controlled by the Scottish Government. This is in line with our Operator of Last Resort duty."

The UK Government established the Williams Review [13] in September 2018 with the aim "…to recommend the most appropriate organisational and commercial frameworks to deliver the government's vision." The UK Government published the results of this review, which effectively end the current rail franchising system, in Great British Railways: The Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail [14] in May 2021. This confirmed the creation of a new public body, Great British Railways, that from 2023 will run and plan the British rail network, own the infrastructure, and receive the fare revenue. It will procure passenger services from private sector rail operators under a system of management contracts and set most fares and timetables. It also confirms that:

> " Existing devolved authorities in Scotland, Wales, London, Merseyside, and Tyne and Wear will continue to exercise their current powers and to be democratically accountable for them. They will continue to award contracts and set fares on their services, for instance. As now, devolved rail authorities will need to work together in partnership with Great British Railways. This includes supporting a single national network, including one website and app and delivering consistent branding and passenger standards, such as on accessibility and compensation...The government will explore options with Transport Scotland to enable the railway in Scotland to benefit from the reforms on the wider network of Great Britain."

Road

The private car is the dominant form of transport in Scotland, both by number of trips taken and number of miles travelled, although it is important to note that in 2019 some 28% of households in Scotland did not have access to a car. This national figure hides some significant local disparities in access to a car, e.g. 47% of households in Glasgow and 41% in Edinburgh did not have access to a car.

The UK Government retains responsibility for road traffic law, vehicle and driver licensing and taxation, public service vehicle operators and goods operators licensing and the regulation of road safety. Responsibility for all aspects of road building, maintenance, speed limits and road signs are devolved.

Legislative and administrative framework

The main pieces of road transport related legislation reserved to the UK Parliament, including the Motor Vehicles (International Circulation) Act 1952, the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981, the Transport Act 1985, certain sections of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, the Road Traffic Act 1988, the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988, the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994, the Road Traffic (New Drivers) Act 1995 and the Goods Vehicles (Licensing of Operators) Act 1995.

There are four main roads-related Acts which fall within the competence of the Scottish Parliament, these are:

- **Roads (Scotland) Act 1984:** Governs the development, maintenance, improvement, and operation of public roads in Scotland.

- **Transport (Scotland) Act 2001:** Allows local authorities to establish statutory bus quality partnership and quality contract schemes, introduce local road user charging schemes and other more minor transport related matters.

- **Transport (Scotland) Act 2005:** Established Regional Transport Partnerships, the Scottish Roadworks Commissioner and allowed for the development of national concessionary travel schemes and other more minor transport related matters.

- **Transport (Scotland) Act 2019:** includes provisions on a range of transport matters, including low emissions zones, pavement and dropped kerb parking prohibitions, regulation of road works and the workplace parking levy. Many of the provisions in this Act have (as of May 2021) yet to be enacted.

Main agencies and organisations

Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency (DVSA): Its main responsibilities include: conducting driving tests, maintaining a register of car driving instructors and checking their standard of tuition, supervising compulsory basic training for motorcyclists, MOT testing, the Statutory Testing of HGVs, buses and coaches, plus associated investigation and enforcement action in support of the work of the independent Traffic Commissioners.

Traffic Commissioners: The Traffic Commissioners are appointed by the Secretary of State for Transport and have responsibility in their area for licensing the operators of HGVs, buses and coaches; the registration of local bus services; and disciplinary action against drivers of HGVs and Public Service Vehicles (PSVs). The Traffic Commissioner for Scotland is also responsible for dealing with appeals against decisions by Scottish local authorities on taxi fares and appointing parking adjudicators to the Parking and Bus Lane Tribunal for Scotland.

