

LCY Airport Accessibility Panel Minutes, 11th June 2025

Attendees:

Jessie Buckle (Chair)
Dave Christie (Director of Aerodrome Operations, London City Airport)
Suzanne (Director of Customer Operations, London City Airport)
Juwairiyah Ali (Head of Training and Compliance, London City Airport)
Dorota Zielinska (Digital Engagement Lead, London City Airport)
Josh Wintersgill (ableMove UK et al.)
Emily Yates (Mima)
Sasha Hailey (Business Disability Forum)
Dean Eales (AccessAble)
Ruth Rabet (Hidden Disabilities Sunflower)
Patsy Ryan (British Airways)
Azmir Khan (Mitie)
Sheraz Faisal (Mitie)

Apologies:

Pareisse Wilson (Harmonise Change and Mott MacDonald)
Matthew Clark

Agenda:

1:00 pm until 1:15 pm Introductions (15 minutes, All - Chaired by Jessie Buckle)
1:15 pm until 1:40 pm Business Update (25 minutes, Dave Christie)
1:40 pm until 1:55 pm Mitie Business Update (15 minutes, Sheraz Faisal / Azmir Khan)

Comfort Break (10 minutes)

2:05 pm until 2:30 pm Assistance Travel System and ATS Service Tender, Dave Christie)
2:30 pm until 2:45 pm Web Accessibility (Dorota Zielinska)
2:45 pm until 2:55 pm AOB (Jessie Buckle)
2:55 pm until 3:00 pm Closing Thoughts (Jessie Buckle)

Introductions:

Each of the panel members introduced themselves, with two new members joining:
Suzanne Kara, Director of Customer Operations, London City Airport and Dean Eales,

Head of Customer Access, AccessAble.

Business and Performance Update:

Dave Christie presented the overall business performance.

- Dave highlighted that the airport growth remains at 5% annually, which is lower than the market average, with assisted travel customers growing at 15%.
- There has been a consistent growth trend since the pre-COVID period. The forecast shows continued growth for the rest of the year, with 18% more hours allocated to the team to assist these journeys.
- Dave emphasised the importance of this growth, which is expected to continue due to demographic changes and increased awareness of accessibility needs.
- The feedback score dropped slightly to 78.4%
- The panel discussed the new check-in system, which was highlighted during the February site visit, which aims to resolve waiting area issues.
- Panel members discussed the correlation between positive relationships with airlines and ground handlers and the impressive performance in assisted travel. As well as the incorrect tagging of passengers, causing a spike in numbers, which needs to be addressed, and changes in codes are often take place at the last minute by passengers who see the stairs involved.
- The recommendations from the Aviation Accessibility Task and Finish Group, led by Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson, regarding the classification of passengers requiring assistance.
- The importance of correctly staffed and equipped teams to meet CAA standards, despite the CAA's concerns about timing accuracy, was highlighted.
- The panel discussed the need for better clarity and consistency in codes across all airports. IATA needs to define global codes for passengers travelling with mobility aids, as some airlines use their own codes.

Mitie Business Update:

Azmir Khan and Sheraz Faisal presented the Mitie Business Update and provided introductions of their roles at London City. As well as highlighting the importance of providing the best customer service to assisted travel passengers.

- 18 ATS trained members of staff (11 full-time and 7 part-time) with an additional 14 cross-trained members of staff from Security. There are plans to increase staff numbers. Mitie mentioned that members of staff have a number of hours per week to ensure levels of training remain sufficient.
- Mitie highlighted examples of specialist equipment used and highlighted that the service includes landside to plane and arrivals.
- Details on staff training were provided. Training includes a two-day induction and 40 hours of on-the-job training before completion of onboarding. Mitie highlighted that if they believed someone was not comprehensive at this point, more training would be provided.
- Panel members gave feedback on Mitie's training methods and have requested a more detailed review of the approach. The panel emphasised the importance of practical training and an understanding of disability awareness.
- It is highlighted that LCY has taken over the training compliance officer role for Mitie, ensuring quality and standards are maintained.

Assistance Travel System and ATS Service Tender:

- Dave Christie highlighted that the current contract with Mitie is due to expire.
- Potential new providers have been identified.
- Dave and Jessie highlighted that the panel would have the opportunity to be involved in the tender evaluation process. The tender timeline is targeting August 2025.
- Dave highlighted that LCY are seeking a provider with a robust system integration and industry knowledge. There is an aim to consolidate multiple service contracts.
- The panel asked questions and provided invaluable feedback regarding this process.

Web Accessibility:

Dorota Zielinska discussed web accessibility at London City (LCY) with the panel. Dorota highlighted the commitment to continuous improvement and transparency with the panel.

- Dorota highlighted that LCY are currently working at WCAG Level A and working towards Level AA. The deadline for compliance is the 28th of June 2025.
- Dorota mentioned the usability testing, which was completed before the September 2023 website relaunch.
- Dorota shared the LCY website on her screen and highlighted features which have been implemented to improve accessibility, such as an accessibility toolbar.
- Accessibility checks and audits are performed regularly.
- The accessibility statement is to be published within the next few weeks and will be shared with panel members.
- The panel discusses the importance of making the accessibility toolbar more visible and user-friendly, and the need for regular updates to the accessibility statement.
- Jessie and Dorota reiterated that feedback on the accessibility level of the website from the panel is welcome.

AOB:

Jessie informed the panel that London City are still awaiting the CAA audit report, which is expected at the end of June, and will be added to the agenda of the next meeting in September.

Actions:

- Organise a plan going forward for the advisory group members to be involved in the evaluation of the assisted travel services tender.
- A summary of the supplier options for the assisted travel services contract for the panel to review.
- Update the accessibility statement on the website with the findings from the CAA accessibility audit and the planned improvements.
- Mitie to provide more detailed information on the staff training approach.
- Advisory group members to provide the Chair with a biography, pronouns and headshot for the London City Airport website.
- Another site visit is to take place on the 24th of July 2025.