

Media Release

Transport Minister Glimpses Future of Caledonian Sleeper

--- Humza Yousaf MSP views nextgen overnight rail travel, including en-suite double rooms ---

Date 30 June 2016

Scotland's Transport Minister Humza Yousaf MSP boarded a prototype of new Caledonian Sleeper train carriages today (Thursday 30 June 2016) for a sneak preview of what will be a world class guest experience.

Mr Yousaf was treated to an exclusive preview of the new train design, which features double room accommodation, a first in the UK. The new fleet will also introduce en-suite toilet and showers in a number of rooms in the accommodation carriages alongside other new design features.

The design of the train has evolved over the last year following a consultation process. Several new features have been included such as a hotel style key card entry system, more accessible rooms, and reclining seats, upgraded panels for phone and gadget charging and wifi.

The prototype carriages were installed at a warehouse near Edinburgh to allow feedback ahead of the full build programme by supplier CAF in Spain, which is now underway.

The new design will ensure guests, whether on business or leisure, enjoy a hotel-style experience, waking at their destination refreshed and rejuvenated having travelled in luxury and comfort.

And in response to the ever-growing popularity of hospitality on board the Caledonian Sleeper, the Lounge Car for dining will be further upgraded with more seating options and social space serving the best of Scottish produce in the on board menu,

Scottish interior designer Ian Smith has overseen the look and feel of the new carriages, with the patterns reflecting a contemporary Scotland.

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Peter Strachan, Managing Director, Caledonian Sleeper, said: “Sitting with Humza Yousaf aboard the new Lounge Car allowed us to fast forward to 2018 and get a real feel for what will be a new standard of overnight travel between Scotland and London.

“We have made a number of improvements to the design plans for the new Caledonian Sleeper based on discussion with stakeholders and model testing, most notably the introduction of double beds which will enhance the Caledonian Sleeper’s reputation for being one of the world’s most enchanting travel experiences.”

Over £150m is being invested in the new fleet, which is part funded by a £60m capital grant from Scottish Ministers.

Minister for Transport & Islands, Humza Yousaf said: “The Scottish Government is committed to improving every aspect of Scotland’s railways, no less so than on one of the truly iconic Scottish rail services.

“When investing upwards of £60m, we wanted a new sleeper service that incorporated cutting edge design, top class passenger catering and a service that was emblematic of the very best Scotland has to offer. We also wanted a service that would enhance travel options to and from London as well as encourage more tourists to visit Scotland.

“Today’s glimpse of what innovative and never-before-seen upgrades to services rail passengers can expect is breathtaking, and I look forward to the trains moving to full production and then into service.”

The introduction of new trains will be the culmination in a raft of improvements and investments in the Caledonian Sleeper since Serco took over the franchise on behalf of the Scottish Government in April 2015.

Highlights include a new Guest Service Centre in Inverness as well as new uniforms, toiletries and food and beverage offer, all supplied by Scottish companies.

For more information about the Caledonian Sleeper visit sleeper.scot

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Notes to editors

- The Caledonian Sleeper service is an overnight rail journey between the Scottish Highlands and central London.
- Scotland's Caledonian Sleeper service has been hailed as one of Lonely Planet's 'Super Sleeper Trains' and the London to Fort William service made the world's best-selling travel guidebook's top ten list.
- Every night, apart from Saturday, guests are transported both north and south between Inverness, Aberdeen, Fort William, Glasgow, Edinburgh and London Euston.
- Travel bookings can now be made up to one year in advance on www.sleeper.scot.
- The Caledonian Sleeper service currently offers a range of ways to travel - comfortable and affordable seated carriages, shared berths and first-class private accommodation –

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with a dining car offering an extensive locally-sourced menu.

- Caledonian Sleeper is committed to supporting local communities and suppliers:
 - 92% of food produce is sourced within 50 miles of the food production operation in Dingwall.
 - All guests are provided with an Arran Aromatics sleep pack which includes sleep mask, socks and toiletries.
 - The Head Office and Guest Services Centre are located in Inverness employing around 30 people from the locality.

- Brand new trains will be launched in 2018, which will offer innovative ways to travel in comfort on the Caledonian Sleeper service with double and en-suite rooms as well as a redesigned Lounge Car for dining, serving the best of Scottish produce in the on board menu.

- The Caledonian Sleeper service is operated by Serco on behalf of Transport Scotland.

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About Serco

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