

Airport accessibility report – 2022/23

CAP2565

A large, abstract graphic composed of overlapping blue and purple shapes, resembling a stylized 'C' or a wing, occupies the lower half of the page. It features a gradient from light blue to dark purple.

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Chapter 2

Executive summary

The UK Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) is responsible for the enforcement of UK Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled and less mobile persons when travelling by air (“UK1107”). This legislation is intended to ensure that disabled and less mobile passengers have the same opportunities for air travel as others, in particular that they have the same rights to free movement, freedom of choice and non-discrimination.

In 2014, the CAA introduced a UK wide Airport Accessibility Performance Framework ([CAP1228](#)) which sets out a standardised method of assessing airports in the provision of assistance to those with accessibility needs. This framework sets out a rating approach to assess the provision of assistance by airports, which considers both legal obligations of airports (to ensure minimum standards are maintained) and best practice (to drive continuous improvement in the provision of assistance).

This is the sixth time since 2014 that the CAA has published its annual report on airport accessibility, providing an assessment of all airports with an annual passenger volume of more than 150,000 against the Airport Accessibility Performance Framework. Typically, the CAA publishes airport accessibility reports annually after the end of the reporting period (April - March). However, given the significant disruption to air travel during the pandemic, the CAA paused the publication of these annual reports in 2021 and 2022.

Following the challenges faced by the aviation industry in the summer of 2022, when air traffic resumed following the lifting of COVID-19 travel restrictions, the CAA exceptionally published an Interim Airport Accessibility Report ([CAP2491, “Interim Report”](#)) in December 2022 covering the period April to October 2022. In our Interim Report we identified airports that needed to improve their service to ensure that disabled and less mobile passengers did not have to wait an unreasonably long time for assistance and that passengers did not continue to miss flights due to assistance service failures. The report was limited to the sixteen largest airports in the UK.

This is the first report on airport accessibility covering a full year since 2020. This annual report, as in previous years, includes all airports with a passenger volume of more than 150,000 passengers in the year, a total of 26 airports.

In the four quarters covered by this report:

- **eighteen airports have consistently achieved a very good or good rating.** All eighteen airports achieved a very good rating in at least two of the four quarters.
- **seven airports improved from a poor rating to a good or very good rating over the four quarters.** These airports struggled to meet performance targets in the first and second quarters, but all seven airports achieved a very good rating by the fourth quarter.
- **one airport, London Heathrow, has shown improvement since spring/summer 2022, but has not met the criteria for a good rating** in any of the four quarters. Although it falls outside the period covered by this report, the performance in recent months has shown a further improvement at London Heathrow such that it would have received a good rating for those months.

We are pleased to report that the vast majority of UK airports are now performing well, with many excelling in the provision of assistance to the majority of individuals who request it. There has been marked performance improvements from last summer and early autumn. We have also been heartened by the conversations we have had with airports about investments made in staffing and equipment ready for this summer and, in particular, the peak travel months for disabled and less mobile passengers of September and October.

Although outside the reporting period, we are also pleased to report that data has shown that performance levels remained high for April and May, historically also peak travel periods for those requiring assistance. We are grateful to the efforts of senior management and the teams responsible for the provision of the assistance service at UK airports for the efforts they have made to improve the service against a challenging backdrop of increased demand for the assistance services.

Although covering a longer period than this report, this positive news is supported by the most recent CAA [Aviation Consumer Survey](#) which identified that *“disabled passengers are significantly more likely to say that the experience of flying has gotten better over the last five years than non-disabled passengers (30% vs. 20%).”*

Our general airport accessibility data provides important context to our work in relation to the enforcement of airports’ obligations under UK1107 and our wider work on accessibility

at UK airports. This data shows a marked increase in the proportion of passengers requesting assistance at UK airports.

- In 2022 (calendar year) 3.45 million passengers received assistance at UK airports which was 1.56% of all passengers.
- Prior to the impact of the pandemic in 2019, the proportion of passengers who received assistance was 1.35% of all passengers.
- This compares to 1.85 million passengers (less than 1% of all passengers) in 2010.

This demonstrates a marked increase in the proportion of passengers requesting assistance since 2010. It is notable that this upturn has been particularly significant since 2019. Further, the volume of disabled and less mobile passengers has recovered faster than the number of passengers overall. Total passenger volumes in 2019 and 2022 fell by 25.2% while the volume of disabled and less mobile passengers travelling only dropped by 13.3%¹.