Transport Scotland: Transport Scotland is responsible for the development, management, and maintenance of the trunk road network, the strategic road network that connects Scotland's towns, cities, airports and ports. It has contracted out the maintenance of four geographic trunk road units to the following private companies:

- North West: operated by BEAR Scotland since April 2013 (Due to end 2022)

- North East: operated by BEAR Scotland since August 2014 (Due to end 2022)

- South East: operated by BEAR Scotland since August 2020

- South West: operated by Amey since August 2020

Transport Scotland has contracted out responsibility for certain major trunk road projects to private concessionaires, private companies that design, build and maintain the road for a set period, under Design Build Finance Operate (DBFO) contracts, which are:

- DBFO Autolink: A74(M) from Junction 12 to the English Border

- PPP Connect: M77 from Junction 5 to Fenwick (PPP Connect)

- Highway Management (Scotland) Ltd: M80 from Stepps to Haggs

- Aberdeen Roads Ltd: Aberdeen Western Peripheral Route/Balmedie-Tipperty (AWPR/ B-T)

Local Authorities: Each local authority is, under the Roads (Scotland) Act 1984, designated as the roads authority for its area. They are responsible for all aspects of the non-trunk road network within their jurisdiction.

Statistics

The total number of vehicles in Scotland stood at an all-time high of 3,041,000 in 2019, an increase of approximately 357,000 since 2009. There were 5606 licensed operators of heavy goods vehicles in Scotland in 2020. There were 248,073 blue badges (blue badges provide a range of parking benefits for disabled people who travel as drivers or passengers) on issue at the end of March 2020. The total distance travelled by all vehicles in Scotland has increased from 44.2 billion kilometres in 2009 to 48.7 billion kilometres in 2019, an increase of 10.2%.

Details of the size of Scotland's road network, as of 2019, are as follows:

Road Type	Distance (Km)
Motorways (including slip roads)	651
A, B and C roads	28,832
Unclassified roads	27,240
All roads	56,722

Ongoing developments

The two most significant road enhancement projects currently ongoing are the dualling of the single carriageway sections of the A9 between Perth and Inverness and the A96 between Inverness and Aberdeen, details of which are set out below.

- **A9 Dualling:** The A9 dualling project aims to dual 80 miles of single carriageway between Perth and Inverness, plus associated upgrades, by 2025. The project will be completed in 11 sections and is due to cost £3bn. Transport Scotland launched the procurement exercise for the 20-mile long section between Tomatin and Moy on 26 February 2021, with the contract expected to be awarded in summer 2022.

- **A96 Dualling:** The A96 dualling project aims to dual 86 miles of single carriageway road between Aberdeen and Inverness, by 2030. However, the Infrastructure Investment Plan [15] published on 4 February 2021 shows just £20m of Scottish Government investment in this project planned for 2021-22 to 2025-26.

Scottish Ministers have also committed to delivering a permanent engineering solution to the issue of land slips on the A83 at the Rest and be Thankful through the Access to Argyll (A83) project.

Aviation

Regulation of aviation and air transport is a reserved matter, with the UK Department for Transport taking the lead role in policy making. However, as the planning system is a devolved matter decisions on airport development are taken by the appropriate local authority, or occasionally the Scottish Ministers where an appeal has been lodged or an application called-in.

The Scottish Government also has powers to designate air routes, which serve a peripheral region, as a Public Service Obligation (PSO). A PSO can only be created where the maintenance of regular air services is considered vital to the economic development of the peripheral region where the airport is located. A PSO can be imposed where adequate provision of air services in terms of continuity, capacity and pricing cannot be provided on a commercial basis. In addition, the Scottish Government operates an air discount scheme for residents of remote rural areas. This scheme offers eligible people discounted air fares on routes between certain highland and island airports and Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Inverness.

Legislative and administrative framework

Much of the overarching framework for aviation law is set at the international level – by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

When the UK was a member of the European Union (EU) some aviation law was made by the EU and had direct legal effect, as a European Regulation, in the UK. Following the end of the transition period on 31 December 2020. the UK is now formally a third country and EU law no longer applies. From 1 January 2021 the UK law that applies to such aviation rights and obligations are the retained EU Regulations, as amended by various UK Statutory Instruments (made under the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018).

Domestically, air travel and airport legislation is largely reserved to the UK Government, although some aspects are devolved, particularly noise pollution and control. So, for example, the UK Government sets the overall strategy for airspace use and management, and how airports are regulated, but the Scottish Government could impose noise restrictions on airport operations in Scotland. Responsibility for Air Passenger Duty (APD) is also devolved to the Scottish Government.

The Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is the UK's aviation regulator. It is responsible for safety, consumer protection, the ATOL holiday financial protection scheme and the economic regulation of some airports and certain aspects of air traffic control.

