

Minutes of Special Assistance Consultative Committee meeting

Date of meeting: 2nd August 2018

Meeting participants:

Consultative Committee Chairman, BAL Head of Terminal Facilities, BAL Head of Customer Experience, BAL Terminal Operations Manager, BAL PRM Manager, BAL Terminal Operations Intern, BAL Security Training Manager, BAL Security Agents, OCS General Manager, Stomawise, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Whizz-Kidz, Autism West Midlands, Action On Hearing Loss, Spinal Injuries Association, Alzheimer's Society, Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation, CAA Consumer Enforcement Manager

Apologies

assist-Mi, Cerebral Palsy West Midlands

Purpose of meeting:

To evaluate current service levels provided to special assistance passengers travelling to/from Birmingham Airport, and propose improvements and enhancements for consideration.

This meeting began with a full tour / journey through the airport with the entire group to review check-in areas, security, departures, arrivals, immigration and baggage reclaim.

The second part of the meeting was conducted in a meeting room, with the following items discussed:

- Feedback from the tour
- Introduction of ECAC regulations by the CAA
- Review of current PRM service level performance
- Review of improvement actions in regards to the core service
- Review of completed, ongoing and upcoming actions for general accessibility improvements

Actions completed since last meeting

- Introduction of Whatapp / SMS alternative method of assistance at help call points. NCP due to offer similar at pay machines and entry / exit barriers shortly.
- All on site airport car parks confirmed to have fully automated ANPR access / exit with pre-booking without needing to extract or deposit a ticket.

- Animal chip readers now located airside and a second unit has been purchased. This is to reduce processing delays for arriving assistance animals.
- Hidden disabilities sunflower badge now available in addition to, or instead of the existing lanyard.
- Special assistance reception area upgraded and rebranded as Assisted Travel. Now includes high contrast signage, new seating, looping airport journey video on a large screen, water machine and self service bag drop machine.
- Installation of sharps bins in disabled toilets
- Hidden disabilities sunflower signage introduced along route through north security
- Introduction of an Eagle Hoist (model 4A) for use by customers
- Installation of 2 further ADi Access Roommate devices in departures and baggage reclaim

Discussion points & actions to consider:

- Consider installing arrows or lines on flooring to guide people, install a bread crumb route.
- Glass wall in Security, apply vinyl to the glass work to help wayfinding.
- Car Parking in Car Park 1 needs to have improvements on wayfinding, include any other car parking to ensure all are adequate for PRM use.
- Desk in Departure Lounge; Induction loop needs reinstalling
- Assess the situation for PRM's and hidden disabilities when an evacuation happens, display the information on the BHX website.
- Security access route for PRM's is too narrow for wheelchair users (N.B This route is compliant with part M building regulations)
- Changing Places Toilets need better signage
- Map of the Terminal needs to be available on the website.
- Invite people to BHX to test out the Map software, so that they can include it on their websites. Include on the map, where locations of vending machines are, and how long the distance is to vending machines from security.
- Review security information for PRM's with insulin pumps and display on website. More awareness needs to be given to security staff that insulin pumps cannot go through the body scanners.
- The sunflower badges need to be changed to plastic.
- Look at installation of Quiet Area within the departure lounge.
- Security staff should be conscious of certain hand gestures which may feel more intrusive from a lower eye level. Security agents need more awareness into supporting people with hearing impairments.

- Fully dedicated security processing lane to be considered.
- CAA requirement that disability groups influence and help with the design of the airport.
- CAA: Comment heading towards our own security lane.
- Discussion that Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRM) is not appropriate and fully inclusive for everyone needing assistance.
- Disability advocates should be involved within tender process.
- Invite different stakeholders to forum each time e.g airlines, security, Border Force, handling agents.

Next meeting date and time: TBC