OFTHE TICKET COMPANY IN THE INTEREST ISSUED BY THE GL OBE TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRIES AND BUS RAIL WAYS

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TRANSFER CONCEPT

(The seventh of several issues on this subject)

"TRANSFER POINTS AND RESTRICTIONS"

GLOBE TICKET COMPANY

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Why restrictions regarding transfer points? Why should transfer from some lines to certain other lines be limited to certain points or perhaps not allowed at all?

As it is generally considered necessary to restrict transfers as to date, in order to prevent their accumulation for future use, as it has become accepted practice to time transfers, in order to restrict them to immediate completion of the trip, so is the need recognized for the establishment of certain safeguards against misuse of the transfer privilege through attempts to take two rides for the price of one.

As long as it is accepted practice to grant rides on one fare away from the starting point only and to rule out round-trip riding on one fare, it will be necessary to provide safeguards in the transfer system, designed to insure their use in accordance with the policies adopted.

Transfer between lines running in part over the same route in the same direction.

In some cases the practice is still followed of restricting transfer from and to lines running in part over the same route and in the same direction to one or two definite points, as a rule in the center of the central district.

As an example, on diagram 1 in this issue the lines 1, 3 and 5, all running southbound, use a common route part of the way. The route for lines 1 and 3 coincides between points A and E. Lines 1 and 5 follow the same route between C and E, and lines 3 and 5 do so between points C and F.

The tendency is to limit transfer between routes such as these at a central point, such as C or perhaps D.

Where this is being done it will be a good plan to re-examine the necessity for it. We have found many instances where careful study produced little good reason for such restrictions.

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Also they are hard to justify before passengers who might well ask: "What difference does it make whether we transfer at your point C, or at A or B or D or E, or at stops between these points, as long as we continue in the direction in which we started? Your point C is over-crowded. If we transfer there we cannot get a seat, whereas if we transfer at D we can."

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Passengers may have a preference for certain transfer points for a variety of legitimate reasons; often it means a good deal to them, and if it should be found possible to accommodate passengers on points such as these, without affecting the proper working of the transfer set-up and without inviting abuse, that accommodation becomes mighty cheap advertising.

Thus it is a good plan to check restrictions of that type and to determine just what if any advantage they offer in each case. The question should be asked: "Do they help the system? Do they prevent abuse, and what abuse? Do they help traffic? Do they help operation?"

You may find, as some properties did, that it may be better to disperse transfer passengers, by having them transfer at several points, whenever possible, rather than at one or two central points. You may find it better from an operating standpoint to have passengers from line 1, for instance, transfer on to line 3 anywhere along the common route of these two lines, between points A and E. Most of this common stretch of route is in the central business area, all stops are apt to be made anyhow; therefore, a few transfer passengers getting on and off at these stops may cause less delay than the concentration of all of them at a central point, such as C.

Some properties found that the relaxing of previously existing restrictions with respect to this type of transferring could be used nicely to bargain with, as a balance against the introduction of new restrictions or the tightening of existing ones considered necessary in the rejuvenation of a transfer system.

This comes under the heading of establishing restrictions only if they answer a definite and sufficient purpose. Likewise and in most cases as the result of sufficient purpose, they should be easily justifiable.

Withholding of the transfer privilege

In counteracting abuse by return-riding, transfer between lines running entirely or partly in opposing directions needs attention.

As a rule it is possible to devise restrictions which, if they cannot prevent return-riding in each and every case, will nevertheless reduce the incentive for such attempts and stop substantial and sustained abuse from this source.

In illustration 2 transfer from line 1 (inbound) onto vehicles of line 2 (outbound) will generally not be allowed, because to do so would permit passengers to go into the central business area on line 1 and return on line 2. That prohibition imposes no hardship on legitimate riders. Where the two lines follow a parallel but different route they are only one block apart.



But what if the parallel routes of the two lines are further apart? The question of whether or not to refuse transfer from one to the other then boils down to your own estimation of how far a person will walk in order to get a round trip into town on one fare. Your decision will be affected by the demands of legitimate traffic between these parallel lines, which become the more urgent, the greater the distance between them.

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Again it may be said that restrictive rules should be well thought out and considered, lest they inflict inconvenience on too many legitimate riders, out of proportion with the number of fares which one may expect to recapture. We do not wish to lose sight of the fact that accepted practice demands the carrying of passengers for one fare, plus perhaps a transfer surcharge, from any point on the system to any point on that same system within the established fare area, and that our arrangements for the collection of fares and the handling of transfer riders should interfere with that principle as little as possible.

Happily, most restrictions required for protection against return-riding are obvious, reasonable and fully justifiable, imposing no hardship on the legitimate rider. Nevertheless there are borderline cases where the balance is finely drawn between the advantages expected by the use of certain restrictions and the possible inconvenience which they may impose upon legitimate passengers, plus the difficulty and cost of enforcing them.

In such borderline cases it is good to keep in mind that proper observance of transfer time limits goes a long way toward reducing the incentive toward round-tripping. Return rides on one fare are sought mostly by those wishing to go into active shopping areas, mostly central business districts, for shopping and return. Under skillful setting of time limits and their proper enforcement much of this shopping and return travel on a single fare can be discouraged, because the time will then be too short in most cases for the accomplishment of any amount of shopping.



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However, shoppers are not the only ones seeking to obtain rides on a two-for-one-fare basis. Many business people as well as private and government employees habitually search out means of getting illegitimate rides at the expense of public transit, and too liberal an application of the "customer is king" maxim may admit a flood of additional riders of the same category, in time making "two rides for one" a practice honored by custom.

