



AIRPORT ACCESSIBILITY COMPLIANCE REPORT 2023

SHANNON AIRPORT







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1. Executive Summary

The IAA is the single civil aviation regulator for Ireland. We are responsible for the regulation of safety, security and consumer interests. The Irish Aviation Authority (IAA) is the National Enforcement Body in Ireland for *Regulation (EC) No. 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air* (hereafter referred to as ‘the Regulation’). The IAA investigates complaints and conducts inspections of airports situated in Ireland in order to ensure compliance with the Regulation. The purpose of the Regulation is to enable persons with reduced mobility (PRM) and persons with disabilities to have equal opportunities for air travel comparable to those of persons without reduced mobility or a disability. In line with the IAA’s responsibilities as the National Enforcement Body for the Regulation, the IAA conducted an inspection of Shannon Airport to ensure compliance with the obligations set out therein. The information gathered pre-inspection pertains to statistics on Persons with Reduced Mobility (PRMs),¹ as well as training information and the type and quantity of mobility equipment.

Figure 1 indicates the total PRM numbers and the total passenger numbers from 2023. As the data shows, there were a total of 22,045 PRM passengers in 2023 in Shannon Airport which is 1.16% of the total passengers. Shannon Airport has implemented all aspects of the Regulation and is currently working on a signage upgrade as recommended by the IAA.

| Airport | Total Passenger | Total PRM | PRM % of Total Pax |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------|--------------------|
| Dublin | 33,262,941 | 391,719 | 1.18% |
| Cork | 2,798,024 | 26,619 | 0.95% |
| Shannon | 1,897,599 | 22,045 | 1.16% |
| Ireland West | 813,266 | 12,602 | 1.55% |
| Kerry | 414,571 | 3,322 | 0.80% |
| Donegal | 19,230 | 382 | 1.99% |

Figure 1: 2023 All Passenger and PRM numbers from all Irish Airports²

¹ This report will use the acronym ‘PRM’ to refer to both persons with reduced mobility and persons with disabilities in line with industry practises.

² Passenger numbers refer to commercial passengers only. The passenger numbers are all available from the Central Statistic Office. Donegal Airport passenger number is from the airport, not the CSO. Further information can be downloaded from the CSO here:

https://ws.cso.ie/public/api.restful/PxStat.Data.Cube_API.ReadDataset/TAM08/XLSX/2007/en. The PRM numbers are provided by the airports.



2. Overview

2.1. Definition of Person with Reduced Mobility and Disabled Person

The definition of ‘disabled person’ or ‘person with reduced mobility’ is taken directly from (EC) 1107/2006 Article 2(a):

“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.”³

It is important to note that there is no distinction between short-term/long-term or, as used in the above definition, “permanent/temporary” for the purposes of having reduced mobility or a disability. There has also been an international movement to recognise those with hidden disabilities and how these passengers can experience barriers to air travel. Persons with disabilities (hidden or otherwise) or with reduced mobility can request the assistance set out in the Regulation without having to disclose their disability or reason for reduced mobility.

2.2. Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive overview of the accessibility of Shannon Airport within the scope of IAA’s enforcement remit of Regulation (EC) 1107/2006. The report addresses Shannon Airport’s compliance with the obligations prespecified in the Regulation and determines, from the physical inspection, complaints submitted to the IAA and the pre-inspection questionnaire whether the airport has met its obligations. The report’s sections will briefly summarise the relevant Article and the airport’s compliance, as well as the IAA’s commentary from the inspection. The IAA has issued findings with timeframes for the implementation of any necessary changes to comply with the Regulation. The report will also highlight positive innovations undertaken by the airport and upgrades since the previous inspection. Finally, the report will provide a conclusion summarising the obligations, the compliance of the airport under the Regulation, and a Conclusion.

