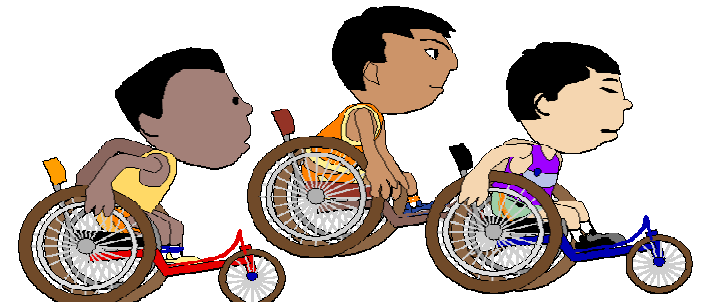


Meeting the Needs of Older and Disabled Air Travellers: Best Practice in Ground Handling and Staff Training

Ann Frye



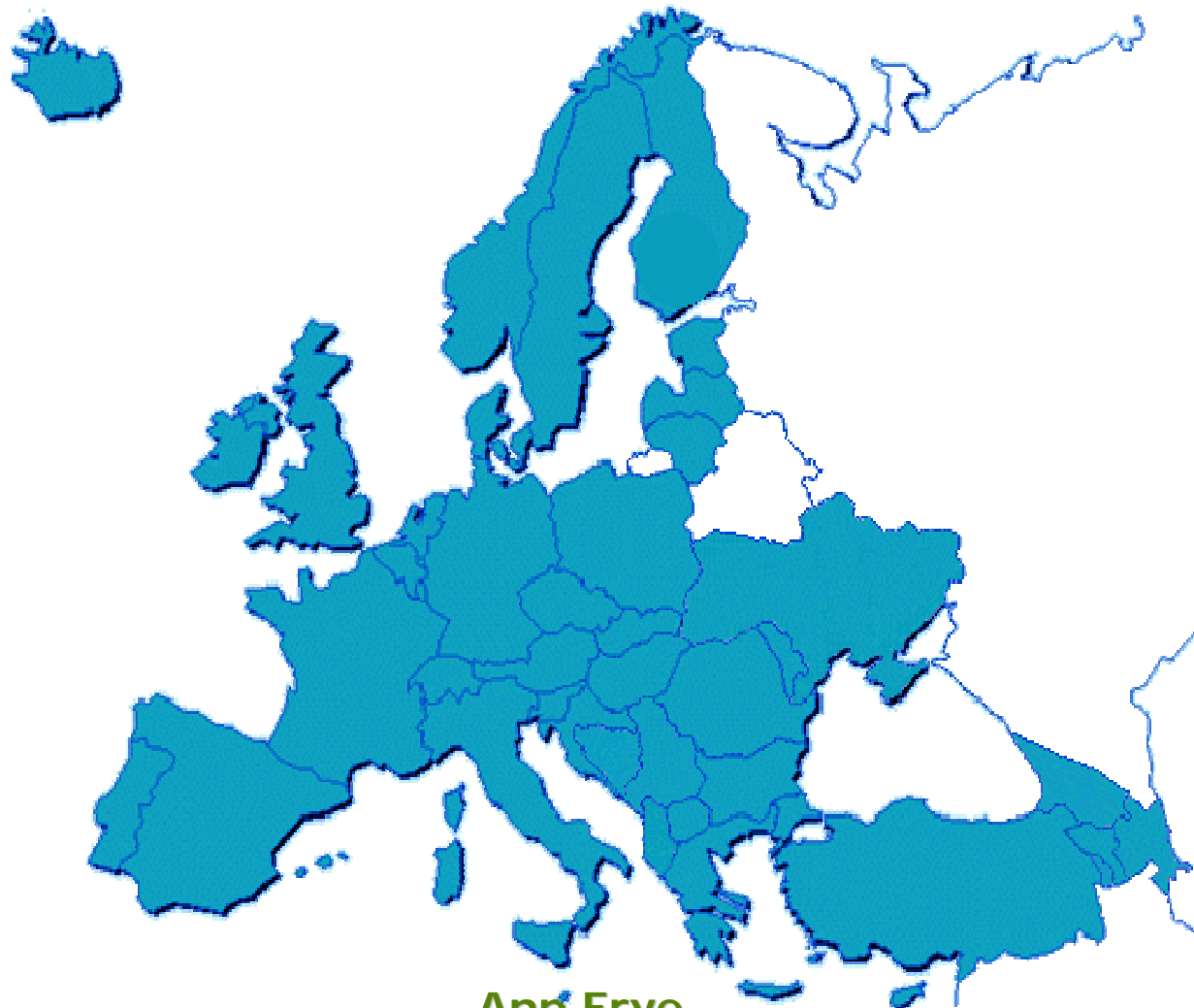
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European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC)

