

Amendments to the Subway Conditions of Travel

Date of meeting 26 April 2024

Date of report 8 April 2024

Report by Director of Transport Operations

1. Object of report

To recommend the Committee approves an amendment to the Subway Conditions of Travel which clarifies the policy on travel with lithium-ion powered micro devices including:

- e-scooters
- e-unicycles
- e-hoverboards
- e-skateboards

2. Background to report

With the rising trend of fire and smoke incidents associated with these batteries globally, it becomes imperative to address this pressing safety concern in subway environments to safeguard the lives and well-being of commuters and subway staff alike.

Despite advancements in lithium-ion battery technology, the risk of thermal runaway leading to fires or smoke emission remains a persistent challenge. In the context of subway environments, where large numbers of passengers are confined within enclosed spaces, even a single device malfunction can have catastrophic consequences. The upward trend of fire and smoke incidents involving lithium-ion batteries in the UK and on rail networks underscores the urgent need for proactive measures to mitigate these risks. Banning lithium-ion powered micro devices in subway environments is a crucial step towards ensuring the safety and security of commuters, reducing the likelihood of potential accidents, and preventing disruptions to subway operations.

3. Outline of proposals

An amendment to the Conditions of Travel has been drafted at clause 4, which now states that the use and carriage of lithium-ion powered micro devices on subway premises is prohibited. This clarifies SPT stance for customers and is consistent with transport operators such as Western Railway, Southeastern, Southern Rail, Thameslink, Gatwick Express, ScotRail, Avanti West Coast, LNER, Northern, TransPennine Express and Transport for London.

4. Committee action

The Committee is recommended to approve the amendment to the Subway Conditions of Travel by placing a temporary ban on all lithium-ion powered micro devices to allow further data to be collated on the safe operation and travel of devices or once formal legislation comes into effect.

5. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>Consistent to SPTs policy on premises.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>If approved, revised Subway Conditions of Travel shall be published.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None identified.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None identified.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>None identified.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>None identified.</i>
Climate Change, Adaptation & Carbon consequences	<i>None identified.</i>

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