The Aviation Consumer Survey sheds some light on what may be driving this change. Some disabled and less mobile respondents said that their confidence in travelling without support had been dented following the pandemic because they had travelled less, whilst others pointed to their health and disability issues being made worse by the pandemic. We also consider that there are other factors such as the decrease in business travel since 2019, where traditionally there is less demand for assistance services. Our [Departing Passenger Surveys](#) have identified that the leisure proportion of all passengers increased by 5.4% points from 2019 to 2022, driven primarily by a significant increase in “visiting friends and family”. We know that a high volume of disabled and less mobile passengers are relatives visiting family members. Whatever the reasons, the data from 2023 so far continues this trend of increasing demand and airports and airlines must continue to adapt, ensuring adequate resources are available to meet the demand.

Whilst acknowledging the good performance received by the majority of those requesting assistance at airports, as set out in this report, the CAA is also conscious that more needs to be done to improve the assistance provided to some.

¹ Based on data from 23 airports who provided the CAA with annual data from 2010-2022

Of the 3.45 million passengers who requested assistance either departing from or arriving into a UK airport in 2022: 88% were for people who are less mobile and need assistance around the airports, but do not have more complex needs (often elderly individuals); 6% were for people with more complex physical needs, often using their own wheelchair (approximately 40,000 assistance journeys were for individuals using electric mobility aids which includes electric wheelchairs and mobility scooters); 6% were for people who are blind, deaf or have another non-visible disability (although data suggests there are many more in this group with accessibility needs but do not request assistance because they are supported through other means e.g. accessible infrastructure and improved accessibility of other airport services). The CAA Aviation Consumer Survey suggests that it is those with physical, visible disabilities who are more likely than others to have difficulties in accessing or using airports and flying.

Often these challenges are a result of areas within the control of airlines and we intend that our proposed Airline Accessibility Framework will drive improvements in these areas. However, we will also continue to work with airports to ensure that the service provided by them is appropriate and that, where there is the need for joint working between airports, airlines, and ground handlers - such as ensuring that mobility equipment is appropriately brought from the hold to the aircraft door on landing - this is prioritised.

Chapter 3

Introduction

As with our Interim Report, this report uses a different rating system to our previous annual reports and focusses on the waiting time standards in the CAA's Airport Accessibility Framework. This is to reflect the unprecedented challenges the aviation industry faced in the spring and summer of 2022 with recruitment challenges in all areas, industrial action, shortages of equipment and low on time performance. At the time of the Interim Report, the CAA acknowledged these challenges and the knock-on effect to other parts of the airport operations and as a result committed to reporting the full year using the same ranking system to that it used in the Interim Report. However, unlike our Interim Report, this report includes comments on the other aspects of our Airport Accessibility Performance Framework; results of surveys of passengers who use the assistance service; and consultations with disability groups. We plan for the rating system for the 2023/24 reporting year to return to normal².

This report therefore focusses on one particular aspect of the passenger journey – the timeliness of the assistance service. Despite the generally positive comments we make about this aspect of assistance provision in this report, we acknowledge there are other areas where people have spoken to us about their concerns. Many of these concerns relate to airline accessibility but they also relate to airport services on occasion, particularly the training of staff.

In April, the CAA consulted on an Airline Accessibility Framework to accompany the airport framework that this is covered in this report. We hope that this will address many of the concerns relating to airline accessibility which are frequently raised with us. In addition, the CAA has restarted its airport accessibility inspections, which were paused over the pandemic, where it does periodic 'deep dive' investigations into all accessibility matters at individual UK airports, including on the quality of disability equality training. So far this year we have carried out inspections of East Midlands, London Luton, London Stansted and are currently reviewing London Heathrow.

² The Airport Accessibility Performance Framework is set out in [CAP1228](#) "guidance on quality standards under UK1107"

Chapter 4

Review of the year

Airport rankings

Airport	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4
Aberdeen	Green	Green	Green	Green
Belfast City	Green	Green	Green	Green
Belfast International	Green	Green	Green	Green
Birmingham	Red	Red	Green	Green
Bournemouth	Green	Green	Green	Green
Bristol	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
Cardiff	Green	Green	Green	Green
City of Derry	Green	Green	Green	Green
Cornwall Newquay	Green	Green	Green	Green
East Midlands	Green	Green	Green	Green
Edinburgh	Green	Green	Green	Green
Exeter	Green	Green	Green	Green
Glasgow	Green	Green	Green	Green
Glasgow Prestwick	Green	Green	Green	Green
Inverness	Green	Green	Green	Green
Leeds Bradford	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
Liverpool	Green	Green	Green	Green
London City	Green	Green	Green	Green
London Gatwick	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
London Heathrow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
London Luton	Red	Red	Yellow	Green
London Stansted	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Manchester	Red	Yellow	Green	Green
Newcastle	Light Green	Green	Green	Green
Norwich	Green	Green	Green	Green
Southampton	Green	Light Green	Light Green	Green