Key legislation governing the operation of the aviation industry includes the Carriage by Air Act 1961, the Carriage by Air (Supplementary Provisions) Act 1962, the Carriage by Air and Road Act 1979, the Civil Aviation Act 1982, the Aviation Security Act 1982, the Airports Act 1986, the Transport Act 2000 and the Civil Aviation Act 2006 and he Civil Aviation Act 2012.

Main agencies and organisations

International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO): ICAO co-ordinates the development of international aviation standards between the 193 governments that are signatories to the Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation.

European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC): Established in 1955 ECAC provides a focus for inter-governmental co-operation in air transport matters in Europe. It currently has 44 members, including the UK - which was a founder member, and its main aim is to harmonise civil aviation policies and practices between member states.

Department for Transport (DfT): The DfT is the UK Government department responsible for aviation policy.

Civil Aviation Authority (CAA): The CAA is a public corporation responsible for safety and economic regulation of aviation industries; including airlines, airports, and national air traffic services. It also manages the Air Travel Organiser's Licensing (ATOL) scheme.

National Air Traffic Services Ltd(NATS): NATS, a public/private partnership between the Airline Group, a consortium of airlines, which holds 42% of shares, NATS staff who hold 5%, LHR Airports which owns 4% and the UK government which holds 49%, provides 'en-route' air traffic control over the UK and air traffic control services at 14 UK airports.

Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd (HIAL): HIAL, a company owned entirely by the Scottish Ministers, owns, and manages eleven airports throughout the Highlands and Islands of Scotland.

Statistics

There were 28.9 million air terminal passengers in Scotland in 2019. 5% of these travelled to/from other Scottish airports, 38% to/from other parts of the UK, and 45% between Scotland and mainland Europe. In 2019, 478,000 aircraft movements, and 58,914 tonnes of air freight passed through Scotland's airports.

Ongoing developments

The Scottish Government is currently (May 2021) in negotiations to sell Glasgow Prestwick Airport to a private sector operator.

Highlands and Islands Airports Ltd, through its Air Traffic Management Strategy, is developing a Combined Surveillance Centre to manage air traffic control at a number of its airports.

Shipping

Regulation of shipping is a reserved matter, with the Department for Transport taking the lead role in policy making and implementation. However, the Scottish Government retains control of the planning system and Public Service Obligation (PSO) designation both of which affect ports, harbours, and ferry routes.

The Scottish Government also has the power to award freight mode shift grants to support the switch of freight transport from road to water. The Scottish Government sponsors Scottish Canals, the public corporation which manages the Scottish canal network.

Legislative and administrative framework

Matters relating to maritime transport are reserved where there is a need for consistent provision across the UK, e.g. to comply with international obligations or agreements - such as those relating to vessel safety or the employment of seafarers., or there are practical reasons, e.g. coastguards and lighthouses. Financial assistance for shipping services which start and/or finish outside Scotland and navigational rights and freedoms are also reserved.

In addition, legislation governing UK shipping, including registration, manning and command, safety, pollution and liability is reserved, along with the relevant provisions relating to navigation (lighthouses), salvage and wrecks, and security. These incorporate international commitments entered into by the UK Government for the whole of the United Kingdom.

There is a considerable body of legislation governing maritime transport, the main Acts being the Coastguard Act 1925, the Hovercraft Act 1968, the Carriage of Goods by Sea Act 1971, the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973, the Merchant Shipping (Liner Conferences) Act 1982, the Dangerous Vessels Act 1985, the Aviation and Maritime Security Act 1990, the Carriage of Goods by Sea Act 1992, the Merchant Shipping Act 1995 and the Shipping and Trading Interests (Protection) Act 1995.

The Scottish Government sets out its policy on the development of Scottish ferry services up until 2022 in the Ferries Plan 2013-2022. UK ports policy is set out in the Department for Transport National Policy Statement for Ports.

Main agencies and organisations

International Maritime Organisation (IMO): The IMO is a United Nations specialised agency responsible for improving maritime safety and preventing pollution from ships. It is also responsible for technical co-operation between members.

Department for Transport: Responsible for formulation and implementation of UK shipping, and certain aspects of Scottish ports, policy.

Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA): The MCA is responsible for search and rescue operations, vessel safety inspections and marine pollution reduction and response.

