



Transportation
Security
Administration

November 3rd, 2005

Mr. Thomas Lee
President
American Federation of Musicians
1501 Broadway Street, Suite 600
New York, NY 10036

Dear Mr. Lee:

On December 20, 2002, TSA modified its Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to allow for the carriage of one musical instrument through security screening checkpoints in addition to the standard allotment of one carry-on and one personal item. There has been some confusion regarding this modification and I am writing to clarify the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) policy regarding the screening and carriage of a musical instrument as a carry-on item.

The TSA policy only covers procedures at the security checkpoint, and does not apply to restrictions imposed by individual airlines. TSA will screen one musical instrument per passenger. However, even though TSA allows the instrument to pass through the screening checkpoint, passengers may still be prevented from bringing the instrument onboard an aircraft by airline representatives as they each impose their own restrictions. These restrictions vary from airline to airline, so we recommend that musicians check with their individual air carrier prior to arrival at the airport to ascertain specific restrictions that will be enforced by the air carrier at the boarding gate.

Should your membership experience problems at the security screening checkpoints, please advise them to request to speak to a screening supervisor for resolution. However, if a passenger is prevented from carrying the instrument onboard the aircraft at the gate by airline personnel, TSA has no authority to alter the airline's policies.

For the most current information on the security screening of musical instruments, please visit the TSA website at www.tsa.gov, and click on Travelers & Consumers, then Air Travel, then Transporting Special Items.

I hope this letter clarifies TSA's policy concerning the screening of musical instruments and clears up any confusion.

Sincerely yours,

Lee Longmire
Acting Assistant Administrator,
Office of Transportation Security Policy

Cc:
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