Very good / good in all four quarters

Eighteen airports were rated very good or good in all four quarters. These include **Aberdeen, Belfast International, Belfast City, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Liverpool, London City** and **Newcastle** - all airports which handled more than 1 million passengers in the reporting period.

East Midlands provided a very good service to disabled and less mobile passengers throughout the year. We carried out an accessibility inspection of this airport during the year and we were impressed by the investment it had recently made in its assistance service. This included the purchase of new, and refitting existing, high-lift vehicles and the installation of a live chat service allowing passengers to request assistance and stay in touch with staff throughout their airport journey.

Despite suffering similar operational challenges to larger airports in the summer of 2022, we are pleased to report that all nine of the smaller airports included within this report (those with less than 1 million passengers) provided a very good or good service in all four quarters, including in September, which is the peak month of travel for disabled and less mobile passengers. This included **Bournemouth, City of Derry, Exeter, Glasgow Prestwick, Inverness**, and **Norwich**.

It also includes **Cardiff** and **Cornwall Newquay**, who we would like to particularly highlight as having invested in their IT systems to record and report their performance. We expect this to increase both the accuracy of data and efficiency of the service provision, enabling airport management to conduct data and performance audits and drive further improvements. We have written in previous reports about the importance of airports investing in upgrading to an automatic solution to record the provision of assistance and it is pleasing to note that smaller airports are investing in this technology.

Southampton also moved to an automatic recording system using location technology during the year. In quarters two and three the data recorded indicated there were issues with late job acceptance and allocation while the new system was implemented, making the service reported to the CAA appear below acceptable standards. However, after investigation and cross checking with other data sources we were satisfied that the airport was providing a good service. We are pleased that Southampton has worked to improve the monitoring of the system and retrain staff to ensure that the data recorded is accurate

and robust. Southampton continued to run their survey of assistance service users throughout the year and received a high response rate. We can see from their results that passengers were happy with the timeliness of service provided and that staff were friendly and helpful.

Improved from poor to good / very good over the four quarters

Our Interim Report identified a group of airports whose performance fell short of standards in the first quarter but improved in the second quarter and then in October. We are pleased to report that this group of airports continued to improve for the remainder of the year and reached the performance standard for a very good rating in the third and fourth quarters. Albeit we acknowledge that the number of disabled and less mobile passengers is lower in winter, so it is generally easier for airports to meet performance targets. We have reiterated to these airports how important it is for them to ensure performance targets are met in the busier spring and summer periods and that the unacceptably long waiting times seen too often in 2022 are not repeated. The CAA will continue to closely monitor progress at these airports throughout this year. It is also important that airports can demonstrate that their performance is accurately and reliably recorded and that the audit requirements set out by the CAA in [CAP1228A](#)³ are met.

London Luton was the only airport with a poor rating in our Interim Report but has since made significant investment in its assistance service with additional resources and monitoring. London Luton has invested in location technology, accompanied by extensive CCTV audits conducted by its management team, which has helped to ensure that data recording is accurate and robust, and it can act quickly to address any service quality issues. London Luton now meets the standard for a very good rating. We also carried out an accessibility inspection of this airport during the year. This concluded that the airport is excelling in some areas, such as the accessibility of the new DART rail link, where construction and initial trials had significant input from members of its accessibility forum. The airport also assists passengers to and from the DART station using electric buggies which provides a high-quality service to passengers. In addition, the airport has added a bank of manual wheelchairs to the passenger drop off area which are available for

³ CAP1228A provides guidance on information reporting, data collection and oversight under CAP1228.

passengers to take and use around the airport should they wish to travel with more independence.