CalMac Ferries Ltd (CalMac): A company wholly owned by Scottish Ministers which provides ferry services to 22 islands and four peninsulas on Scotland's west coast. CalMac Ferries operate Clyde and Hebrides ferry services under contract to Scottish Ministers.

Caledonian Maritime Assets Ltd (CMAL): A company wholly owned by Scottish Ministers which owns 36 ferries, 31 of which are leased to CalMac Ferries and five to SERCO Northlink. It also owns 16 Clyde and Hebrides harbours and owns or leases properties and port infrastructure at 10 other Clyde and Hebrides locations.

Western Ferries: Private operator of unsubsidised vehicle ferry service between Dunoon (Hunter's Quay) and Gourock (McInroy's Point).

Pentland Ferries: Private operator of unsubsidised vehicle ferry service between Gills Bay in Caithness and St Margaret's Hope in South Ronaldsay (Orkney).

Orkney Ferries: Entirely owned by Orkney Islands Council, Orkney Ferries links the Orkney mainland with 13 of the smaller Orkney Islands

Shetland Islands Council: Shetland Islands Council operate a network of ferry services linking the Shetland mainland with Yell, Skerries, Bressay, Fair Isle, Foula and Papa Stour. A service also links Yell with Unst and Fetlar.

Northlink Ferries: SERCO Northlink operate ferries from Aberdeen and Scrabster to Orkney and the Shetlands under contract to Scottish Ministers.

Statistics

In 2019, a total of 67 million tonnes of freight was handled by Scottish ports. 1.8 million passengers were carried on ferry services between Scotland and Northern Ireland. CalMac Ferries carried 5.4 million passengers (plus 1.6 million vehicles). SERCO Northlink Ferries services between northern Scotland and the Northern Isles carried 347,600 passengers, Shetland Islands Council services carried 776,800 passengers and Orkney Ferries services carried 335,600. While passenger numbers have remained broadly consistent on Shetland and Orkney ferries over the last five years, CalMac has seen a 16% increase since 2015 and SERCO Northlink a 17% increase.

Ongoing developments

Transport Scotland is committed to replacing the Ferries Plan [16] with an Islands Connectivity Plan (ICP) by the end of 2022. The ICP will consider island connectivity in the round, covering ferries, fixed links (bridges or tunnels) and aviation.

CMAL announced on 23 February 2021 that it was launching a Small Vessel Replacement Programme [17] , with the aim of replacing the following vessels over a ten year period:

Vessel	Year built	Current route
MV Loch Striven	1986	Oban-Lismore
MV Loch Riddon	1986	Largs-Cumbrae (second vessel, summer only)
MV Loch Ranza	1986	Tayinloan-Gigha
MV Loch Dunvegan	1991	Colintraive-Rhubodach
MV Loch Fyne	1991	Mallaig-Armadale (summer only)
MV Loch Tarbert	1992	Tobermory-Kilchoan
MV Loch Linnhe	(built 1986)	relief vessel

Vessels will be low emission, utilising batteries and on-shore charging infrastructure, drawing on experience from the three diesel/electric hybrid vessels already operated by CalMac Ferries. There will be increased standardisation in vessel design.

The two dual fuel ferries being built at the Ferguson Marine shipyard, MV Glen Sannox and the unnamed Hull 802, which were subject to an inquiry by the Session 5 Rural Economy and Connectivity Committee [18] , are due to be delivered in 2022 and 2023 - over four years behind schedule and at more than twice the original cost.

Bus and coach

Scotland's scheduled local bus and inter-city coach services are provided by private sector operators, except for Lothian Buses which is local authority owned but operates on a purely commercial basis at arms-length from its owners. Services are provided on a purely commercial basis, unless a local authority wishes to offer a subsidy for the operation of a socially necessary service which cannot be provided on a commercial basis.

Legislative and administrative framework

Many aspects of the regulation of bus and coach services, including matters such as health and safety, vehicle design, driver working conditions and vehicle inspection are reserved. The Scottish Government is responsible for concessionary fares and legislation governing the regulation of bus service provision.

