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Planning

Barcode Ticketing in London

Transport Trading Limited

UK2: Preliminary market engagement notice - Procurement Act 2023 - [view information about notice types](#)

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Scope

Description

Background

This preliminary market engagement exercise is being conducted by Transport for London (TfL), through its trading arm Transport Trading Limited (TTL) and in collaboration with Rail Delivery Group (RDG) on the basis described in this notice.

There is a shared ambition across TfL and the wider rail industry to move more passengers to digital ticketing in all its forms, to deliver strategic, operational and customer benefits - while ensuring that the retail experience remains inclusive and accessible for those who rely on paper tickets or cash.

To enable delivery of these benefits, TfL is seeking to deliver a ticketing solution for the acceptance of barcode tickets in London.

Barcode ticketing has been rolled out nationally on rail, further accelerating the adoption of digital retailing and acceptance. Today, 79%* of National Rail tickets are retailed digitally (including barcode, smart card and TfL PAYG).

TfL's proposed expansion of barcode ticketing in London aligns with the broader rail

industry-led reform of fares, ticketing, and retail. Making fares easier to understand, ticketing simpler and delivering improvements to passenger experience now, ahead of a simpler more unified railway under Great British Railways.

Project Description

The objective of this market engagement is to investigate the feasibility of bringing barcode ticketing to London, in a number of parts including barcode acceptance and barcode retailing. TfL is seeking to understand the market's capability for designing, developing, testing and deploying a scalable end to end barcode ticketing solution for all identified TfL stations.

Lot 1 -Barcode Acceptance

Part A - Fixed Barcode Acceptance and Validation

A fixed barcode reading solution, which will interface with existing TfL gatelines is required to enable barcode acceptance and validation at TfL stations. The roll-out of Barcode Ticketing in London could ultimately be required at all London Underground and TfL Rail locations, based on forecasted demand in order of this priority:

Stations where TOC services call behind TfL Gatelines (e.g. Farringdon and Stratford)

Cross-London interchange stations and TfL rail services, including TfL Overground and Elizabeth Line stations.

Zone 1-3 London Underground Stations.

Remaining London Underground Stations.

Part B - Barcode Back Office

A back office solution, compliant with RDG barcode standards, which will interface with non-TfL, TOC and rail retailer electronic Ticket Validation Databases (eTVDs) and extendable to incorporate future TfL station barcode retailing.

Part C - Portable Barcode Acceptance and Validation

A portable barcode reading solution which will provide revenue protection capability for TfL revenue inspectors. This may integrate with existing TfL revenue inspection devices, for example as a software application.

Lot 2 - Barcode Retailing

A solution to enable retailing and vending of physical (i.e. barcodes printed on physical ticket stock) TfL issued barcode tickets to replace existing TfL issued magnetic tickets as a ticket of last resort. These will be required to support cash and card payments.

Anticipated Scope and Requirements

Full interoperability with national rail barcode ticketing standards (RDG/RSP).

Ability to design, deliver, operate and maintain an integrated solution.

To collaborate with the primary System Integrator, responsible for TfL's revenue collection system. The supplier will need to provide equipment to the primary System Integrator, who will carry out front-line installation and maintenance.

Fixed readers to integrate with existing gates at TfL stations.

To deliver the solution and services at scale in London.

To deliver the solution in line with TfL and RDG security standards.

Provide L2 and L3 support to the barcode solution (L1 will be the responsibility of the primary System Integrator).

TfL to own or have licence rights in perpetuity for the IPR created as part of the solution deployed.

Out of Scope

At this time, installation of barcode acceptance equipment and retailing of barcode tickets for buses in London is not in scope.

Contract dates (estimated)

June 2027 to January 2033

Possible extensions up to January 2038

10 years, 7 months.

Contract dates (estimated)

- 1 June 2027 to 3 January 2033
- Possible extension to 1 January 2038
- 10 years, 7 months, 1 day

Main procurement category

Services

CPV classifications

- 22459000 - Tickets
- 30144400 - Automatic fare collection
- 34980000 - Transport tickets
- 50316000 - Maintenance and repair of ticket-issuing machinery
- 50317000 - Maintenance and repair of ticket-validation machinery
- 51000000 - Installation services (except software)
- 60200000 - Railway transport services

Engagement

Engagement deadline

2 February 2026

Engagement process description

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To facilitate market engagement, TfL intends to hold an open day supplier information session W/C 2nd February 2026, followed by a release of a Market Sounding Questionnaire. To register for the supplier information session, please email TomThomas@tfl.gov.uk (cc'ing SarahAdedeji@tfl.gov.uk) before 17:00 2nd February 2026.

Publication of this notice does not bind TTL or subsidiaries, or any related person, in any way regarding the subject matter of this notice and it is possible that no procurement process will be launched in respect of the subject matter of this Preliminary Market Engagement Exercise or that no resulting contract will be awarded. TTL expressly reserves the right to amend details of the anticipated scope, requirements, contract duration, start and end dates, or any other matter, detailed within this notice. In no circumstances will TTL be liable for any costs incurred by the suppliers.

This preliminary market engagement exercise does not constitute a formal procurement process, and participation in it does not confer any advantage or guarantee of success in any future procurement exercise.

Contracting authority

Transport Trading Limited

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