

21 October 2026



Willie Rennie MSP
Convener
Scottish Parliament Transport Committee

Dear Convener,

Response to your letter: Scotland's rail services

I write in response to your letter of Monday, 21 September seeking additional information, following the evidence I gave to the Transport Committee on Wednesday, 16 September.

ScotRail app update

Firstly, I want to again apologise to customers for any impact they experienced as a result of the launch of the new app, and we are grateful for their patience over recent months.

Since I appeared at the Committee, the performance of the app has stabilised, however, two issues continue to affect some customers, which we are working closely with SilverRail to resolve:

1. A display/activation problem relating to our Flexipass product (specifically when the customer's network connection is intermittent).
2. Automatic app logout issues for a small group of iPhone users.

With regards to the first issue, at the time of writing, the relevant fix for Flexipass is expected to be implemented on 25 October. On the basis of what has been reported by customers, it appears that the second issue is only impacting a small number of iPhone users. It is anticipated that the fix which will be implemented on the 25 October will, in addition to resolving Flexipass issues, also provide SilverRail with better data as to the extent of the automatic logout issue and assist in identifying the root cause.

My team will contact Committee clerks following the update on 25 October to advise on its implementation.

Contract with SilverRail

The contract awarded to SilverRail for the new ScotRail app is part of a wider contract for a retail systems partner, which also supports ScotRail's website and station ticket vending machines. This contract has an initial four-year term until 29 July 2030, with options for extensions included, which total an additional five years.

The contract contains a break clause which gives ScotRail the right to terminate the contract, in whole or in part, at any time following the first anniversary of the commencement date of the contract, which was 29 May 2026. To terminate the contract, ScotRail is required to give a minimum

of 12 months' notice. Termination of the contract under that provision would have financial consequences for ScotRail.

The contract also includes Service Level Agreements through which ScotRail monitors SilverRail's performance, and provides ScotRail with an option to exercise termination rights for critical and/or persistent failure to meet the relevant contractual requirements.

As I said to the Committee, ScotRail is not currently considering exercising those termination rights. We will, however, continue to closely monitor performance across all aspects of the contract and reserve all contractual rights available to ScotRail. I want to reassure you and the Committee that in my discussions with SilverRail, there is recognition of the importance of delivering on the contract and restoring customer and stakeholder confidence in our app.

Late night and weekend services

Turning to late-night and weekend rail services, as I noted during the session, we recognise leisure travel is more important to us than it ever has been, and that more people want to travel by rail at those times of the week, namely evenings and weekends. Therefore, we are keen to explore what can be done to increase the number of services we provide in response to those new travel patterns. That work needs to be done through a whole-system approach, which takes into account engineering works (which often take place overnight or on Sundays when the railway has traditionally been quieter), the maintenance and cleaning of ScotRail trains, and the availability of on-train colleagues, who are currently contracted to work across timetable operating hours, Monday to Saturday, and which is also reflective of the headcount.

As I stated at the Committee, we have a specific commitment to bring Sunday into the working week by negotiating with our trade unions to vary our employees' terms and conditions, which would enable us to consider enhancing our Sunday services. Working with Scottish Rail Holdings (SRH) and Transport Scotland, we have developed a proposal for Sundays to be included as part of the normal working week, which is currently going through the necessary approval process – and would then be followed by negotiation with trade unions. I am not yet able to provide a confirmed implementation timescale on this process being completed. We will, however, keep the Committee updated as this work progresses and when a clearer delivery timetable emerges.

Setting the contractual position on Sunday to one side, we know there are small changes we can make sooner. There are things we have done in recent years following customer feedback. We operate some later services for big events across the country, for example, during the Edinburgh Festival, we operate later services on Fridays to accommodate passengers travelling home from Edinburgh. Additionally, over the last three years, we have incrementally increased the services provided on Boxing Day, serving Edinburgh, West Lothian, Stirling, Fife, Perth, Dundee, and Aberdeen.

This year, due to ongoing engineering works, trains will not be able to access Dundee in any direction, meaning we cannot operate Edinburgh to Aberdeen services. However, in positive news, after engineering works taking place in other routes of east of Edinburgh for consecutive years, this year we are able to add hourly services between Edinburgh and Tweedbank and Edinburgh and North Berwick this year, and an additional hourly service between Aberdeen and Inverurie, making it our biggest Boxing Day to date.

We use feedback from customers and stakeholders to help us understand what routes have a demand for late-night and weekend services, and use passenger journey figures to make the best decisions about which routes can be serviced. I want to assure the Committee that we will continue to monitor the change in travel patterns across the country to ensure we understand any shift in demand.

I hope this information is helpful, should the Committee require any further information please get back in touch.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Maguire', written in a cursive style.

Joanne Maguire
Managing Director