Founded in 1955 as an intergovernmental organisation, ECAC's objective is:

- to promote the continued development of a safe, efficient and sustainable European air transport system. In so doing, ECAC seeks to:
 - harmonise civil aviation policies and practices amongst its Member States;
 - promote understanding on policy matters between its Member States and other parts of the world;
- ECAC does not have powers to legislate but its guidance is widely observed and recognised;
- It has 42 member states.

ECAC Member States



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Who are we talking about?

“ “Disabled person” or “person with reduced mobility” means any person whose mobility when using transport is reduced due to any physical disability (sensory or locomotor, permanent or temporary), intellectual disability or impairment, or any other cause of disability, or age, and whose situation needs appropriate attention and the adaptation to his or her particular needs of the service made available to all passengers.”

Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006

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People with Reduced Mobility

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Ageing and Disability

- There is a close correlation between age and disability;
- Two thirds of disabled people are over retirement age;
- Almost half the population aged 75 plus has some kind of disability.



Changing travel horizons

International research has indicated that:

- Older people in the future will have better health, higher levels of education, better housing and higher incomes than older people now;
- They will expect higher levels of service than at present;
- This will open up new market opportunities.



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Key issues for disabled and older air travellers

- Lack of confidence;
- Inadequate information;
- Poor communications;
- Physical barriers;
- Attitudinal barriers;
- Lack of co-ordination between service providers.

What goes wrong?



- Barriers (physical and organisational) to access from car parks/public transport links to airport;
- Breakdown in communication about needs;
- Inappropriate/insensitive handling (inadequate training);
- Neglect (being left for long periods without information);
- Loss of or damage to mobility equipment.

Regulation (EC) No 1107/2006 of The European Parliament and of the Council

- “Concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air;”
- Made 5th July 2006;
- Requirements on refusal of carriage come into effect 26th July 2007;
- Other requirements come into effect July 2008.



European Union Regulation

Fundamental Principles

"In order to give disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility opportunities for air travel comparable to those of other citizens, assistance to meet their particular needs should be provided at the airport as well as on board aircraft, by employing the necessary staff and equipment. In the interests of social inclusion, the persons concerned should receive this assistance without additional charge."

European Union Regulation

Fundamental Principles

- Managing bodies of airports must be responsible for ensuring that high quality assistance is provided;
- Assistance must be provided by a central body;
- Airports can provide the assistance themselves or can contract to a third party, including an airline (provided this does not infringe public procurement rules);
- Airports with fewer than 150,000 commercial passenger movements are exempt from these requirements.

Regulation – Main Requirements

- Transport should not be refused to disabled people (except on justified safety grounds prescribed by law or where the size of the aircraft or its doors make embarkation impossible);
- Assistance should be given without additional charge;
- Assistance should be available from a designated point of arrival/departure and to/from and on/off the aircraft;
- 48 hours notice can be required;
- Staff must be given appropriate training.

Regulation – Main Requirements

- Cost of providing assistance at the airport may be spread across all passengers using airport;
- Charge can be also levied on airlines according to total number of passengers carried;
- Assistance must also be provided by the airline on board aircraft;
- Airports and airlines should follow ECAC Code of Good Conduct when organising service and training staff.



