



CODE OF GOOD CONDUCT IN GROUND HANDLING FOR PERSONS WITH REDUCED MOBILITY

1.1 WHO SHOULD RECEIVE THE SERVICES

DEFINITION

A Person with reduced mobility (PRM) is understood to mean any person whose mobility is reduced due to physical incapacity (sensory or locomotory), an intellectual deficiency, age, illness, or any other cause of disability when using transport and whose situation needs special attention and the adaptation to a person's needs of the service made available to all passengers

1.2 INTRODUCTION

The following specification provides guidance on the general nature and scope of the special assistance services to be provided and delivered at an airport in accordance with local, national & European legislation in order to ensure professional and seamless services to PRMs.

Air carriers, Ground Handling Companies and Airports should work together at a local level to organise special assistance for PRMs. Arrangements for the provision of special assistance must be in accordance with the Ground Handling Directive and PRMs must not be charged directly for the assistance they require.

PRMs have the same rights as other citizens to freedom of movement and freedom of choice. This applies to air travel as to all other areas in life. Discrimination towards PRMs in air travel must be prohibited. PRMs must not be refused booking or carriage due to their disability. PRMs must not be charged directly for the assistance they require.

1.3 STRATEGY FOR SPECIAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

Individual Airport communities should work in partnership to review and develop the way that special assistance services for Persons with Reduced Mobility are organised in order to support the principle of a professional and seamless service set out in the introduction.

Key strategies:

- The service must be delivered in a harmonised, transparent, non-discriminatory way and must be subject to audits and reviews in accordance with the European Ground Handling Directive.
- To improve levels of customer service and safety to PRMs, through a seamless service from quality supplier/s, implemented with quality staff, equipment and a quality organisational structure, operating to meet and exceed prescribed customer service and safety standards

1.4 SCOPE

The services to be provided, should include:

All pre-booking services should enable the PRM to notify his/her specific needs in accordance with the current IATA codes.

- A pre-booking service, utilising all aspects of all common and modern media (Web sites, e-mail, telephone text etc. both nationally and locally, for all those PRMs requiring assistance on departure and arrival).
- Assistance from a customer's point of set down at the airport to check-in.
- Assistance with registration at check-in and with security processes.
- Assistance in proceeding to the gate at the correct time for pre-boarding.
- Assistance in boarding and disembarking, including the provision of a suitable service for passengers who require special access to/from the aircraft (in accordance with local or national regulatory requirements).
- Assistance in the retrieval of baggage, and with immigration and customs processes.
- Assistance from/to connecting flights both for landside and airside, inter and intra terminal connections.
- Assistance up to the first point of onward travel.
- Enabling the customer to use the airport facilities as requested, subject to sufficient time being available.
- Providing a wheelchair only service (non-assisted) as requested by passengers.
- Adequate assistance in case of (long) delays and/or cancellation of flights (covering the momentary needs of the PRM).

1.5 OPERATING PRINCIPLES

Provisions regarding the facilitation of the transport of passengers requiring special assistance have been consolidated into the eleventh edition of ICAO-Annex 9, Chapter 8.

The following principle should be reflected in the operation:

- Operating in accordance with the provisions laid down within the European Ground Handling Directive.
- Airlines will be able to self-handle or choose another service provider. The service provider (air carrier, ground handling company and/or airport) must not charge the PRM directly. In any case, the service delivered must be in accordance, as a minimum, with the standards as defined in ECAC Doc 30, Part I.
- 'Handover' procedures must be avoided where possible.
- Seamless service should be provided where applicable.

