

**London City Airport
Accessibility & Inclusivity Forum Meeting 5
9th December 2025, 2 pm until 4 pm**

Apologies

Azmir Khan
Patsy Ryan
Pareisse Wilson
Emily Kilby
Emily Yates
Dave Christie

Attendees:

Jessie Buckle
Suzanne Kara
Juwairiyah Ali
Josh Wintersgill
Ruth Rabet
Dean Eales
Alan Collins
Colm Doherty
Eliza Tomniuc

Agenda

1. **Introductions**
(10 minutes, Chaired by Jessie Buckle) 2:00-2:10
2. **Mitie Business Update**
(15 minutes, Azmir Khan and Group Discussion) 2:10-2:25
3. **Business Update**
(20 minutes, Suzanne Kara and Group) 2:25-2:45
4. **AccessAble**
(10 minutes, Dean Eales) 2:45-2:55

Comfort break (10 minutes) 2:55-3:05

5. **Mishandled Mobility Aids**
(10 minutes, Josh Wintersgill) 3:05-3:15
6. **LCY Training, Medical Devices and CAA Audit Updates**
(25 minutes, Jay Ali and Group) 3:15-3:40

7. LCY Projects

(15 minutes, Colm Doherty and Group) 3:40-3:55

8. AOB and Closing Thoughts

(5 minutes, Jessie Buckle and Group) 3:55

1. Introductions:

Panel members introduced themselves. The panel is reminded that they are welcome and encouraged to ask questions or feed into the discussion at any time.

2. Mitie Business Update:

Azmir Khan (Mitie) was off sick. Suzanne Kara presented the slides and updates.

- Due to slower automated security processes, London City Airport has required approximately 30% more labour, leading to both internal staff recruitment and the utilisation of Mitie resources.
- More "Mitie hours" have been added in the security function to sustain performance levels. This extra support is intended to be in place through the end of the current month and may extend into next month.
- Cross-training is being implemented for colleagues, including those from Mitie, so that additional personnel may flexibly support terminal operations. This training will continue into the next year and is designed to give both Mitie and other off-terminal staff a better understanding of the customer journey within the terminal.
- The Mitie partnership is thus focused on augmenting LCY's staffing resilience and operational capacity, particularly in security and customer service roles.
- Mitie has been providing a monthly ATS dashboard, which will be presented in future panel meetings.

3. Business Update:

- **Automation Impact:** The airport's full automation rollouts have caused gate-to-gate times to increase, making customer processing more challenging and requiring a shift away from the previous best-in-class speed.
- **Staffing and recruitment:** To address slower throughput, the airport has increased staffing by using 30% more labour than before, moving 10 people to full-time, and

granting 12 others guaranteed overtime. Further recruitment is planned for January and February.

- Other airports and CAA have visited LCY to study their automation model; operational learnings are being shared within the industry.
- Lane performance and partners: Significant work is underway to optimise lane performance, reduce errors, and challenge technology suppliers to drive improvements.
- Customer Experience Manager role: Suzanne addressed that the role is currently vacant. It has been reopened and is now in active recruitment.
- Training initiatives: Additional recruitment and training (including upskilling out-of-terminal colleagues) aim to bolster terminal operations and enhance understanding of the passenger journey.
- Tendering process update: Following the panel members' involvement in the tendering process, Suzanne highlights that one unsuitable vendor has been removed. The tender is currently on hold. No further details can be shared until the financial review is complete.
- Suzanne Kara invites questions from the panel, leading to a discussion on accessibility trends and the hold-up with the tender.
- Despite operational pressures, staff performance was praised, and external reviewers have found operational teams are acting correctly under tough conditions.

Part 2: Eliza Tomniuc

- Eliza provides an update on the installation of an airside dock area and the addition of an artificial grass mat for assistance dogs, following the CAA audit feedback. The CAA audit feedback tracker was shared on-screen with updates. Jessie and Eliza highlight that this will be a regular agenda item, ensuring updates are made.
- Eliza highlights that the mobility equipment process is being finalised, with a flowchart showing the steps for passengers travelling with their own wheelchairs. Invitation to panel members to contribute feedback. The document will be circulated following the panel meeting. Feedback will be implemented before being uploaded to the LCY website. The panel discusses the importance of making the flowchart accessible to all users, including those using screen readers.

