

London City Airport PRM and Hidden Disabilities Forum meeting

Monday 22nd March, 12.00-13.30

Attendees:

- Ian Cowie, Customer Operations Director, LCY (Chair)
- Courtney Swaby, Business Disability Forum (BDF)
- Christiane Link, Accessibility Advisor
- Carrie-Ann Lightly, AccessAble
- David Leach, Head of Corporate Affairs, LCY
- Denise Rutter, Airport Duty Manager, Customer Operations, LCY

Apologies: Mitie; National Autistic Society; Royal National Institute of Blind People; TfL; Alitalia

LCY business update:

The Chair, Ian Cowie, updated the group on the latest developments at the airport and the significant business changes made in the past year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The update covered the temporary closure of the airport for three months between March and June 2020 and the re-opening with enhanced health and safety measures, culminating in the airport receiving the ACI's Global Health Accreditation Standard.

The Chair also highlighted the completion of the initial phase of the CADP works and pause to the terminal expansion as well as the business restructuring undertaken in the autumn to right size the operation in light of the reduction in the number of flights and passengers. The Chair also updated the group on the opening of the airport's Testing Centre and latest insight regarding airline schedules and the anticipated restart of international travel this summer.

In response to a question from BDF on the anxiety/mental wellbeing of passengers returning to the airport, the Chair remarked that signage was being updated across the campus and staff were being trained as Mental Health first aiders so they could provide on-hand support. The airport also operates the sunflower lanyard scheme for passengers who may have hidden disabilities.

A query was raised by BDF as to how disabilities and equalities issues were factored into the criteria and methodology used in the selection process for the redundancy programme. The Chair commented that the selection process was fair and robust and had been developed in consultation with the elected employee representatives on the airport's Staff Committee.

Passenger data:

Total passenger numbers for 2020 were down 82% on the record 5.1 million passengers who used the airport in 2019. This decline is comparable with airports of a similar size in the UK and Europe and also reflects the fact that LCY was closed for three months at the height of the pandemic.

The airport has had approx. 100 PRM packs since re-opening and has not seen an increase in traffic yet. The forecasts are for PRM traffic per passenger count to remain broadly the same, albeit this traffic could be slower to return. As a result, the airport doesn't expect any issues with PRM-related access this year.

Update on PRM since last meeting / planned changes in 2021:

The Chair updated the group on the airport's plans for PRM in 2021, which includes improving the airport's data capture and surveying of passengers.

The airport's PRM rating by the CAA was maintained (LCY didn't receive a new rating for 2020-21 due to the pandemic). The CAA's monitoring, auditing, and reporting process will restart from April 2021, which includes new training requirements for the airport to implement. LCY is aiming to achieve 'very good' status in the 2021-22 reporting year.

In addition, AccessAble has agreed a new three-year contract with the airport to produce accessibility guides for passengers. The group commented that the pandemic had increased awareness of disabilities and underlying health conditions and there was an opportunity for the airport to differentiate itself by becoming more accessible and inclusive and being seen as the 'go to' airport for PRM passengers travelling short distances.

Update on LCY equipment - Ambulift:

The airport now has one Ambulift that has been trialed and modified, ready for operation shortly. The intention is for the airport to provide a 100% Ambulift service in the coming weeks.

A second Ambulift will be delivered soon, and the airport is considering leasing the second unit in the short term until passenger demand recovers. The group commented that the airport should promote the Ambulift through its marketing and communications channels to increase awareness, as well as updating the PRM-related information for passengers on the LCY website.

AOB:

BDF noted that there was an opportunity for LCY reps to get involved in their forthcoming customer taskforces and this will be followed up after the meeting.

Date and time of next meeting:

The proposed date for the next Forum meeting is **Thursday 7th July, 14:00-15:30**