



# Tassie Flying Paws Dog Club Inc.

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To all flyballers,

We have just travelled for Victoria and back for the “On The Fly” and “Let’s Do It for Paul” flyball events at Frankston so we thought we would share with you the requirements to travel with pets on the Spirits across Bass Strait. Also, as you know we are holding the first ever flyball event in Tasmania in November and quite a few of you have expressed concerns about travelling with dogs on the Spirit so we thought we would share our experiences and tips.

Yes, taking pets over on the Spirits ([Spirit of Tasmania](#)) can be a daunting experience, particularly if it is the first time. Doing our first trip was nerve racking because we didn’t understand the process and the conditions our dogs would be staying in. The truth is the first crossing was more traumatic for us than the dogs. The thought of placing them in a kennel for the night unable to check on them through the trip was unsettling, but upon arriving at the pet kennel area the morning after we were delighted to find them well and very excited to see us (lots of barking).

Unfortunately, there have been pet fatalities in the past but approximately 25,000 animals per year are transported across the Bass Strait on the Spirits without incident. Yes, if one of my dogs passed away on the journey I would be distressed and devastated and would be seeking an explanation from the TT-Line as well as reviewing what I did in preparing my dog(s) for the trip.

To be honest, the single or double stacked “kennels” will be or could be very different from the sleeping arrangements that your dogs may be used to, but if they are crate trained that is a bonus. However, the kennels are clean, roomy, well ventilated, not smelly, have large water bowls and are checked through the night, at least four times during the trip. The kennels vary in size but as a guide the approximate measurements are: 700mm wide x 800mm high x 900 mm deep. On our way home this time we discovered large single kennels the same height as the double stacked kennels near the rear of the ship adjacent to the double stacked kennels. Our anxiety was replaced with relief after that first crossing and over time now have the planning of the trip with dogs pretty well organised.



Kennels in centre of ship near stairwells – Deck 5.



Kennels at the rear of the ship on port side – Deck 5. Large single kennels are adjacent.




Kennels in centre of ship near stairwells – Deck 5.

Details are available to be viewed online under [SPIRIT OF TASMANIA – PETS & KENNELS](#) regarding rules and regulations.

We travel with our dogs to and from the mainland 2 - 3 times a year (so 4- 6 crossings), however, we have few hints on making the trip with your pets less stressful but there are no guarantees.

1. Be prepared – book the kennel, one for each dog. There is a small cost involved which at the moment is \$22.00 each way. It's worth this amount to know your pet is in a clean, roomy space and checked through the night. You will be asked by the booking staff what type of dog(s) is(are) travelling with you.
2. There is a latch on the door of the kennel to which you can put a lock. We clip our dog's lead to it (see Pic 3 above). Also, you will be given a tag to attach to the kennel which has your details (cabin number) (see Pic 2 and 3). This allows the crew to contact you during the night if there is an issue as kennels are not allocated at booking time.
3. Please note from the pictures above the kennels are different sizes please place your dog in the appropriate kennel. There are large single height kennels at the rear of the ship next to the double stacked kennels on the port side Deck 5.
4. Before you travel the dogs must be treated for 'Hydatid Tape Worm'. You will be required to show proof of this and the treatment must have been given within 14 days of sailing. You can purchase the tablets from either a supermarket or vets keeping the packet and receipt in the car to be viewed prior to boarding at the Port Melbourne quarantine checkpoint. It is not required when returning to Melbourne
5. Like all flyball dogs our dogs have plenty of energy so we make sure there are active days before the day of the trip.
6. On the day of the trip we only feed our dogs in the morning and do not feed them again until we arrive in either Melbourne or Devonport.
7. We give them plenty of water to drink regularly and opportunities to relieve themselves, particularly on very warm days.
8. When departing from Devonport we arrive at least 2.5 hours before departing and take our dogs to the Park overlooking Flour Mill Bay on the corner of Tarleton and Melrose Streets, East Devonport. We let them run around and tire themselves out.
9. When departing from Melbourne we take them to any of the dog friendly beaches from Station Pier to Hampton and again let them tire themselves out before boarding.
10. We do not medicate our dogs for anxiety but some of our members have. That is a choice for you and your vet to consider.
11. When arriving at the ticketing booth you will be given a yellow card to hang onto your reversing mirror. Make sure you hang it there as this informs the vehicle loading attendants that your car must be loaded onto a ventilated deck (usually deck 5).
12. Once you have parked your car, we suggest that you prepare the kennel while the dog remains in the car. Place their bed, your tag, and any food or treat if you choose then retrieve your pet. If you try to juggle items, position them in the kennel and perhaps have to deal with other pets arriving as well while your pet is waiting can lead to nervousness and confrontation. If you can simply walk your pet to the kennel and lift them in its much more controllable. Normally there is a Spirit employee there to guide and assist you.
13. Try not to stay too long saying goodnight. A quick exit is better for the dog(s) and you.
14. Go and enjoy the sailing. Your pet is safe, secured and being monitored!!
15. In the morning get to your vehicle as quickly as possible when instructed by the crew as Deck 5, where the kennels are located, is the first Deck offloaded so you and your dog(s) are first off. It can be busy around the kennels as everyone gets their pets, as well as other passengers making their way to their vehicles. We reverse the process by retrieving the pet and putting them in the vehicle first then returning to get bedding etc.

Although the Spirit don't recommend it, you can opt to leave your dog(s) in your car but there are a couple of things to remember. Firstly, you will have to complete and return an 'Indemnity Form'. This releases the Spirit of Tasmania from your pet's care throughout the trip. Also be



aware your vehicle may be placed on a deck with poor ventilation. The kennel areas are on Deck 5 and are very well ventilated. Other decks may not be as “airy” and can be quite warm. We know quite a few people who choose to leave their pets in their vehicle and some of our members have.

Below is a couple of links to other information regarding pets travelling on the Spirits that you should refer to and we recommend that you contact the Spirit staff if you have any questions and/or concerns. Links are:

1. Media release <https://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/company-information/media/media-releases/spirit-of-tasmania-vessels-safe-for-pets>
2. Terms and Conditions <https://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/terms-and-conditions>
3. Boarding Information <https://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/sailing-fares/boarding-information>
4. Frequently Asked Questions <https://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/customer-support/faqs>
5. Travel Information August 2019 [https://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/media/718384/your-travel-information\\_august-2019.pdf](https://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au/media/718384/your-travel-information_august-2019.pdf)
6. Biosecurity conditions for dogs travelling to Tasmania contact the Department of Industries, Parks, Water and Environment for Dogs on 1800 684 215 (Toll Free) or visit [Biosecurity-Tasmania](#).

We have always found the Spirit staff very helpful and go out of their way to lessen the stress and anxiety of travelling with pets.

Bon voyage. We hope to see you and your dog(s) soon either on the mainland or in Tassie as a participant in our future flyball competitions or as a very welcome tourist in our island paradise.

Sincerely

David Strong  
President  
Tassie Flying Paws Dog Club Inc.