Accessible Air Travel: Airport services to disabled and reduced mobility passengers

Appendix 1: CAA Questions

Service provision (Article 9.1)

1.) Who is your service provider?

G4S

2.) How long is the contract with your service provider

The contract with G4S was for a duration of three years from 1 April 2008. Gatwick Airport Limited (GAL) have invoked an early termination with effect from 31 October 2010.

3.) How did you engage the airport community and disability groups when you procured the service?

GAL formed a PRM Steering Group with representation from Airlines and Disability Groups.
The development and measurement of service standards (Article 9)

4.) How did you establish service standards at the airport?

Gatwick’s service standards incorporated in the contract with G4S were established through the PRM Steering Group referred to in Question 3. The original service standards have since been reviewed with Airlines, Handling Agents, CAA, Passenger Advisory Group (PAG), Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee (DPTAC) and Passenger Groups and will be introduced into the Gatwick operation with effect from 1 November 2010.

5.) Do you monitor performance against the service standards?

Yes, through both manual paper based systems and automated through Groundstar’s “Inform” system. The CAA is provided with monthly visibility of Gatwick’s performance.

6.) If you do monitor performance, are you satisfied that the measurement is accurate?

Data robustness continues to evolve through the development of the “Inform” system aligned to frontline operatives use of handheld devices in measuring performance. Data validation for Airlines is reconciled with Delay Reports to ensure accuracy. Measurement of Passenger Service is also complimented by periodic Quality Service Measurement (QSM).

Taking into account the needs of passengers with varying disabilities (Article 7.2, Article 7.7, Annex I)

7.) Are passengers able to use assistance dogs at the airport?

Yes

8.) If not, have you plans to take action to enable passengers to use assistance dogs at the airport?

n/a
9.) If a blind or visually impaired passenger arrives at the airport without a sighted companion, how does that passenger locate the designated points of arrival at the airport?

GAL would rely on Airport Staff in the vicinity or other passengers to direct Blind/visually impaired passengers to designated Help Points. GAL are also about to pilot a new form of Help point through “Milesys” which has extensive endorsement from disability groups.

10.) Do you provide audible announcements, for example for flight information, as well as display information visibly?

Yes, although there are opportunities still to improve coverage across the Gatwick campus.

11.) Do you take account of the needs of blind or visually impaired passengers in any other way?

Blind or visually impaired people will be escorted by our PRM service provider throughout the Passenger journey, where required.

12.) How do you take account of the needs of deaf or hard of hearing passengers?

Deaf or hard of hearing people can use Flight Information Screens (FIDS) and in highly populated areas, flashing beacons are incorporated into alarm systems. Inductive loops are available in some parts of Gatwick’s infrastructure. We are currently working with the RNID on Gatwick’s consideration for the “Louder than Words” Charter Mark.

13.) Do you have loop systems for the hard of hearing at the airport? If so, do they work properly?

As 12. Testing and activation of Hearing Loops continues to evolve and be the subject of regular monitoring.

14.) How do you ensure that deaf and hard of hearing passengers receive information that is normally transmitted orally (e.g. calling forward passengers for their flight at the gate)?

Where Passengers have made themselves known through our PRM provider.
15.) Do you have contingency arrangements if visual information systems (such as flight information displays) go wrong?

Our contingencies involve Public Announcement calls and staff presence to call passengers forward. Our PRM providers staff are trained in the full evacuation of PRMs from Terminal Buildings including the use of Evac Chairs.

16.) How do you deal with passengers with spinal cord injuries?

Our experience is that passengers with spinal cord injuries are normally transported via a stretcher. Where appropriate our PRM provider works in tandem with ambulance services to manage individual passenger requirements throughout the Airport journey. GAL have also provided private areas for Passengers to lay down through the Airport process.

17.) How do you take into account the needs of passengers with other disabilities?

Our PRM provider is responsible for service provision for all the ECAC designated PRM categories.

**Designated points of arrival at and departure from the airport (Article 5)**

18.) Please can you inform me of the location of the designated points of arrival at and departure from the airport?

On arrival at the Airport, GAL have a distribution of circa 50 Help points in Multi Storey Car Parks, Entrance Buildings and Terminal access points. Our PRM provider will transport Passengers to onward travel points.

19.) Who did you consult when deciding where to locate these designated points?

