



Carriage of Animals on the Subway

Committee Operations

Date of meeting 20 January 2017

Date of report 21 December 2016

Report by Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

1. Object of report

The object of this report is to:

- inform the Committee of the conclusions of a review of current policy on carriage of animals on the Subway; and
- recommend that the Committee approve the outcome of the review, namely that the current policy represents the appropriate level of risk mitigation and should not change, but that SPT will continue to keep the matter under consideration as the Subway Modernisation programme is delivered.

2. Background

2.1 The Subway Conditions of Travel¹ form the contract between SPT and its customers for travelling on the Subway and/or use of Subway car parks. The Conditions of Travel should be read in conjunction with the Subway Byelaws² to which all customers of the Subway must adhere. Both the Conditions of Travel and the Byelaws are publicly available on the SPT website.

2.2 The current Subway Condition of Travel in relation to the carriage of animals on the Subway is as follows:

“9. Carriage of Animals

Animals are not allowed on the Subway with the exception of:-

(a) assistance dogs; and

(b) small animals in secure containers”

2.3 Following an issue raised by a member of the public regarding the application of the above Condition in relation to the carriage of a dog on the Subway in October 2016,

¹ The Subway Conditions of Travel are on the SPT website at: <http://www.spt.co.uk/corporate/about/our-services/glasgow-subway/conditions-of-travel/>

² The Subway Byelaws are available on the SPT website at: <http://www.spt.co.uk/corporate/about/our-services/glasgow-subway/glasgow-subway-byelaws/>

this matter was considered at the Partnership meeting on 9 December 2016 and remitted to this Operations Committee for further review and scrutiny.

3. Review of Current Conditions of Travel

3.1 Context for review

As noted in Section 9 of the conditions of travel, small animals in secure containers and assistance dogs are permitted on the Subway. With regard to the carriage of other categories of animal, it is worth highlighting that in undertaking the review and being mindful of the fact that pet owners have individual responsibility for their pet, SPT has the wider responsibility for the safety and security of all passengers on the subway. In particular, detailed consideration has to be given to the unique characteristics of the Glasgow Subway with its relatively small size of station platforms and trains, which pose specific challenges that are not seen in other transport operations. Therefore, in conducting the review, whilst officers have considered similar conditions of travel in place elsewhere in the UK and abroad, it has been necessary to focus on the specific risks and potential mitigation measures that relate to Glasgow subway.

3.2 Rationale for current conditions on carriage of animals

The current conditions allow for assistance dogs as they have been specially trained and systematically exposed to public transport and Subway noises and environment and therefore the risks can be managed within Subway. To date there have been no significant incidents with assistance dogs and neither SPT nor members of the public have raised any concerns or difficulties with this aspect.

The reference in the Condition to carrying “small animals in secure containers” is derived from the inherent and potential risks of the Subway environment together with other limiting factors including the size of the carriages, the space available to customers and the fact that the container could easily be accommodated on the owners lap while not intruding on the comfort of other passengers. This ensures the safety of the small animal, the owner and other customers. Larger animals, even in a secure container, would prove harder to accommodate on the owners lap or in the train carriage due to the small size of the trains. In these circumstances, the larger containers necessarily required would intrude on the space of adjoining customers or necessitate either carriage on the floor or on a seat. This could prove to be particularly difficult for passengers negotiating their way on or off a train due to the narrow space within trains.

3.3 Subway specific considerations and risks

The very nature of the current Subway environment is one which includes a number of potential hazards to untrained or uncontained animals such as escalators, automatic ticket gates, relatively narrow platforms, narrow width train carriages, and the presence of a 600vDC third rail adjacent to the tracks which carries the traction power throughout the system. There are also a number of other factors relating to noise from trains and air flows that have a potential to unnerve/distress animals that are not within a secured container or trained to deal with this environment. Whilst a number of these conditions exist in other transport operations, it is generally the smaller physical size of the subway system (trains and platforms in particular) that is the overriding factor.

The relatively small size of the current passenger train compartment means that larger animals could present an obstacle particularly at peak periods. This is exacerbated by the current train design whereby there is no thoroughfare between carriages, and

hence no ability for passengers to move between carriages (unless in an emergency situation, which is controlled and managed through staff intervention). Furthermore, the presence of larger animals in an emergency situation (e.g. evacuation of a train in a tunnel) would present a significant additional risk in an already challenging situation that requires very careful management by staff. In such situations, whilst rare, passengers are required to be “de-trained” by staff through the front train driver’s door, as there is no ability to exit through the normal train side doors due to the small diameter tunnels, and then walked along the tunnel to the nearest station. A further consideration for larger animals relates to the relatively narrow platforms and space available to accommodate larger animals, particularly within a container without creating an additional obstacle/trip hazard, most notably during peak periods. The very nature of the subway with its original construction comprising a number of narrow island platforms, without platform edge protection requires very careful management of passengers and the risks of large containers on such narrow spaces without platform edge protection presented a significant hazard.

It is therefore considered that the transporting of larger animals, either within or outwith a secure container, is not practical due to the specific size constraints within the subway, most notably within the trains and platforms.

3.4 Consideration of open, unsecured containers

The use of open, unsecured containers for the carriage of animals was considered during the review. However, due to the potential risks for the animal to break free and the impact in such confined spaces on station concourses, platforms and trains (particularly during peak periods), it is not considered to be a practical and acceptable approach that can be adopted in the Subway.

3.5 Future opportunities from the Subway Modernisation programme

In reviewing practices on other forms of transport, SPT is aware that the carriage of animals is, in some cases, allowed without many restrictions. While the unique scale and environment of the Subway does not currently present the opportunity for that level of change, the Subway Modernisation programme will present some solutions to further mitigate some risks from the issues identified previously. For example, the internal design of the new Subway trains will have larger internal free areas as well as the ability to move between carriages. In addition, the use of platform screen doors will provide edge protection to the platforms. It is therefore likely that some of the above risks could be mitigated in future and some of the current restrictions could be relaxed with the introduction of these features and it is recommended that this be kept under review as the modernisation programme is progressively implemented.

4. Conclusions

Following a review of the conditions of carriage relating to the carriage of animals, it is concluded that the rationale for the current Condition of Travel in relation to the carriage of animals remains valid. It is further concluded that the current environment and specific risks relating to the carriage of animals beyond those specified in the current relevant Condition of Travel (i.e. small animals in secure containers only) suggest that the conditions should not change at present.

It is however, noted that the Subway Modernisation programme will provide opportunity through the introduction of the new rolling stock and platforms screen door to mitigate some of these risks and potentially relax the restrictions in future.

5. Committee action

The Committee is recommended to:

- note the conclusions of a review of current policy on carriage of animals on the Subway which has focussed on the risks relating to the specific physical limitations of the Subway; and
- approve the outcome of the review, namely that the current policy should not be changed, but that SPT will continue to keep the matter under consideration as the Subway Modernisation programme is progressed and in particular following the introduction of the new trains and platform screen doors.

6. Consequences

Policy consequences	<i>In line with the RTS.</i>
Legal consequences	<i>None at present.</i>
Financial consequences	<i>None.</i>
Personnel consequences	<i>None.</i>
Equalities consequences	<i>None.</i>
Risk consequences	<i>None at present.</i>

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