- An effective system of prioritising, scheduling and achieving timely assistance should be achieved.
- Clear guidelines for the customer in order that they understand the provisions of the services should be provided.
- Waiting/meeting areas at strategic points within individual airports should be provided in a suitable manner.
- Where buggies are used, they must be organised and managed in a way that maximises their efficient utilisation.
- The efficiency of the operation, ensuring that the most effective processes for redeploying staff and equipment are utilised, must continually be reviewed and improved.
- Training programmes, based on the requirements laid down within ECAC Doc 30, Part 1, appropriate to meet local regulations or national legislation, developed in partnership with national and European forums of disabled people (see service level).
- All necessary equipment used to provide assistance to PRMs that must comply with local & national legislation and also local airport requirements including national security regulations should be kept in readiness and provided by the service provider.
- It is recommended that airports allow blind passengers to be escorted by their guide dogs inside the terminals throughout their stay, provided airport regulations allow it, and under their conditions.

1.6 OPERATING HOURS AND LOCATIONS

The suppliers should operate the required service during operational hours in landside, terminal and airside areas according to local requirements. Set down and pick up points will include forecourts, public car parks, taxi ranks, coach and rail stations or other interchanges (where these exist within airport boundaries).

1.7 SERVICE STANDARDS AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

These must be mutually agreed on by the local Airlines Operators Committee and the Airport Authority Service as well as all other stakeholders including airlines which self-handle. Service level targets and standards should be included in the contract.

The following standards represent the minimum levels of service to be applied to the handling of PRMs. They are subject to adjustments agreed on by the local Airlines Operators Committee, the Airport Authority and all other stakeholders in accordance with the size of airport and the type of traffic concerned.

FOR PRE-BOOKED DEPARTING CUSTOMERS

Upon arrival at the airport, once they have made themselves known:

- 80% of customers should wait no longer than 10 minutes for assistance
- 90% should wait for no longer than 20 minutes
- 100% should wait for no longer than 30 minutes.

FOR NON PRE-BOOKED DEPARTING CUSTOMERS

Upon arrival at the airport, once they have made themselves known:

- 80% of customers should wait no longer than 25 minutes
- 90% should wait no longer than 35 minutes
- 100% should wait no longer than 45 minutes.

Note: Waiting times over 15 minutes are subject to availability of waiting areas as referred to in 1.5.

FOR PRE-BOOKED ARRIVING CUSTOMERS

Assistance should be available at the gate-room/aircraft side for:

- 80% of customers within 5 minutes of “on chocks”
- 90% within 10 minutes
- 100% within 20 minutes.

FOR NON PRE-BOOKED ARRIVING CUSTOMERS

Assistance should be available at the gate-room/aircraft side for:

- 80% of customers within 25 minutes of “on chocks”
- 90% within 35 minutes
- 100% within 45 minutes.

1.8 GENERAL

- All customers should be satisfied with the assistance provided.
- 100% of departing customers should reach their aircraft in time to enable timely preboarding and departure.
- Training is required for all employees including the management who deal directly with the travelling public at airports and shall be tailored to the employee’s function. At least they should receive annual customer service training and disability awareness training, which should include the following:
 - Information on the range of disabilities incl. all types of temporary disability (broken legs, arms etc.)
 - Skills needed to communicate with disabled people, particularly those with a hearing impairment or learning difficulties.

To deliver at least the minimum standards of service as defined in ECAC Doc 30, Part 1, the service provider of the special assistance to PRMs will employ well-trained and educated staff only.

Note: Training Courses should be developed in partnership with local, national and European forums of people with a disability.

1.9 PERFORMANCE & QUALITY MONITORING

There will be regular reviews to monitor the service provider performance against these standards and to continually improve performance-monitoring systems. Performance against some or all of the standards should be used to publicise the services provided and these could also be included within any future passenger charter.

Whilst regular market research surveys will be undertaken to measure performance, the suppliers should be expected to introduce their own performance monitoring systems and to provide reasonable data as required by the airport community.

2. PROMOTING AWARENESS

The service provider will be expected to provide useful information to the public and other airport organisations promoting awareness of the special assistance services or arrangements available.

They should also emphasise the importance of pre-booking and exploit the growing use of the Internet ensuring that information provided is in all accessible formats. ●●●