The main pieces of bus and coach related legislation are:

Transport Act 1985: The three key features of the 1985 Act are:

1. Bus operators are required to register each local bus service with the Traffic Commissioners

2. Local authorities must only award subsidies for the provision of socially necessary bus services, which are commercially unattractive, after tenders have been sought from different bus operators

3. Local authority bus operations, i.e. those owned by the regional councils and Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive, had to be formed into separate passenger transport companies operating at arm's length from the local authorities/ SPT, with a view to privatisation.

Transport (Scotland) Act 1989: The 1989 Act authorised the break-up of the Scottish Office owned Scottish Bus Group into several regional companies, which were then privatised.

Transport (Scotland) Act 2001: The 2001 Act established systems for setting up formal Bus Quality Partnerships (voluntary agreements between local authorities and bus operators aimed at improving bus services) and Bus Quality Contracts (where local authorities specify, manage and support bus services in a specific area, with services provided by bus operator(s) following a competitive tendering exercise).

Transport (Scotland) Act 2005: The 2005 Act provided the legislative basis for the national concessionary fares scheme for elderly and disabled people, which is administered by Transport Scotland.

Transport (Scotland) Act 2019: The 2019 Act included a number of bus related provisions, such as clarifying the law regarding the provision of bus services by local authorities, replacing Bus Quality Partnerships with Bus Service Improvement Partnerships and replacing Bus Quality Contracts with Local Service Franchises.

Main agencies and organisations

Department for Transport: The DfT is responsible for bus operator licensing and enforcement, which is mainly provided through the offices of the Traffic Commissioners and associated agencies.

Transport Scotland: Transport Scotland sets the policy framework for the provision of bus services in Scotland. It also administers and funds the national concessionary fares scheme for elderly and disabled people and provides other funding streams for the provision of local bus services, e.g. bus service operators grant.

Local Authorities: Local authorities are responsible for the provision of bus infrastructure, e.g. bus shelters and bus priority measures, and the provision of subsidies for socially necessary, non-commercial bus services.

Bus Operators: Bus services in Scotland are provided predominantly by private sector companies, including international bus giants such as First and Stagecoach and many smaller local companies. Most bus operators are members of, and represented by, the Confederation of Passenger Transport.

Alexander Dennis: Part of the Canadian NFI group, Falkirk based Alexander Dennis is the UK's largest bus and coach builder.

Statistics

There were 366 million local bus journeys in Scotland during 2019-20, a fall of 118 million from 2008-09. Bus fares in Scotland increased by 10.5% above inflation between 2015 and 2020. Local authorities spent £57 million on subsidising socially necessary bus services during 2018-19. The Scottish Government spent £216 million on concessionary bus fares during 2019-20.

Ongoing developments

The Scottish Government is supporting bus operators to purchase ultra low emission vehicles through the Scottish Ultra-Low Emission Bus Scheme , the replacement for the Scottish Green Bus Fund and investing £500m in bus infrastructure. The Scottish Government is also committed to introducing free bus travel for people aged under 22 and is also encouraging people to travel by bus through support for the #lovemybus campaign.

The bus related provisions of the Transport (Scotland) Act 2019 will be enacted and implemented during Session 6 of the Scottish Parliament.

Transport and climate change

In 2015, transport became Scotland's [19] single largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. In 2018, Scottish transport produced emissions equivalent to 14.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide – just 0.5% lower than was produced in 1990. By contrast, total Scottish greenhouse gas emissions fell by 45.5% over the same period. Transport emissions fell by 1.1% between 2017 and 2018, the first year-on-year fall since 2013.

The biggest generator of Scottish transport emissions in 2018 were cars, accounting for 39% of total transport emissions, followed by shipping (16%), aviation (15%), light goods vehicles (13%), heavy goods vehicles (13%), bus/coach (4%) and rail (1%) – the total does not equal 100 due to rounding.

