
Four Qualified Bidders For South Eastern Franchise

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Public consultation to identify service specification preferences for the new **South Eastern franchise** was delayed as a result of the British General Election and not completed until 30th June 2017. This though did not prevent an announcement from the Department for Transport that it had approved four bidders to take part in a competition for the new contract which commences in December 2018.

These companies are:

London and South East Passenger Rail Services Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Govia Ltd., the current franchise operator.

South Eastern Holdings Ltd., a joint venture made up of the Abellio Transport Group Ltd., the East Japan Railway Company and Mitsui & Co. Ltd.

Stagecoach South Eastern Trains Ltd., a wholly owned subsidiary of Stagecoach Group plc.

and **Trenitalia UK Ltd.**, which is wholly owned by the Italian rail operator, and recently acquired the c2c from National Express.

The geography of the franchise covers inner suburban routes to the Medway towns, longer distance operations that reach coastal towns in Kent and East Sussex and domestic services on the High Speed 1 route which serve additional destinations such as Canterbury by using the classic network.

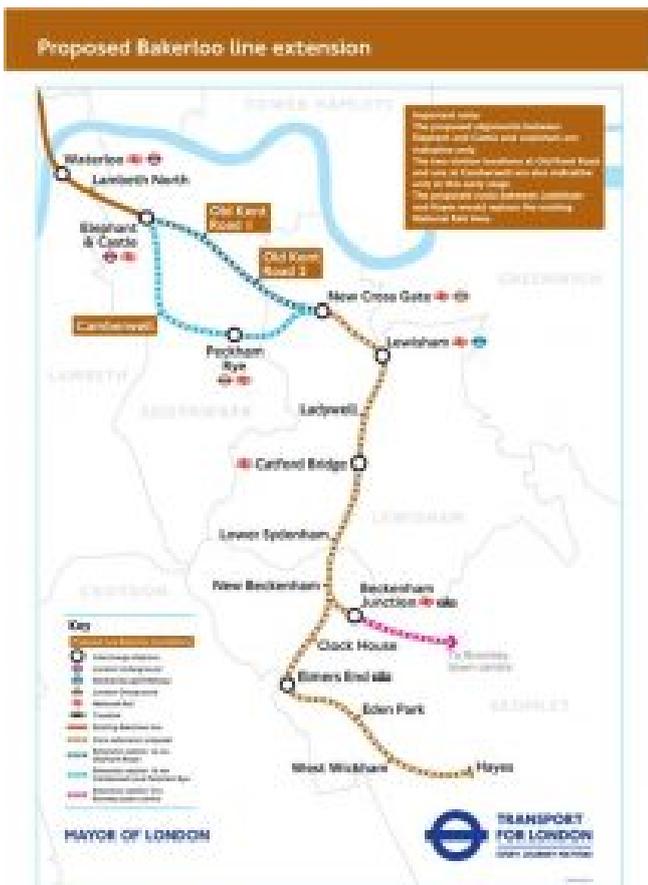
The contract has been held by Govia for the last 12 years and there is a sense that operations have been trading water as passenger numbers have been static at 216 million annual journeys for the last two years although the disruption caused by the **rebuilding of London Bridge station** and the need for a reduced timetable are likely to be the major factor behind the statistics. At least disruption from staff disputes has been avoided.

Abbey Wood station



Growth is expected to return particularly as there are very significant housing developments planned in the area served. As an example, *Network Rail forecast* in the London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy published in 2011 that passenger numbers in the busiest peak hour arriving from Kent would double by 2031 although the advent of Crossrail and the interchange *station at Abbey Wood* is expected to reduce the use of London Victoria. The expected peak hour traffic split in 2031 is 12,000 at Abbey Wood and 8,700 at Victoria.

London Underground Bakerloo line extension map



The DfT has asked bidders to disregard the current franchise boundary and promote a pattern of services that benefit passengers. In this context NR studies have suggested a future extension of Crossrail operations to Gravesend and the extension of the *London Underground Bakerloo line* to Hayes partly using existing infrastructure which would free up capacity at Charing Cross. Greater use of HS1 is also considered to have merit given the transformational speed up of services.

There are three core objectives to create more space for passengers by running longer trains, reduce the level of delays and improve ticketing and compensation terms with the delay repay scheme being tightening with a threshold for refunds if lateness exceeds 15 minutes.

BS44001 Process Diagram



Bidders will be expected to form partnerships with companies that enables investment in infrastructure improvements, and higher standards of customer service. FCP has strong expertise in such structures and can advise clients on the use of the Collaborative Business Relationship Standard ISO 44001 (previously BS11000) where the DfT requires certification by a target date.