

Giant fans in London underground to counter summer heat

Giant fans are being installed across the London tube network to bring respite to passengers from summer heat.

Temperatures can rise over 30 degrees Celsius in the underground stations during summers.

Tube officials have said they were installing industrial-sized fans in ticket halls and concourses at busy stations such as Bond Street and Charing Cross to create a current of cool air for passengers.

London Mayor Boris Johnson said about the exercise: 'It always perplexed me that boffins could produce mobile phones the size of a credit card, yet passengers would emerge dripping with sweat from tube trains that lacked air-conditioning.'

The mayor also has plans to introduce air-conditioned trains.

Nearly 200 carriages are to be introduced on the District, Metropolitan and Hammersmith and City lines. The exercise will be completed by 2010, according to The Guardian.

However, the remaining nine lines, which are the busiest as they course through the heart of London, will have to wait longer for air-conditioning of stations and trains.

These lines are deeper underground and reaching the giant industrial fans down there is impossible.

Short-term measures to reduce heat on these lines are therefore being thought of, including upgrading the ventilation shafts to allow hot air to escape more easily.

Not all lines have these shafts and air-conditioning will raise temperatures, engineers have warned, because it will pump hot air back into tunnels that have no ventilation shafts to let the air escape.

Millions of passengers are forced to swelter underground every summer because the 100-year-old tunnel system was designed without ventilation shafts. The rolling stock was designed more than 30 years ago when the network was less crowded.

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