

Minutes BAAF Meeting 06th August 2019

Attendees			
Name	Company	Name	Company
Andy Wright	Chair, BAAF	Deane Arnold	Terminal Operations Manager, BHX
Ed Kibblewhite	Accessibility Manager, BHX	Helen Taylor	Service Delivery Facilitator, BHX
Jo Jones	Security Officer, BHX	Mick Connolly	Training Manager, OCS
Libby Herbert	Colostomy UK	Sarah Lilly	Cerebral Palsy Midlands
Bradley Beaumont	Whizz Kidz	Abi Clarke	JDRF
Paul Rhodes	Spinal Injuries Association	Joe Carroll	Spinal Injuries Association
Janice Le Tellier	Alzheimer's Society	Vidar Hjordeng MBE	Diversity Consultant, ITV News
Phil Downes	Guest		
Apologies			
Karen Thompson	Guide Dogs for the Blind	Eleanor Stephens	Guide Dogs for the Blind
Henley Skinner	Action on Hearing Loss	Daniel Sturley	Autism West Midlands
Dan Farrow	JDRF		

Opening of meeting and welcome to new attendees

Andy opened the meeting welcoming the new attendees and summarised the agenda for the day.

Andy announced, that following recommendations from the Forum, the PRM consultative committee would now be formally known as the '**Birmingham Airport Accessibility Forum**' (BAAF).

Completed Actions since last meeting

Ed confirmed that the Disability Awareness training modules (e-learning) were launched on 1st July for direct employees of Birmingham Airport. He confirmed that the next tier of training will be extended to third parties in the new year. He also thanked the members of the Forum who had provided content and helped shape the look and feel of the training course.

Ed then went on to confirm that the Website videos had been checked and now have appropriate sub-titles and closed captions are available, as previously requested by the Forum. OCS Whatsapp / SMS number have also been added to the website.

Actions in Progress

Ed provided an update on the installation of the **Sunflower Room** or Quiet Area, as a suitable location had now been identified. The project is due to commence shortly, and it is hoped to be completed by December 2019.

He confirmed that the Airside Assistance Dog Relief Area is also underway and again should be completed by December 2019.

Minutes BAAF Meeting 06th August 2019

Improvements and Innovations

Ed then informed the Forum members that a Help Point replacement project was underway, which is due for completion by December 2019. The project objective is to improve the quality and serviceability of the Help Points on site, and offer an image based / audio free option to communicate with the Assisted Travel team. The Project team is utilising previous feedback from the Forum regarding functionality and design.

Ed advised that **Andy** and **Paul** - SIA, had been involved with an Accessibility audit of the airport's retail outlets during May. **Paul** confirmed that in general retail accessibility for wheelchair users was good. A few action points were identified from the audit but were addressed shortly afterwards. The recommendations document compiled, now forms part of the airport's commercial standards.

Mick demonstrated to the Forum one of the new motorised aisle chairs that is utilised with Aviramps. The purpose of which is to improve the experience for customers who require full carry assistance when boarding an aircraft. The motorised chair removes the need for an Ambulift to be deployed, which can result in passengers not being able to pre-board the aircraft on occasions.

Ed told the Forum that the Sunflower symbol, that already marks the fast track routes through Security to Departures, is now also included on wayfinding through to Immigration / passport control on the Arrival routes.

He also advised that two of the older buggies had now been replaced with four newer models. Which doubles the capacity for both Departures and Arrivals.

Most significantly, **Ed** informed the group that the design of the Passenger Survey / Feedback had been changed. Which had led to a 200% increase in response rates from May – July.

Core Service – ECAC Standard Performance

Ed provided an overview of the airport's ECAC performance since April 2019 and discussed the context behind the engagement standard results.

He also shared the recent CAA Airport Accessibility report published in July 2019, which rated Birmingham Airport as 'Good'. **Andy** explained to the forum that this was an impressive performance and thanked the Forum members for their contribution in helping the airport achieve this standard. But also added, that it was important for the airport not to become complacent, and stressed collectively, BHX and the Forum, should now look at ways in which Birmingham can strive for a 'Very Good' rating.

Passenger Feedback

The Forum was shown an overview of recent survey feedback from May to July, which demonstrated a sizeable increase in the overall satisfaction score of passengers using the service. At the time of the meeting, 82% of passengers were satisfied with the assistance received, up from around 70% in the previous year.

Paul and **Joe** - SIA suggested the airport highlights successes and improvements more on social media and provides case studies.

Ed had identified some responses that marked every rating as extremely dissatisfactory. But explained that without any free text comments, as these had not been provided, it was very difficult to identify the causes.

Janice suggested making the free text elements mandatory, which was acknowledged by other Forum members.

So, the comments were noted and will now be actioned by the airport.

Minutes BAAF Meeting 06th August 2019

What does a *quality service* mean to you?

Andy asked the Forum members their views on current service levels and what they felt would be their priorities as travellers, other than performance being gauged by time metrics alone. Most members showed a preference towards the quality and experience of the service, rather than the speed of the service.

Joe commented on his own positive experience recently when traveling through the airport. However, pointed out that he was unfortunately not pre-boarded, much to his frustration, which had tainted his view a little.

Ed offered some background as to why pre-boarding is often out of the control of the Assistance provider and does rely heavily on the processes and turnaround times of each respective airline.

Andy explained to the forum that there was now a concerted effort being made by the CAA, to focus on airlines and in particular their processes and procedures as far as PRM travellers were concerned.

Andy acknowledged that this topic was complex and very personal, as there were many different and varying viewpoints. So a fuller discussion would take place at the next meeting.

Any Other Business

Sarah - CP Midlands shared details of an upcoming awareness social event the charity was hosting in July and extended an invitation to members of the Forum.

Andy suggested that the airport should attend, along with members of the OCS team.

Deane and **Ed** agreed to support the event and to provide an Assisted Travel stand at the show.

Forum members offered to help promote the airport's Sunflower lanyard scheme and Assistance Services, through their own social media / engagement channels. It was agreed by all, that the facility had been very successful to date, and it was important to continue raising awareness of the service. Thereby encouraging more people to fly who require some form of additional support or assistance when they travel.

Website link for Birmingham Airports Assisted Travel service can be found at -

<https://www.birminghamairport.co.uk/at-the-airport/terminal-facilities/special-assistance/>

Andy thanked everybody for their attendance and contribution and set a date for the next meeting.

Next meeting - Thursday 6th February 2020