Manchester has delivered significant improvements in wait times for arriving disabled and less mobile passengers, achieving very good ratings in the third and fourth quarters. In our Interim Report, we noted that an unacceptable number of disabled and less mobile passengers missed flights in the spring and summer of 2022. This number has reduced significantly. These improvements were made despite the challenges created by the percentage of disabled and less mobile passengers as a proportion of all passengers using the airport increasing by 30% compared to 2019. We are pleased to report that Manchester has invested heavily in recruitment and equipment, with a 40% increase in staffing and a 20% increase in high-lift vehicles since summer 2022. In addition, Manchester has made changes to its security lanes to improve the experience of disabled passengers through the departures journey, such as providing a separate lane for families which allows the assistance lane to be used exclusively by disabled and less mobile passengers. Renovations at Terminal 2 have included wider corridors so that electric buggies can be used in more areas which provides a better experience for passengers arriving on flights with high numbers of passengers who request assistance.

Birmingham and **Leeds Bradford**, like Manchester, saw an increase in the proportion of disabled and less mobile passengers as a proportion of total passenger numbers compared to 2019. Both airports struggled with their performance in the first half of the reporting year but improved greatly in the second half thanks to additional oversight and strengthening of resources through extra investment in staffing and equipment, resulting in significantly fewer passengers waiting for extended periods for assistance. In addition, Birmingham had far fewer disabled and less mobile passengers miss flights in the third and fourth quarters. Birmingham has implemented an operational improvement plan and convened regular meetings with stakeholders to discuss the assistance service. It has continued to invest in its service, for example by upgrading its dedicated airside seating area. Leeds Bradford continued to run its assistance users survey throughout the year and despite the issues it had last summer with providing a timely service we note that responses to its survey throughout the year were overwhelmingly positive with many passengers describing the assistance service team members as helpful and friendly.

London Stansted has performed well in the last two quarters of the year and, although not in the reporting year, we note that April and May performance data shows that London Stansted has maintained a very good level of performance. It has made significant investments in its assistance service, adding new high-lift vehicles to its fleet. During our recent accessibility inspection of the airport, we noted how London Stansted has worked with its airlines and service provider to implement aspects of our [CAP2374](#)⁴ guidance to create a more passenger focussed service, such as planning a boarding ramp trial for embarking and disembarking and encouraging disabled and less mobile passengers to be pushed by their companions if they are able and wish to do so, so that they can make better use of the facilities the airport has to offer. In addition, London Stansted has improved wayfinding for disabled and less mobile passengers in the check-in hall and on arrival to the UK border.

Bristol's performance improved over the year and achieved a very good rating in the final quarter. Following the issues raised in our Interim Report with vehicle availability impacting performance, we are pleased that Bristol has made a commitment to invest in this area to ensure that they have sufficient high-lift vehicles and aircraft boarding ramps by summer 2023. However, we note that performance at Bristol has recently dipped. Although outside of the reporting year for this report, the performance in April and May, when standards were not met, demonstrates how important it is that the airport quickly delivers on its commitments to extra resourcing and equipment. We will be closely monitoring the service to ensure that management delivers on its commitments before the autumn peak.

London Gatwick improved to a very good level of performance over the last two quarters of the reporting year. Since the publication of our Interim Report, London Gatwick has worked closely with the CAA to improve data collection, which we had identified as being a cause for concern following a number of our own audits earlier this year. To address this, we asked London Gatwick to increase its own audits and monitoring of the service and for airport management to ensure service provider staff are better trained on data collection processes. Progress has been good, and this should be further enhanced by the addition

⁴ CAP2374 provides guidance on "appropriate" assistance under Article 7(7) of the Regulation. It encourages airports to adapt the assistance to the individual requirements of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.

of location-based technology which the airport has recently installed. We will continue to work with the airport to ensure that the technology is working as expected.

Poor / needs improvement in all four quarters

Only one airport falls into this category, **London Heathrow**. There were improvements over the four quarters, but not to the same extent as the other airports, and in the final quarter the standard for a good rating was still not met. London Heathrow's performance data shows that performance varies between terminals, with targets routinely met in Terminals 2 and 4, and lower performance in Terminals 3 and 5.

During the reporting year, London Heathrow has seen a large increase in the number of disabled and less mobile passengers as a proportion of total number of passengers. Between 2019 and 2022 this increase was over 50%, with the proportion of disabled and less mobile passengers in the calendar year 2022 being 2.38% which was the highest proportion in the UK. This appears primarily due to an increase proportionally in routes used predominantly by leisure passengers which traditionally have a higher proportion of disabled and less mobile passengers onboard. Additionally, there been an increase in the proportion of passengers travelling to visit friends and family. London Heathrow also has other unique challenges, namely a high volume of transfer passengers and a high number of flights with a very high proportion of disabled and less mobile passengers on board, with sometimes 10% to 20% of all passengers requiring assistance. Against this backdrop, we have worked with London Heathrow to identify areas where we consider the airport could do more to improve the passenger experience.

