

NEWS RELEASE

MEDIA STATEMENT

Alcohol on Stations and Trains

January 2013: Merseyrail strives to keep passengers safe and secure on its network, and gives particular attention to people who are considered unfit to travel. This includes those that are under the influence of alcohol. Last year, we did a number of things to achieve this:

- Attempted to **change the byelaw**, banning the consumption of alcohol out of an open vessel on stations and trains
- Rolled out our **Travel Safe** policy
- Focused on the **entire Merseyrail network**
- Strengthened the wording in our **Passenger Charter** about alcohol consumption

Proposed Byelaw Change

At present, under existing railway byelaws, people found to be in possession of intoxicating liquor or in an unfit state of intoxication can be removed from the railway.

However, Merseyrail would like to change this byelaw, so that the consumption of alcohol from an open vessel is not allowed at any point in the year, not just over Christmas.

We have written to the Department for Transport to register this request and hope to have secured a resolution this year. We do not know when or if our request will be granted and understand that if it is, the process of enforcement is likely to take a considerable amount of time.

Over the Christmas period, we invoke railway byelaw 4, banning the consumption of alcohol on our five underground stations. This means that from mid-November till Christmas Eve, the consumption of alcohol from an open vessel is not allowed on certain days. Note that we also outlaw the consumption from open vessels at certain times and locations during Aintree Races, Matthew Street Festival and Orange Lodge parades.

Notes to Editors:

- *Merseyrail carries approx 110.000 passengers per weekday*
- *Merseyrail scored 96 per cent for punctuality in the last public performance measurement, third highest among the over 20 train operating companies in the country*
- *Merseyrail is one of the most intensively used networks in the UK with more than 800 trains per weekday*
- *Merseyrail is a 50/50 Joint Venture between Serco and Abellio*
- *Merseytravel is the combined Passenger Transport Authority and Executive for Merseyside*
- *Network Rail is the owner and operator of most of the rail infrastructure in the UK*
- *For further information, contact Alice Owen on tel 0151 702 1684*

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Travel Safe Policy

Merseyrail developed its Travel Safe policy in 2011, implementing it in January 2012 with the support of our security contractors, Carlisle Facilities Services. The British Transport Police back this policy.

Travel Safe encourages staff to look out and assist people who had trouble standing steadily and unaided; display disorderly, indecent, offensive or aggressive behaviour; or who are verbally abusive. It covers all passengers, not just those that are under the influence of alcohol.

Under the policy, if station or train staff sees that a person is a danger to him or herself or to others, they are instructed to help them find another way of getting to their destination. Employees offer practical advice and emotional support, and there are examples of them calling for taxis when necessary. They routinely help people with physical disabilities or simply carrying lots of luggage.

This policy is supported by a publicity campaign, which comprises internet banners, posters in trains and on stations and hand-outs.

Focus on the entire Merseyrail network

Previously, we concentrated on helping people who are unfit to travel on our five underground stations, however now, we are making a concerted effort to target the entire network, ie all 66 stations.

Passenger Charter

The Merseyrail Passenger Charter now states that alcohol consumption on stations and trains is not permitted where before, passengers were merely asked to refrain from drinking alcohol.

Results

In 2011, there were 92 alcohol-related accidents on the Merseyrail network. In 2012, this figure fell to 66, which is a 28 per cent reduction.

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In 2011, there were 71 alcohol-related accidents at underground stations. In 2012, this figure dropped to 41, representing a fall of 42 per cent.

Kaj Mook, director of customer service, said: "Since the start of the Travel Safe campaign and people being refused access to the network because they are unfit to travel, there has been a significant drop in the number of alcohol-related passenger accidents and staff assaults."

Ends

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