4. AccessAble:

- Dean introduced AccessAble by highlighting that accessible, reliable, and in-advance information is crucial for disabled people; surveys show that 95% of respondents check accessibility before visiting a venue, with a lack of information being a significant barrier. Dean explained the service's origins, methodology, broad coverage, and the continuous evolution of both the platform and its content to best serve travellers with accessibility needs. Panel members discussed how they refer to pre-arrival information when attending spaces such as airports, and how important this is. One panel member highlighted that this is a key recommendation within inclusive design consultancy practice.
- The service was created 25 years ago after the founder personally experienced inaccessible facilities. AccessAble now partners with hundreds of venues, including most UK airports and resorts abroad.
- Methodology: The AccessAble team of surveyors physically visits sites to collect thousands of factual access datapoints, such as entrance measurements, lighting levels, and toilet features. This ensures consistent, trusted information that is ISO accredited and subject to regular updates.
- AccessAble website: The AccessAble website (accessible.co.uk) lets users search for venues and access detailed guides. Accessibility tools allow for customisations (e.g., language, text size, contrast, screen-reader support). Recent and planned enhancements include larger, expandable images and richer 360-degree content, especially for accessible toilets and changing facilities.
- Guides cover all building aspects: entrances, toilets, counters, menus, signage, and more, often with 360-degree images and easy-read summaries.
- Feedback: Over 6.2 million people used the site in the past year, and Dean emphasised that the guides are updated based on user and partner feedback, including plans for updates at London City Airport.
- Dean stressed the importance of promoting AccessAble's materials to maximise their usefulness, pointing to planned improvements, ongoing partner engagement, and upcoming reviews to keep LCY's accessibility info accurate.
- The group discussed updates across LCY following the CAA audit, which need to be updated within the AccessAble Guides. An action was created.
- Panel members asked whether formats were provided in accessible formats, such as for screen readers. Panel members were also encouraged to offer suggestions or feedback on updates to the AccessAble guides and to consider language and accessibility aspects, such as terminology and accessible formats.

5. Mishandled Mobility Aids:

- The presentation highlighted persistent accessibility barriers in air travel for disabled passengers and introduced a tech-driven solution aimed at eliminating friction and increasing confidence for both users and industry staff.
- Josh described significant challenges for passengers with disabilities, especially wheelchair users, when travelling by air, notably the repetitive and inefficient process of providing technical information about their mobility aids to airlines at multiple journey stages. Passengers often face misunderstandings or even travel denial, especially regarding battery types and regulatory compliance.
- An inclusive flight planner was introduced - a digital tool designed to help passengers store, verify, and share detailed information about their mobility aids (e.g., wheelchair specifications, battery type, dimensions). The app enables passengers to search for, and book flights based on their mobility aid's requirements, ensuring compatibility with airlines' and airports' policies.
- Functionality of app: Passengers can input mobility aid details and can search flights filtered for their specific needs. An integrated database draws on verified manufacturer information. Passengers can consent to share their mobility aid information with airlines seamlessly, minimising double entry and confusion. The app uses QR codes, scannable by airline or ground staff at any journey stage, to present relevant information to the right staff, reducing error and speeding processing. Airlines and ground handlers have a backend interface to view, verify, or add fleet data (e.g., baggage door dimensions, dangerous goods approvals).
- The repository can eventually extend to cover other assistive devices (like guide dogs) or user needs. The project aims to centralise data and eliminate unnecessary barriers, with future ambitions of industry-wide adoption and compliance.
- Josh, other panel members, and the LCY team expressed interest in piloting the app at London City Airport, inviting participation from the panel for user trials and industry feedback.
- Panel members discussed personal experiences they had and how this would revolutionise their travel experience. One panel member shared how this app would be useful to document their long-term health condition, to prevent continuous declaration.

6. LCY Training, Medical Devices and CAA Audit Updates

Jay Ali presents the LCY training strategy:

- Jay Ali presents the LCY training strategy. All frontline staff directly employed by LCY receive annual, in-person awareness training, shaped by lived passenger experiences and feedback from customer complaints.

- Training materials have been reviewed for accessibility (e.g., by the Business Disability Forum), focusing on improving accessibility features in their delivery, such as colour schemes and contrast. Panel members are invited to review training, which will be delivered during the site visit and circulated.
- An online refresher training package is in development; however, input from the panel was requested on whether online-only delivery risks becoming a “tick box” exercise, versus face-to-face engagement.
- Currently, management does not receive the same face-to-face training as frontline staff; this was a finding in an RCU audit that LCY is working to address.
- A training development and cross-industry review is taking place. LCY seeks to enhance its training content by gathering insights not just from aviation, but also from other sectors.
- Panel members provided company names and suggestions when Jay asked for recommendations for external training content reviewers.
- Input and stories (both positive and negative) from panel members and other airports are warmly invited and considered valuable for improving internal practices and module relevance. Panel members were enthusiastic to provide this.
- Staff training is being expanded to include recognition of stress indicators in both passengers and team members, with a focus on providing the right support and differentiating genuine stress from potentially suspicious behaviour.
- Medical devices: Training includes scenarios and content relevant to passenger journeys with mobility aids and medical devices. There is ongoing work to ensure staff are equipped to address these needs accessibly and confidently.
- CAA security audit: LCY recently underwent a security audit by the CAA, resulting in the highest compliance score yet for the airport (99.5%).
- CAA site visit: An upcoming visit in December from the CAA’s Consumer Panel to review the full passenger journey at LCY was highlighted, with feedback to be shared at future panel meetings.
- CAA audit results and compliance are informing updates to training (especially for management).
- Jay and the LCY team demonstrated a continuous commitment to improvement. LCY is actively working on including external consumers (e.g., check-in agents, concessionaires) in its awareness training and aligning partner training packages for consistency.