In our Interim Report, we reported that because of infrastructure issues, London Heathrow asked many passengers to wait for assistance in an area just prior to UK Border at Terminal 3 when they are moved from one piece of equipment to another. We noted that some passengers waited over 30 minutes for assistance in this area – an unacceptable break in the service in our view. During the reporting year wait times in this area have reduced, due to extra staff being deployed to this area. Despite this, wait times occasionally remain unacceptable, particularly at certain times of the day. London Heathrow has told us it is removing this handover point from the arrivals journey at Terminal 3 as well as recently installing new lifts in the arrivals route which allows many passengers to stay in one piece of equipment throughout their journey.

More successful has been the reopening of additional security facilities for transfer passengers in Terminals 2 and 5, which had been closed since the pandemic. This has greatly reduced the distances some passengers travel to make connections, specifically avoiding the need to travel to 'A' gates in Terminal 5 for those that are at 'B' and 'C' gates. In addition, the airport has implemented aspects of our CAP2374 guidance by providing passengers with alternative methods of assistance on departure. It has encouraged staff at the host desks to establish passengers' needs so that they can offer different types of assistance, for example, travelling companions who are willing and able can push their companions through to the boarding gate. In the departure lounge, London Heathrow has introduced a pager system for assistance service users. This allows passengers to be more independent and use all the shops, restaurants, and lounges in their own time, safe in the knowledge that the team will page them when it is time to board.

Audits conducted by the CAA during the year brought to light issues with data recording. They also identified issues with the airport's recent implementation of the location-based technology. It was disappointing that the airport had not identified these issues through its own audits and highlights the importance for all airports to ensure they meet the CAA's requirements in CAP1228A to conduct audits of their own performance. London Heathrow has subsequently increased resources and investment in this area and now has a team dedicated to assurance and audits which meets our minimum requirements. The CAA will continue to work with London Heathrow to ensure that their data recording and reporting is accurate and robust.

Although not in the reporting year, we note that for the period April to June this year Heathrow has met our standard for a good rating. This is despite continued record demand for assistance. This, together with the progress already made, and further plans, to improve the experience at Terminal 3, means we are increasingly confident that the airport will make significant progress this year.

Survey of service users

CAP1228 requires all airports to conduct an assistance service user survey. In order to encourage participation, we require airports to distribute the survey to users of the assistance service by email after their journey.

Due to the difficulties experienced last summer, some airports did not distribute the survey because other priorities prevented airport management being able to restart surveys that were paused during the pandemic. These issues have meant that some airports have not received a large number of responses and therefore we are not including survey responses in this year's rankings.

Despite this, we are pleased to note that many airports did continue to run their assistance survey in full through a post travel email link and those that did received a high number of responses. Many received very positive responses overall, including Glasgow, Edinburgh, Norwich, Southampton, and Glasgow Prestwick. These airports were praised for customer service, showing how passengers value the importance of staff understanding the needs of disabled and less mobile passengers.

Within the survey, the opportunity to provide free text comments is available for passengers which provides very useful detail for the CAA to understand problems and areas we need to focus on. As in previous years, a lack of staffing and equipment causing longer waiting times and poorer customer service was the most complained about aspect of the assistance service.

For the 2023/24 reporting year, we expect airports to routinely distribute the survey as per guidance in CAP1228 to get as much feedback as possible about their service.

Consultation with disability groups

As with the assistance service user survey, airports focussed on improving their core assistance services last summer and some have been slow to revive accessibility forums. We recognise that the pause on this requirement during the pandemic meant that airports have had to rethink and restart their groups. CAP1228 states that airports must hold at least two meetings per year, and we are pleased that many airports have still managed to meet this requirement. Some smaller airports held only one forum or worked with local groups in other ways during the year. Inverness, for example, consulted with disability groups four times a year through their local Nairn Access Panel. Other airports such as London Heathrow, Exeter, Newcastle additionally held terminal walk-throughs for forum members, which is valuable for airports to get feedback and give members an insight into services and processes.

Last year the CAA asked Ann Frye, the Government's [Disability and Access Ambassador for Airports](#) to review the current methods used by airports to consult with disabled passengers and disability groups. Ann presented her review to us last summer and we had hoped to progress this work this year and propose further guidance for airports on this important requirement. Unfortunately, we were not able to do so because of the challenging summer for aviation but we will take this work forward this year. When we report on 2023/24, all airports are expected to meet the requirements relating to consultation with disability groups in order to achieve a good or very good rating.

