



Department
for Transport

Rail Vehicle Accessibility: Exemption application Northern Line

Moving Britain Ahead

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Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR
Telephone 0300 330 3000
Website www.gov.uk/dft
General enquiries: <https://forms.dft.gov.uk>



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Foreword

The Rail Vehicle Accessibility (Non-Interoperable Rail System) Regulations 2010 (RVAR) set standards for the accessibility features of a rail vehicle operated on particular types of rail systems. The Secretary of State has powers under section 183 of the Equality Act 2010 to allow operators of regulated rail vehicles to continue to operate a vehicle if it does not fully comply with the standards set in the Schedules to these RVAR 2010.

This consultation contains the application from London Underground Limited for exemption from one standard set out in Schedule 1, Part 1 (General Requirements) RVAR 2010 for trains operated on the Northern line. This is in relation to:

- The provision of a single handrail at single leaf passenger doors

The consultation period shall run until 27 July 2017. To share your views and comments on the application please contact us at

1. Exemption Application

Full name of applicant and address

London Underground Limited
Windsor House
42-50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

Description of Rail Vehicles

Northern line 1995 Tube Stock - Vehicle numbers:

Train Formation: 106 x 6 Car permanent formations

Train Numbers:

Driving Motor Cars: 51501 – 51686

51701 – 51726

Trailer Car: 52501 – 52686

52701 – 52726

Uncoupling Non Driving Motor Car: 53501 – 53686

53701 – 53726

Circumstances in which exemptions are to apply

At all times while the train is in passenger service

Relevant requirements from which exemption is sought

Schedule 1, Part 1 (General Requirements) of the Rail Vehicles Accessibility Regulations (RVAR) 2010, paragraph 10 (1) a:

10.—(1) Subject to sub-paragraphs (2) and (3), a handrail must be fitted in the following positions—

(a) in every rail vehicle, on the inside as close as practicable to, and on either side of, the passenger doorways in the side of the vehicle, extending vertically from a point not more than 700 millimetres above the floor to a point not less than 1200 millimetres above the floor.

Technical, economic and operational reasons why exemption is sought

Currently on the Northern line, there is a single compliant handrail in the single doorways of the trains. At double doorways, there is a compliant handrail on both sides of the door opening.

London Underground believes that fitting a second hand rail in the single door area would be technically challenging because there is no standback to the body end and a perch seat in this location. This would also not provide good value for money given

that the stock has recently undergone a midlife refurbishment to bring the train into compliance and improve the reliability of the rolling stock. To fit each car with hand rails would mean that trains would be withdrawn from service for the modification to take place, dis-benefitting customers who rely upon the frequent service.

To make a handrail which is obvious from the exterior and useable would mean encroaching into the door aperture or placement which would obstruct part of the perch seating area and access panels for equipment underneath. Re-engineering the body end panel to allow for a compliant handrail would result in significant cost and would likely further limit access to equipment in this area.

In the uncoupling non driving motor cars (UNDM), a hand rail in this location may detract from the usability of the controls housed underneath the perch seat and present a limitation to the operability of the shunting position when required for use.

In the interest of consistency across all single doorways on this fleet, London Underground would be uneasy in placing hand rails in only some locations as this may lead to confusion or injury if people are expecting the rail to be on both sides.

The effect which non-compliance would have on a disabled person's ability to use rail vehicles of the description to which the application relates

LU does not believe that this non-compliance would preclude a disabled person from using the Northern line trains. A handrail is fitted to both sides of the double doors meaning a user can steady themselves at either side of that door, but not use both at once as the door opening is 1600mm wide. A single handrail is fitted in the single door vestibule give a user the ability to steady themselves when stepping into and out of the train on one side. The rails are situated on the body side (towards the centre of the car), rather than car end side, of each single doorway.

Underground stations have clearly marked areas at which level access is available to aid people boarding a train who have difficulties with steps and gaps. This is publicised on the step free tube map, in stations and on platforms.

Supplementary information for consideration

London Underground has recently received 'minded to' letters from the Department for other fleet regarding the same exemption.

Any proposals for later modification of rail vehicles to secure compliance with RVAR within a stated period

London Underground does not intend to further modify the vehicles.

Though additional trains likely to be procured in order to satisfy the Northern Line Upgrade 2, these will be built to the same specification and design as the existing fleet in order to minimise the associated costs with maintenance and ensure that customers receive a consistent experience on all of the trains.

Unless permanent exemption sought, the period during which exemption is to apply.

LU is requesting a permanent exemption for the Northern line.