



Your Scotland, Your Referendum – ASLEF Response

1. The Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (ASLEF) is the UK's train driver's union representing approximately 18,000 members in train operating companies and freight companies as well as London Underground and Overground. ASLEF has over 1,500 members in Scotland.
2. ASLEF believes that it is in fact not within the powers of the Scottish Government to hold the referendum on independence. Negotiation and an open dialogue with the UK government is therefore essential to stop any possible legal implications or challenges.
3. This is certainly the case with the proposed question. ASLEF feels that asking "Do you agree that Scotland should be an independent country?" is a loaded question. It almost assumes independence within it. The question should make reference to the actual potential consequence of the referendum. In other words the separation of Scotland from the United Kingdom.
4. In addition, by simply asking whether one agrees with a statement is a one sided question. It inherently has positive connotations. The question would be fairer if it was phrased as "should Scotland become independent." Or perhaps the question should state the alternative of remaining in the Union. Put quite simply, asking people to agree with something is more likely to elicit a positive response than asking them to disagree. This is an area that ASLEF agrees with the House of Commons Scottish Affairs Committee.

5. ASLEF support the idea that 16 and 17 year olds should get the vote. The possibility of Scottish devolution will have many long term implications for the people of Scotland. It is therefore only right that those who are old enough to pay taxes and will be the most effected by the prospect of constitutional change should be involved in the decision making process.

6. ASLEF understands that due to the SNP majority in the Scottish Parliament, that it is legitimate to hold a referendum on Scottish Independence. The Union therefore hopes that the referendum is held in a fair, balanced and legitimate fashion.