ANNEX 1

Definition of rankings

Performance against the 'ECAC Performance Targets' for the reporting year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 has been split into four equal quarters and each quarter divided into the following categories:

Very good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 99% of all departing pre-notified⁵ disabled and less mobile passengers were provided with assistance within 30 minutes of making themselves known at a designated point. • At least 99% of all departing non-notified disabled and less mobile passengers were provided with assistance within 45 minutes of making themselves known at a designated point. • For at least 98% of arriving pre-notified disabled and less mobile passengers, assistance was available for each passenger within 20 minutes from on chocks. • For at least 98% of arriving non-notified disabled and less mobile passengers, assistance was available for each passenger within 45 minutes from on chocks. • The airport consistently met any continuous journey standards for arriving passengers individually agreed with the CAA. • The airport has robust processes in place for overseeing how it measures its performance.
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ At least 99% of all departing pre-notified disabled and less mobile passengers were provided with assistance within 30 minutes of making themselves known at a designated point. ▪ At least 99% of all departing non-notified disabled and less mobile passengers were provided with assistance within 45 minutes of making themselves known at a designated point. ▪ For at least 97% of arriving pre-notified disabled and less mobile passengers, assistance was available for each passenger within 20 minutes from on chocks. For at least 97% of non-notified disabled and less mobile passengers, assistance was available for each passenger within 45 minutes from on chocks. ▪ The airport consistently met any continuous journey standards for arriving passengers individually agreed with the CAA.

⁵ When an air carrier or its agent or a tour operator receives a notification of the need for assistance at least 48 hours before the published departure time for the flight, it shall transmit the information concerned at least 36 hours before the published departure time for the flight to the managing body of the airport. Any notification not received at all or received by the airport managing body less than 36 hours before the flight is a non-notified passenger

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The airport has robust processes in place for overseeing how it measures its performance.
Needs improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The airport has failed to meet all the criteria for a good performance standard. ▪ In line with the CAA's guidance for the year 2022/3 to ensure that quality standards targets are not met at the expense of other passengers waiting for extremely long periods for assistance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - at least 95% of pre-notified passengers have waited less than 30 minutes from on chocks for assistance on arrival; and - at least 98% of pre-notified passengers have waited less than 45 minutes from on chocks for assistance on arrival. ▪ The airport has taken the necessary steps during the period to identify the issues with its assistance service and to agree a plan with the CAA to improve its performance.
Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The airport has failed to meet all the criteria for a needs improvement performance standard. ▪ The airport has not taken the necessary steps during the period to identify the issues with its assistance service and to agree a plan with the CAA to improve its performance. ▪ The airport has not implemented robust procedures for monitoring and recording performance

ANNEX 2

Background

UK Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled and less mobile persons when travelling by air provides for a set of rights that apply when departing from and returning to UK airports and on board all flights from the UK and, if on a UK airline, to the UK. The aim of the Regulation is to ensure that disabled and less mobile passengers have the same opportunities for air travel as others, in particular that they have the same rights to freedom of movement, choice and non-discrimination.

With respect to airports, the requirements of the Regulation relate primarily to the assistance that airports must provide to disabled and less mobile passengers to help them move around the airport and board and disembark from the aircraft (usually through a contracted service provider). The Regulation also requires airports to establish quality standards for assistance provided to disabled and less mobile passengers. To ensure that disabled and less mobile passengers can be confident that they will be able to travel and that their assistance needs will be met, it is important that the assistance provided to them is of consistently high quality. It is therefore essential that airports set appropriate quality standards for this assistance to ensure that it is provided to a high standard.

The CAA is responsible for enforcing the Regulation in the UK. We have established an Airport Accessibility Performance Framework for airports to set, monitor and publish a set of quality standards relating to the assistance provided. Guidance (“CAP1228”) for airports on obligations under this framework was published in October 2014, updated in April 2019, and additional guidance supporting CAP1228 was published in 2022 (“CAP1228a”). In addition to the quantitative metrics, which relate to the time passengers have to wait to receive assistance on both departure and arrival, we have also included a number of qualitative metrics: First, that airports consult with disability groups and charities when setting quality standards, so that others with a strong interest in disability issues can hold airports accountable; and second, that passengers with a disability or reduced mobility are satisfied with the various aspects of the service they receive by being surveyed so that issues such as staff attitudes can be measured and reported on.