2.3. Airport Inspection

The airport inspection follows the format provided for in Annex I of (EC) 1107/2006. Annex I outlines the “assistance under the responsibility of the managing bodies of airports.”, the inspection starts at the outside boundary where it is expected a passenger would enter the airport, i.e. from the car park or from the ‘drop off zone’ at the front doors. The inspection should encompass the PRM experience, up to the point of embarking on the aircraft.

³ Regulation (EC) 1107/2006 Article 2.



2.4. Inspection Methodology

2.4.1. Notice of Inspection

The IAA will issue a Notice of Inspection to the airport which will include a proposal for times and dates for the inspection. The Notice of Inspection also briefly outlines the role of the IAA as the National Enforcement Body charged with ensuring compliance with Regulation (EC) 1107/2006.

2.4.2. Preliminary Questionnaire

The Notice of Inspection also includes a preliminary questionnaire in advance of the inspection. The airports have 20 business days to submit a response to the questionnaire.

2.4.3. Post Inspection & Report Publication

After the physical inspection has been conducted, the IAA creates a report outlining the IAA's findings and airport's compliance with the Regulation. The IAA liaises with the airport regarding the deadlines for implementation of the recommendations made. These timeframes are outlined in the published report.

3. Inspection Findings (2023)

On the 1 June 2023, the Irish Aviation Authority conducted an inspection of Shannon Airport to assess the airport's compliance with Regulation (EC) 1107/2006 inspection. On arrival at the airport, we noted the signage directing passengers to the disabled parking was clear and easily located. The designated point of arrival was clearly identifiable and the call point was answered within 5 rings upon testing. Shannon Airport has in place a covered walkway which houses the 'designated point of arrival' call button.

On entry to the terminal, the IAA encountered the same issue that we found in the 2019 inspection, in that there is no signage to the PRM assistance check-in desk. The terminal is spacious but compact which means the desk can be found if a passenger takes a moment to look around. However, a simple pathway finding installation from the entrance to the desk would be a useful addition.

The PRM desk, as discussed on the day, is the same design and colouring as the rest of the terminal which makes it blend in. Also, in terms of uniformity, the standard colour which is used in disability signage – blue on a white background – is not used on the desk. Passengers using PRM services are accustomed to this particular design, which is universal. While we appreciate that the overall design of the airport is a matter for the management body, it would be our preference that in terms of the PRM desk, a universal standard is used.

3.1. Facilities

Both in the terminal and airside, the inspection team found that the toilets were fully accessible. Also, the eating areas are spacious and bright.



We also note the improvements in the security screening process to benefit those travelling with additional needs.

3.2. Training & Equipment

We note that training is continuing to be given on an annual basis through Bidvest Noonan. As mentioned during the inspection, the IAA - through its contacts in the Department of Transport Accessibility Committee, will on occasion be made aware of different initiatives and also update legislation concerning passengers with additional needs. We will continue to endeavour to pass that knowledge on to Shannon Airport with a view to the information being incorporated into the training programme if necessary.

Additionally, all the mobility equipment was found to be in good working order.

The airport confirmed that, in conjunction with the service provider, it would organise temporary replacement equipment should the need arise. Compensation for damaged/lost mobility equipment would be paid through the airline if applicable.⁴

4. Recommendation(s)

4.1. Signage

It is recommended that Shannon Airport updates the signage showing the location of the PRM assistance check-in desk.

As of 2024, the IAA confirms that the above recommendation has been implemented by the airport. Indeed, Shannon Airport has included hidden disability symbols on the sign also.

5. Conclusion

As in previous years the inspection team were encouraged by the positivity and dedication shown by the staff in Shannon Airport. There remains an appetite to improve the travel experience for all with local engagement clearly a definite policy of the airport. The IAA can confirm that Shannon Airport has satisfied its obligations under Regulation (EC) 1107/2006.

⁴ In the context of the Regulation, compensation means a refund for repairs of damaged mobility equipment or payment towards new mobility equipment due to the original being lost. This is done in accordance with international, European Community and national law.