Taking climate action was one of four priorities set out in the second National Transport Strategy (NTS) [20], published on 5 February 2020. More detailed strategic policies were set out in the NTS Delivery Plan 2020-22 [21], these are:

- Reduce emissions generated by the transport system to mitigate climate change and improve air quality

- Support management of demand to encourage more sustainable transport choices

- Facilitate a shift to more sustainable and space-efficient modes of transport for people and goods

- Ensure the transport system adapts to the projected climate change impacts

- Improve the quality and availability of information to enable all to make more sustainable transport choices

The Scottish Government's draft Climate Change Plan update (CCPu), published in December 2020, includes eight transport policy outcomes, these are:

	Policy outcome
1	To address our over reliance on cars, we will reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030
2	We will phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2030
3	To reduce emissions in the freight sector, we will work with the industry to understand the most efficient methods and remove the need for new petrol and diesel heavy vehicles by 2035.
4	We will work with the newly formed Bus Decarbonisation Taskforce, comprised of leaders from the bus, energy and finance sectors, to ensure that the majority of new buses purchased from 2024 are zero-emission, and to bring this date forward if possible.
5	We will work to decarbonise scheduled flights within Scotland by 2040
6	Proportion of ferries in Scottish Government ownership which are low emission has increased to 30% by 2032.
7	By 2032 low emission solutions have been widely adopted at Scottish ports
8	Scotland's passenger rail services will be decarbonised by 2035.

These eight outcomes are to be delivered through 49 policies and proposals. Progress towards meeting the policy outcomes will be measured using nine indicators. The longer term climate impact of Scottish Government investment in transport, and other, infrastructure is examined in the SPICe Spotlight post Infrastructure investment: "locking in" a low carbon economy? [22]

Transport Scotland and the Regional Transport Partnerships

Transport Scotland: Transport Scotland was established as an executive agency of the then Scottish Executive in January 2005. Its role was substantially expanded when it merged with the Scottish Government's Transport Directorate on 2 August 2010, while remaining as a separate agency.

Transport Scotland's main responsibilities include:

- Management of the ScotRail and Caledonian Sleeper franchises

- Funding and strategic direction of Network Rail's Scotland route

- Involvement in the delivery of railway capital projects

- Management of the Scottish trunk road network

- Funding and management of major trunk road capital projects

- Management of the national concessionary fares scheme for elderly and disabled people

- Providing advice to Scottish Ministers on transport issues

- The National Transport Strategy and Strategic Transport Projects Review

- Liaison with regional transport partnerships, including monitoring of funding

- Sustainable transport, road safety and accessibility

- Aviation, bus, freight, and taxi policy

- Ferries, ports, and harbours

- The Blue Badge Scheme (disabled persons' parking permits).

Transport Scotland sets out the Scottish Government's national transport policies and priorities in the second iteration of the National Transport Strategy, which was published in February 2020. Transport Scotland is currently undertaking a second Strategic Transport Projects Review (STPR) [23] . The STPR is a Scotland-wide review of the strategic transport network covering all modes of transport that will inform transport investment in Scotland for the next 20 years. This is likely to be influenced by the recommendations set out in the key findings report of the Infrastructure Commission for Scotland, such as a focus on maintaining existing infrastructure and not adding any additional road space for private vehicles.

Regional Transport Partnerships: The Transport (Scotland) Act 2005 required the establishment of Regional Transport Partnerships (RTPs) covering the whole of Scotland. Seven RTPs were established on 1 December 2005, these are:

- Zetland Transport Partnership (ZetTrans)

- Highlands and Islands Transport Partnership (HITRANS)

- North-East of Scotland Transport Partnership (NESTRANS)

- Tayside and Central Scotland Transport Partnership (TACTRAN)

- South-East of Scotland Transport Partnership (SESTRAN)

- Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT)

- South-West of Scotland Transport Partnership (SWESTRANS)

RTPs are governed by boards which consist of councillors from each of the constituent local authorities, who have voting rights, and external members appointed by Scottish Ministers, who may only vote in certain circumstances. The primary function of each RTP is to produce a regional transport strategy.

RTPs can take three forms:

- **Model 1:** Produce a Regional Transport Strategy with very limited transport powers transferred from constituent local authorities

- **Model 2:** Produce a Regional Transport Strategy with some transport powers transferred from constituent authorities

- **Model 3:** Produce a Regional Transport Strategy with significant transport powers transferred from constituent authorities

Currently, there are four Model 1 and three Model 3 RTPs in Scotland. The model 3 RTPs being SPT, Swestrans and ZetTrans. It is worth noting that Swestrans and ZetTrans have only one constituent local authority and that the current SPT was preceded by a Passenger Transport Authority and Executive (PTAs/PTEs) covering most of the same area.

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