The location of Help points is currently under review. Any changes will be consulted through our network of disability groups and PAG.

20.) Do you regularly check that the equipment at the designated points is working?

Yes
Provision of information to passengers

21.) Do you provide information on airport layout, walking distances, and the need to use stairs on your website?

GAL’s web site makes reference to long distances although currently actual walking distances are undefined. Maps are also included on the Website with some visibility of stairs. GAL are reviewing the user friendliness of maps.

22.) Do you provide the same information at the airport?

Signage does show the location of some ramps and escalators. Distances are not included although this is under review as part of our Wayfinding review.

23.) If you do provide the information at the airport, where is it provided?

Multiple locations including Entrance Buildings, Forecourts and sporadically across the Terminal.

Training and airport staff awareness of the Regulation (Article 11)

24.) What training on disability issues and the provision of service to PRMs do you provide to staff working at the airport?

GAL engaged Ann Bates (DPTAC) in the development and delivery of our Customer Service & Disability Awareness Training.

25.) Is any additional disability training provided to security staff?

Yes as part of deployment of frontline staff training, particularly through Security where the individual needs of PRMs need to be acknowledged.
26.) Do you ensure that staff employed by your sub-contractors at the airport for example cleaning staff receive training on disability issues?

This is specifically incorporated in some of our third party contracts although GAL acknowledge that there are opportunities to develop this further.

**PRM’s baggage (Annex I)**

27.) What arrangements do you have for handling PRMs’ baggage?

Our PRM provider is responsible for PRM baggage.

**Leaving PRMs unattended**

28.) If you leave PRMs on their own, what arrangements do you have for informing them of how long they will be left unattended and how they can summon assistance if necessary in the meantime?

Our new service standards incorporate specific provision that each PRM will be engaged individually at least at 15 minute intervals to include assurance on Flight information/onward travel and access to WC/drinking water facilities.

**Complaints process (Article 15)**

29.) Do you record the number and subject matter of complaints received about PRM services?

Yes. Monthly performance data is shared directly with the CAA.

30.) How do you ensure that passenger complaints are dealt with properly and in a timely manner?

GAL oversee both the quality and timeliness of responses to Passenger complaints.
Pre-notification (Article 6)

31.) How do you receive pre-notification requests from airlines (e.g. SITA (by PAL/CAL), fax, e-mail, telephone calls.)

Airline Pre – Notifications are received through SITA, emails, faxes and telephone calls as well as through Handling Agent flight information screens.

32.) Have you a preferred means for obtaining pre-notification requests?

Preference is through SITA or email in the designated PAL/CAL format. This is regularly reinforced to Airlines through Gatwick Advice Notices and at Airline fora

33.) How do you pass on pre-notification requests to your PRM service providers?

Direct notification to GAL (as opposed to our PRM provider) is very limited.

34.) Are there any differences in how you receive pre-notifications for departing and arriving passengers?

All means of Pre-notification are available to both departing and arriving Passengers

35.) Please can you provide percentage figures for the number of PRM’s whose needs have been pre-notified for each of the last 12 months to the end of June 2010. (If you do not have this information, if possible, please can you estimate the percentage.)

Please refer to Performance Reports cascaded to the CAA on a monthly basis which provide a comprehensive overview on Pre - Notification

36.) Are there any airlines (or tour operators) for which pre-notification levels are particularly low?

As 35.
37.) Are there any particular type of passengers, or airlines for which pre-notification levels are low?
None identified

38.) Do you work with airlines (or tour operators) to increase the level of pre-notifications?
Yes through ABTA and CAA working groups. Airline performance on Pre – notification is communicated regularly in order to drive improvement

39.) How could pre-notification levels be increased for your airport?
GAL are consulting with Airlines to financial incentivise Pre- Notification through the PRM Pricing mechanism. GAL are also embarking on a PRM re branding at Gatwick which promotes pre – notification through PRM desks, vehicle branding, business card promotion. This compliments the current availability of EHRC “Right To Fly” Brochures across the Airport which promote Pre - Notification

40.) Do you experience any problems with airlines or tour operators using incorrect IATA codes? Could you please provide details of the key problems and if you consider provision of further information would be helpful.
The consistent application of PRM codes remains a challenge for the industry. Incorrect information continues to encourage the inappropriate allocation of resource and equipment to meet individual passengers needs eg WCHR versus WCHC