- Management training gaps are being closed with new, more inclusive material.
- Jay and Jessie have been discussing how panel members can be involved in all training processes. Panel members were invited to participate in training reviews during the January site visit and to provide any recommendations for third-party content reviewers. Panel members expressed an interest in this.
- Jay's presentation outlined ongoing enhancements to LCY's training for accessibility and customer service, explained responses to audit recommendations, addressed needs for inclusion around medical devices, and invited panel member involvement in future training reviews and feedback.

7. LCY Projects

- Colm Doherty provides an overview of LCY projects.
- Third international baggage reclaim belt: A major project to add baggage capacity in the arrivals area by repurposing old immigration space, improving passenger flow and catering to growth in larger aircraft arrivals. Installation is set for early next year, to be operational before the summer peak.
- Drop-Off charge: LCY is introducing automated charging for car drop-offs, aligning with industry norms. Although the physical layout won't change, new cameras and signposting will be installed.
- Self-service check-in: Plans are underway to modernise the check-in hall with self-service kiosks and bag drops (staff-supported), reducing reliance on traditional desks and improving accessibility by lowering injection points for checked bags. A phased rollout with testing will begin in Q2 next year.
- Colm discussed the need for infrastructure that can accommodate larger aircraft and the growth of operations to the eastern side of the airfield.
- East Pier redevelopment: The existing east pier, currently a closed, corridor-style gate area, will be radically transformed into a more open, accessible space, with additional seating, commercial opportunities, and new lifts and accessible toilets on both levels. This project is at RIBA Design Stage 3 and will support the future operation of larger aircraft and increased gate capacity, with construction anticipated for late 2026 or early 2027. Colm mentions the need to manage project work, including taking some gate rooms out of action while maintaining 50% of the pier.
- Panel members discuss redevelopment. One panel member enquires about the possibility of a nose-in configuration for larger aircraft, which would be more efficient for future growth plans. Colm confirms that the current self-manoeuvring aircraft will drive nose-in, but future larger aircraft may require nose-in configuration. The airfield and ground handling teams are already workshopping the changes, including embarking and disembarking processes and potential automation.
- Additional refurbishments and asset upgrades: Colm mentioned ongoing international arrivals toilet refurbishments and a program of general asset replacements and upgrades, with a focus on maintaining and modernising facilities for staff and passengers.

- Colm expressed excitement about the potential of these plans.
- Panel members collectively highlight the importance of involving inclusive design consultants and engagement with people with lived experience throughout all RIBA stages.
- Jessie expresses eagerness to involve the panel in all projects and for Colm to provide regular updates on these projects as they develop.
- **AOB and Closing Thoughts:**
 - Site visit date: Wednesday 14th January 2026, complete with an experience of LCY training and procedures. Comms and agenda to follow via email.
 - Terms of Reference Annual Review and October Minutes: Uploaded
 - Name change of panel confirmed: LCY Accessibility and Inclusivity Forum
 - Reminder to those who have not submitted a biography, pronouns and headshot (external and LCY) to Jessie.
 - Jessie expresses thanks to all panel members for their time and expertise over the past year, which has made a positive impact on LCY across the board.
 - Jessie wishes all of the panel members a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Panel members join in wishes.

Actions:

- Site visit to take place on the 14th of January 2026. Jessie to circulate comms and agenda via email.
- Jessie to forward an email regarding the LCY drop-off charge update.
- Jessie to forward an email regarding the Accessible Travel Charter- Workshop summaries and Survey.
- Eliza to send Jessie the mobility equipment document, for Jessie to circulate and for the panel to provide feedback.
- Jessie to circulate panel meeting minutes, and Dorota Zielinska to upload to the LCY website.
- If comfortable, panel members are asked to share information on any positive or negative access or inclusion experiences at airports or venues.
- Jessie and the LCY team are to continue working towards the Business Disability Forum (BDF) Disability Confident Leader Scheme, working alongside BDF.
- Jessie, Eliza and the LCY team continue to implement actions to CAA audit feedback.
- Rachel and Dean from AccessAble will reach out to LCY to identify recent changes at the airport and the LCY team. Eliza and Jessie will review the existing AccessAble guides to highlight updates and provide feedback, such as new facilities and branding changes. AccessAble will then update the online guides with this information to ensure accuracy and completeness.
- AccessAble guides will be shared with panel members.