

HEATHROW AIRPORT PASSENGER SERVICES SUB- COMMITTEE (PSSC) RESPONSE TO CAP 1476.

Future of service quality regulation for Heathrow Airport Limited: Consultation on the design principles for a more outcome-based regime.

Introduction

1. The Heathrow Airport Consultative Committee (HACC) is an independent statutory committee first convened in 1948. It meets quarterly to discharge its role of fostering communication and understanding between the airport's owners and operator and its users, both passengers and airlines, local authorities and interest groups. An important part of the HACC is the Passenger Services Sub-Committee (PSSC) which represents the particular interests of all passengers.
2. The PSSC meets quarterly to review customer experience metrics, provide direct feedback to Heathrow Airport management on member and wider user experience and to receive reports and operational updates. The PSSC does, on a regular basis, focus on specific areas of delivery and invites both Heathrow Airport management and experts along with third-party stakeholders to attend Q&A sessions for detailed discussions.
3. The CAA have issued a consultation document asking for response to CAP 1476 – Future of service quality regulation for Heathrow Airport Limited: Consultation on the design principles for a more outcome-based approach.

Response

4. The PSSC welcomes the opportunity to comment on CAP 1476 and is supportive of the direction and conclusion contained in the interests of further improving service quality performance at Heathrow Airport. Our comments are delivered in answer to the questions raised in the consultation document.

Answers Sought

Do you agree with the case for change in service quality regulation at Heathrow Airport, as outlined in Chapter 4?

5. While we believe that the current service quality arrangements have largely served the 75.7 million passengers (2016) who use Heathrow annually well, we support the need to both develop a set of arrangements which reflect the changing status of Heathrow, build on the innovative work it has done in the service arena since 2003 and take into account relevant best practice from other

consumer centered enterprises. Clear SQR metrics ensure both accountability and an environment which encourages excellence.

6. The experiences of the air passenger from the minute they leave their office, home or hotel until the aircraft takes off are both many and complex. The granularity and interdependency of the experience can result in a relatively small area of delivery, when delivered poorly, having a significant and negative impact on the overall experience. Identifying those small areas and ensuring they are not excluded from the rolled-up QBR is very important. We appreciate that this may result in further measures being looked at which are out with the H7 review.

7. Notwithstanding the creation of the Consumer Challenge Board (CCB) the PSSC believe that it has a key role in providing insights and guidance during this review as well as monitoring the new OBR as part of their work, post implementation in 2020.

Have we accurately reflected stakeholder views, as outlined in Chapter 5? Do you have any comments on our proposals regarding the level of stakeholder engagement we require of HAL in developing an outcomes framework?

8. In as much as this chapter recognises that the broader Airline Community wishes to minimise changes to the OBR and that HAL seeks to breakdown the OBR into “high-level” and “low-level” outcomes we believe that the paper does accurately reflect the views but as a committee which is able to take a single-minded approach to this process (the passenger experience) we believe that there is considerable merit in exploring the suggestions of HAL to deliver greater insight.

9. We believe that the passenger is both entitled to the transparency of knowing who is responsible for delivering their experience and has the ability to use that information to make judgements on the experience.

10. A good example of this would be Border Force, even the most enlightened and regular traveller does not appreciate that the resourcing of this part of the ‘experience’ is out-with the control of HAL. Delays, as communicated via social media, show the disconnect between who is responsible and who is held accountable.

Do you have any comments on the proposed principles?

11. The 5 principles as outlined address the areas of most relevance to the shaping of the OBR. The PSSC find the rigour surrounding the current OBR metrics to be sound and a key tool in understanding the passenger experience and support HAL being the lead on engagement with customers and coordinating across the Airline Community.

12. The interdependency referred to in a section 6.8 of measures is a vital area in OBR measurement. It must be captured and communicated to the passenger as well as driving incentivization.

13. The PSSC expect to contribute to the consultation as outlined in section 6.16 both directly with HAL and the CCB.

14. In relation to Principle 5 the PSSC notes the advances made by other UK airports in communicating performance statistics in an easily accessible format, for example security queuing times and live customer satisfaction ratings for that day at Edinburgh Airport.

Do you consider there are further principles that should be included, or principles that should be removed?

15. No.

Do you have any comments in terms of the proposed structure of the OBR framework, specifically:

- a. Outcomes
- b. Measures
- c. Targets
- d. Incentives

16. No additional points.

Do you agree that customers would benefit from increased transparency on the performance of other parties providing services who play a major role in their experience at the airport?

17. For the PSSC this is one of the most important aspects of the H7 Review. In the interests of absolute transparency to the consumer, to drive a high service delivery culture across every touch point and in fairness to HAL and the Airline Community performance of all actors throughout the customer journey must be measured and disclosed.

Conclusion

18. The Heathrow PSSC supports the principles behind a more outcome-based regime and would take this opportunity to reinforce our belief in delivering a regime which recognises, fosters and rewards on the basis of building on the high standards that HAL has achieved using the existing SQRB.

Further Information

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