Some restrictions designed to prevent round-tripping must go as far as prohibiting transfer from one line to another. As transfer from one line to its own vehicles running in the opposite direction is universally prohibited, so should transfer generally be prevented from a line running in one direction to another running in the opposite direction over the same or nearly the same route.

Fortunately full refusal of transfers is necessary only on relatively few lines beyond the issuing line and its reverse direction.

Restrictions applied to certain passengers only

Knotty problems are posed by lines that follow widely divergent routes out of the city, but later reconverge at an outside point. Diagram 3 shows two of these. Obviously people living in the area at or around point A, and traveling cityward on route 1 will be able to return home on a single fare, if permitted to transfer downtown onto line 4. It would have to be determined how much traffic moves from point A into the city, how many transfers are being taken up on the opposing but returning line, having been issued in that area. That latter check is easy to make, by having operators put a signal onto the transfers issued in that area during a test period. That signal may be a notch or a punch hole or any other convenient signal.

Operators will be instructed to issue transfers with the signal from the start of the line or a point conveniently located before reaching point A, to a point located sufficiently beyond A to rule out walking back to it from that point. We have indicated this latter point as E on line 1 and F on line 3. Beyond these points—going inbound—transfers are again issued without the signal.

The number of transfers with signal taken up on the opposing line, outbound gives an indication of the traffic moving between the two lines in opposing directions and originating from area A.

If it should be found that a sufficient amount of return riding of this sort is taking place to warrant trying to get the lost return fares, there is an easy way to do this, imposing no hardship upon legitimate transfer passengers. It uses the same method of signals described for the test except that their use is continued indefinitely.



As an example, from the beginning of line 1 up to a properly located point, indicated as E on diagram 3, transfers are issued bearing a special signal. At that point the signal is removed, so that transfers issued between E and the central city area do not have it. Transfers bearing the signal are then not made acceptable on line 4 in the central city area, whereas those without it may be so accepted. Under that arrangement passengers originating in the area between points D and E are expected to transfer at point A, if they desire to travel to a point on route 3. Since with respect to almost all points on route 3 that will be the shortest way, legitimate passengers will not be discommoded.

Those originating between point E and B have a right to expect that they be permitted to board line 4 in the central area, in order to reach their destination on line 4 and we can afford to let them do so, as there is no inducement for return-riding.

The same method will be used on route 3. Between points C and F transfers are issued with signal, whereas between points F and B they are devoid of it. Again those with signal will not be accepted on line 2 at point B, but only at point A, and those without signal will be accepted at B.

The signal may take several forms. It may be given by putting a punch mark on the transfer or a notch. If a notch is selected, our transfer cutters with notchers can be used, with the notcher simply slid out of the way, when the point on the route is reached from which no signal should appear on the transfers issued.

A third signal that we consider easily recognized is the use of a red bar down the entire length of the transfer. Where that is used the operator carries two pads of transfers, one with and one without bar. As he reaches the changing point, he will simply remove the transfer pad carrying the bar and substitute for it the one not carrying that signal. He may also have two holders attached to his vehicle, one carrying the barred transfer and the other the one without the bar. He can then simply switch from the one to the other without difficulty.





Insistence on the use of certain transfer points

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Most restrictions are required between lines that follow the same or a nearby route part of the way, but beyond that diverge and follow independent ways and perhaps directions. All the lines shown on diagram 4 are in that category.

When wishing to travel from the starting point of route 1 in the northwest to the end of line 4 in the north, it is common practice to insist that such transfer be made at point A. If passengers were permitted to make their transfer at points C or D, those originating in the vicinity of point A would be enabled to travel from there on line 1 into the business section around point D and return to their starting point on line 4. Likewise, transfer from lines 4 starting south to 5 going southwest or from 6 to 3 will generally be limited to be made only at point F, and transfer from line 2 to lines 3 or 5 at point E. The desirability for such restrictions is obvious, and they generally impose no hardship upon the customer, in fact they give him the benefit of the shortest distance between his starting point and his destination.

With respect to the three lines that travel through points G and H, the situation is different. Assuming that the distance between these two points is only one block, it follows that if transfer should be allowed in the downtown area from line 5 to line 8 or 10 outbound, an opening would then exist for passengers originating near point G to travel downtown on line 5 and return via 8 or 10. Likewise, those originating around point H might be tempted to take line 7 or 9 into the central city area, do their shopping and return to point G on line 6, walking south one block to point H.

The lines involved run closely parallel for a distance and then diverge. Where the distance between the parallel legs of such routes is so close that many people are expected to walk it in order to obtain a round trip ride on one fare, it is the practice of restricting transfer to be made at the diverging point by walk-over. On that basis our passenger coming from the start of route 5 in the northeast will be asked to get off at point G, walk south one block to point H and to board number 8 outbound or 10 at that point. Likewise, passengers coming in on line 7 or 9 are expected to get off at point H, walk north to G and board line 6 at that point.

In this case again the deciding points are: How many people do we expect to walk the distance between the two lines while they run parallel, in order to chisel a return ride? Can we ask legitimate passengers to walk that same distance for their transfer, in order to stop that abuse? How many will be inconvenienced by the walk-over? How great is the time saved by making the transfer at the outside point by walk-over, rather than travel through the city area?

(This is the seventh of several issues of our GLOBE TROTTER on THE TRANSFER CONCEPT. The eighth issue will follow in about a month. The issues will be useful for reference if kept in a binder.)



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