

**2017 05 04 VIA Rail Baggage Car Policy on bikes letter to Pauline Thornham**

On Wednesday, May 3, 2017 3:28 PM, Rita Toporowski <Rita\_Toporowski@viarail.ca> wrote:

Dear Ms. Thornham,

Thank you for your email addressed to Mr. Desjardins-Siciliano which was forwarded to me for handling. Kindly forgive my delayed reply. By way of introduction, I am the General Manager, Customer Experience in the Corridor.

I was pleased to read that you choose VIA Rail as an environmentally friendly option and understand your wish to travel with your bicycle. As you know, bicycles are stored in the baggage car during travel and I was sorry to read of your disappointment with the availability of baggage cars between Ottawa and Toronto.

With a limited number of baggage cars in our fleet, VIA has been compelled to streamline its checked baggage service to correspond more closely with actual needs. While carry-on baggage is generally accepted for inter-city travel, long-distance travel with connections to overnight trains definitely requires through baggage car service. For this reason, baggage cars are limited for the most part to trains that make connections with overnight trains.

I apologize for our limited ability to serve your needs in this case. We do accept as carry-on baggage, foldable bicycles that are to be packed in a bag of less than 62 linear inches. While I understand that most bicycles are not foldable, some passengers have found this to be a viable option.

I have taken note of your comments and appreciate the fact that you have taken the time to express your concerns. Customer feedback is a valuable tool in our continuing efforts to improve our services and does play a role in our future plans for fleet renewal. While I recognize that this does not solve for your current request, your comments help us as we move forward.

Thank you again for writing, allowing me the opportunity to explain our position.

Best Regards

Rita Toporowski