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Codes of Practice

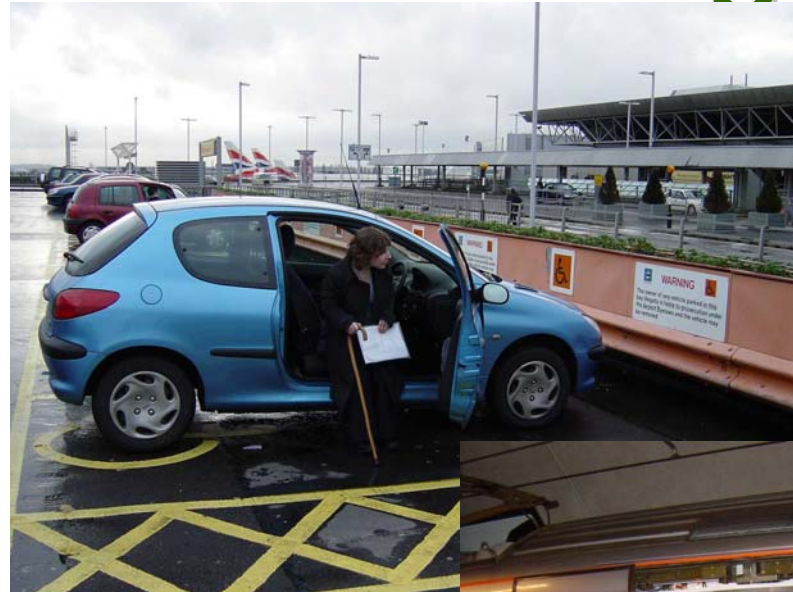
- ECAC has produced Codes of Practice to help ensure that the Regulation is implemented consistently and to an acceptable standard;
- These Codes cover:
 - Ground Handling
 - Staff Training

Ground Handling

- The service provided must be:
 - seamless;
 - mutually agreed by all stakeholders;
 - regularly monitored;
 - reviewed annually;
 - subject to service level agreements.

Service Standards and Performance Monitoring

- Assistance should be available from the designated arrival area at the airport to the point at which the PRM is seated on board the aircraft and vice versa;
- Appropriate equipment to assist the prm should be available and provided when necessary.



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Service Standards and Performance Monitoring

- Minimum service levels should be set for:
 - Waiting times for:
 - Pre-booked arriving and departing customers;
 - Non pre-booked arriving and departing customers;
 - Customer satisfaction:
 - With the service provided;
 - Timely pre-boarding and departure.

Service Standards and Performance Monitoring

Organisations representing different groups of people with disabilities and older people should be consulted in the development of training programmes, policies and procedures.



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Staff Training

- Guidelines cover disability awareness and disability equality training for all airport and airline staff dealing with the travelling public;
- Staff who have an understanding of disability and its diversity, and the types of barriers people with disabilities experience in society, will be better able to provide a high quality service that respects the safety, independence and dignity of each passenger.

Key principles

- Focus on the person not the disability;
- Recognise the diversity of disability;
- Do not make assumptions – ask!
- Do not patronise: you are providing a professional service to which the passenger is entitled.

Opportunities and Challenges

- For policy makers:
 - Older and disabled people are a large and growing part of the population;
 - Meeting their needs is both a social and an economic imperative;
 - This is not just about procedures and processes – it is about changing attitudes and cultures.

Opportunities and Challenges

- For Airports and airlines:
 - Recognise and welcome older and disabled passengers as a growing market sector;
 - Remember that older and disabled people now have the force of law behind them;
 - Use the codes of practice and integrate them into your own training programmes;
 - Use them as part of tender requirements for ground handling contracts;
 - Involve older and disabled people in your planning.

Opportunities and Challenges

- For air travellers:
 - Know your rights;
 - Offer to work with airports/airlines on training etc;
 - Demand good service;
 - Complain when you don't receive it.



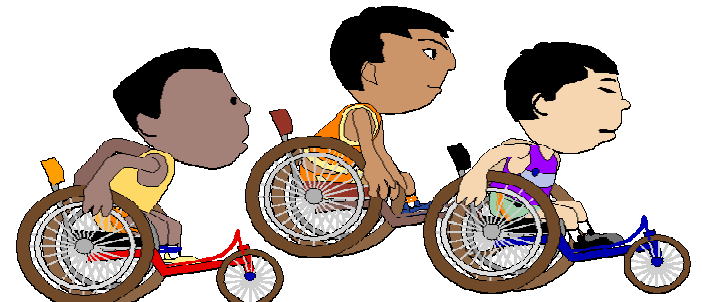
Further information



- <http://www.ecac-ceac.org/>
- **ECAC.CEAC Doc No. 30, Part I
(revised)**
 - Annexes J,K and N

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