

SHORTLISTED BIDDERS FOR GREATER ANGLIA AND INTERCITY WEST COAST RAIL FRANCHISES

The Department for Transport has today announced the names of the companies shortlisted to bid for the new Greater Anglia and InterCity West Coast franchises. They are:

For Greater Anglia

- Abellio Greater Anglia Limited (NV Nederlandse Spoorwegen)
- Eastern Railway Limited (Go-Ahead Group PLC)
- Stagecoach Anglia Trains Limited (Stagecoach Group plc)

For InterCity West Coast

- Abellio InterCity West Coast Limited (NV Nederlandse Spoorwegen)
- First West Coast Limited (FirstGroup plc)
- Keolis / SNCF West Coast Limited (Keolis SA and SNCF)
- Virgin Trains Limited (Virgin Group Holdings Limited)

Today's short listing comes after the Government published requirements for the two franchises, seeking expressions of interest.

The Invitation to Tender for the Greater Anglia franchise will be issued in April. The Government has set out the following objectives for the franchise:

- Delivering a quality of service for passengers for the entire rail journey.
- Working with the Department and other stakeholders to ensure value for money.
- Managing and delivering changes required to accommodate Crossrail. Implementing the station responsibilities if required.
- Working effectively with Network Rail to maintain performance.
- Delivering the plans around the Olympics.
- Managing the introduction of the Class 379 HLOS vehicles.
- Controlling operational costs and maximising revenue.

The consultation on the InterCity West Coast franchise is still ongoing and closes on 21 April. Responses to the consultation will inform the Invitation to Tender which will be issued in May. The Government has set out the following objectives for the franchise:

- To exploit the full potential of the route and maximize capacity.
- To manage effectively the integration of new rolling stock vehicles.
- To improve overall passenger satisfaction.
- To deliver the agreed Olympic services.
- To improve accessibility to services and stations.
- To improve the environmental performance of the franchise.
- To manage effectively any changes during the franchise.
- To achieve sustainable value for money.

Passenger Focus have advised the Department on some key recommendations for the new franchise.

The Government expects to announce the successful bidders for both the Greater Anglia and for InterCity West Coast franchises in Autumn 2011.

The Greater Anglia franchise will commence on 5 February 2012 and will run for 17 months (expiring in July 2013) with an option to extend by up to 1 year. This shorter franchise will allow time for reforms arising from the McNulty review into rail value for money to be properly considered and built into the terms of the subsequent Greater Anglia franchise.

The InterCity West Coast franchise will commence on 1 April 2012 and will run for 14 years (expiring in March 2026) with an option to extend for a further year.

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