



ANNEX 5-C

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

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

Definition

'disabled person' or 'person with reduced mobility' means any person whose mobility when using transport is reduced due to any physical disability (sensory or locomotor, permanent or temporary), intellectual disability or impairment, or any other cause of disability, or age, and whose situation needs appropriate attention and the adaptation to his or her particular needs of the service made available to all passengers;

This definition does not include people who are sick and who need, for example, to travel on a stretcher or to receive in flight medical attention.

1.1 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 disabled persons and PRMs.

Airport managing bodies should work in partnership with all other operators, including air carriers and Ground Handling Companies, at a local level to organise special assistance for disabled persons and PRMs. Arrangements for the provision of special assistance should be in accordance with the EU Regulation (EC) 1107/2006 and disabled persons and PRMs should not be charged directly for the assistance they require. This does not apply to commercial medical services.

Disabled persons and 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 disabled persons and PRMs in air travel should be prohibited. Disabled persons and PRMs should not be refused booking or carriage due to their disability. Disabled persons and PRMs should not be charged directly for the assistance they require.

1.2 Strategy for Special Assistance Services

Airport Managing Bodies should work in partnership to review and develop the way that special assistance services for disabled persons and PRMs are organised in order to support the principle of a professional and seamless service set out in the introduction.

Key strategies:

- The service should be delivered in a harmonised, transparent, non-discriminatory way in accordance with the EU Regulation (EC) 1107/2006. The same procedures should be adopted in Member States outside the European Union.
- To improve levels of customer service and safety to disabled persons and PRMs, through a seamless service from quality suppliers, implemented with quality staff, equipment and a quality organisational structure, operating to meet and exceed prescribed customer service and safety standards.

1.3 Scope

The services to be provided should include:

- A booking service that enables the disabled person or PRM to notify his/her specific needs, and that ensures that these needs are recorded in the reservation system, for notification to all concerned entities in the travel chain.
- 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 disabled persons and PRMs requiring assistance on departure and arrival).
- Assistance from a designated 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 designated 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 disabled person or PRM).

1.4 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 principles should be reflected in the operation:

- Operating in accordance with the provisions laid down within the EU Regulation (EC) 1107/2006.
- Airports managing bodies are responsible under that Regulation (article 8) for providing assistance to disabled persons and PRMs.
- The airport should not charge the PRM directly. In any case, the service delivered should be in accordance, as a minimum, with the standards set out in Annex 1 of the Regulation and those are in accordance with ECAC Doc.30, Part 1.
- 'Handover' procedures should be avoided where possible. Where they cannot be avoided, procedures must be in place to ensure that there is continuity of service and that the passenger is not forgotten or left for too long.

- 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 available, including in an easy-to-read version.
- Waiting/meeting areas at strategic points within individual airports should be provided in a suitable manner.
- Where buggies are used, they should 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, should continually be reviewed and improved.
- Training programmes, based on the recommendations laid down within ECAC Doc 30, Part 1, appropriate to meet local regulations or national legislation, should be developed in partnership with representative disability organisations (see service level).
- All necessary equipment used to provide assistance to PRMs that should 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.
- Airports in EU Member States must allow blind and other passengers who use them to be escorted by their recognised assistance dogs inside the terminals throughout their stay. The same policy should be adopted in all ECAC Member States.

1.5 Operating Hours and Locations

The suppliers should operate the required service during operational hours in landside, terminal and airside areas according to local requirements, including extended hours when necessitated by ad hoc or disrupted flights.

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). Under EU Regulation (EC) 1107/2006 these points must be agreed at each airport in consultation with organisations representing disabled persons.

1.6 Service Standards and Performance Monitoring

These should be mutually agreed by the Airport Users Committee where one exists.

Service level targets and standards should be included in the service level agreement.

The following standards represent the minimum levels of service to be applied to the handling of disabled persons and PRMs. They are subject to adjustments agreed on by the local Airport Users Committee where one exists and all other stakeholders in accordance with the size of airport and the type of traffic concerned. PRMs and disabled persons should always receive assistance as soon as possible.

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.

1.7 General

- All customers should be satisfied with the assistance provided
- Subject to pre-notification, 100% of departing customers who are at the designated point within the stipulated time should reach their aircraft in time to enable timely pre-boarding 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 disabled persons and PRMs will employ well-trained and educated staff only.

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

1.8 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.

