

Irish Aviation Authority Passenger Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes- 21/01/2026 9:15am

PAG Members Present

Mary Tallant (National Disability Authority), Stephen Browne (Chambers Ireland), Barry O'Donnell (Voice for Vision Impairment), Tara Matthews (Irish Society for Autism), Jamie Millar (Vision Ireland), Helen Rochford-Brennan (Alzheimer Europe), Patrick Gaule (IDA), Dermott Jewell (Consumer Association Ireland), Ally Smith (Failte Ireland), Aidan Sweeny (IBEC).

Contributors Present

Clare Mulcahy (IAA), Grainne Behan (IAA), Sebastian Anecoloaei (IAA), Adrian Corcoran (IAA), Luke Manning (IAA), Brian O'Mahony (IAA), Lewis Dowie (IAA), Anna Griffin (IAA).

Simon McGreevy (Dublin Airport), Simon Fagan (Dublin Airport) Sean Murphy (Dublin Airport), Deirdre Roache (Dublin Airport), Roidin Crowley (Dublin Airport), Constantine Iordanov (Dublin Airport), Nicole Casey (Dublin Airport), Emma Byrne (Dublin Airport).

Apologies

Keenan Stack (IBEC), Shay Power (IDA), James Kiernan (Chambers Ireland), Shane Hughes (Chambers Ireland), Tommy Hanahan (Failte Ireland), Ciaran McLoone (Failte Ireland), Kevin Kelly (Vision Ireland)

IAA Introduction Presentation

- 1.1 The IAA provided a short introductory presentation, noting that the purpose of today's meeting was for Dublin Airport to outline its proposals in respect of Quality of Service, and Capital Investment, for the upcoming regulatory period.

DUBLIN AIRPORT 1st Presentation- Dublin Airport Quality Metrics

- 1.2 *Managing change:* IBEC asked how Dublin Airport adjusts to new rules or processes, for example, change in baggage allowances, or the treatment of Liquids and Gels (LAGs) in security.

Dublin Airport noted that it is always assessing and planning for such changes. In this case, the new security equipment was implemented in T2 first, and the resultant data was then used to model and inform the approach to T1. This further benefitted from the experience of different airports who were at different stages of introducing the new equipment and who may have had different processes to learn from.

- 1.3 *Bus Shelter:* Voice for Vision Impairment asked whether Dublin Airport has any plans to build a bus shelter, since many passengers arrive by public transport, and this is an aspect of airport infrastructure that affects all such passengers, particularly those with disabilities. It highlighted that in its current form, the bus interchange can be an unpleasant experience for passengers, particularly those waiting. While passengers can wait inside the terminal, it is difficult for PRM passengers to move between the terminal and the bus stop in a timely manner.

Dublin Airport agreed that the current bussing operation and set-up is suboptimal, having outgrown its footprint. It stated that an integrated transport hub is a large project proposed in its current development plan, stating the need to make substantial investment in public transport in the form of a brand-new bus station, which will also connect to the planned metro station. Dublin Airport has also submitted a planning application to Fingal County Council, who is actively encouraging the use of increased public transport.

- 1.4 Voice for Vision Impairment asked if the integrated transport hub will have to wait until the metro is also delivered.

In response, Dublin Airport stated that this is not necessarily the case. This project will safeguard for the future metro, however metro enabling works could be carried out as early as this year.

- 1.5 *Tactile Paving*: Voice for Vision Impairment asked if Dublin Airport will introduce tactile paving. It referenced other airports who have implemented such upgrades, as well as Belfast Central train station. It stated that this will benefit visually impaired passengers, who currently struggle to navigate the terminals without assistance and has an added benefit from a fire and safety perspective.

Pointing out some examples of bad experiences with using the airport as a PRM, Voice for Vision Impairment also suggested that Dublin Airport ask questions immediately after the experience for immediate customer feedback. It suggests the 'mystery shopper' concept may be useful to inspect the standard of assistance provided and to evaluate performance of staff.

Dublin Airport responded by stating that it held a user accessibility forum in December which allows for comprehensive engagement with passengers and the opportunity for Dublin Airport to see where it can improve in this regard. The concerns brought forward by Voice for Vision Impairment will be taken away, with the intention to act immediately. Dublin Airport is keen to provide updates in due course.

- 1.6 *Airbridges and Ambi lifts*: While appreciative of airbridges, Voice for Vision Impairment is concerned about the variance in the gap between the aircraft and ambi lift/airbridge, something that can vary with each operator. This can result in injury if there is a significant drop and asks whether it is possible to measure this variance.

Dublin Airport stated that this is more of a third-party issue, and it will need to engage with airlines and service providers on this matter. In addition, and with reference to the proposed new pier developments, Dublin Airport is heavily focused on designing out level changes with the hope that PRM passengers travelling through Terminal 1 will be able to get from the check in desk to the plane without a level change. It also emphasised its proposal to install airbridges on the new piers.

- 1.7 *Security Scanners*: Voice for Vision Impairment stated that the new security (body) scanners at Dublin Airport have a raised platform. This means that PRM passengers are taken to the fast-track security area instead. It asked for Dublin Airport to be mindful of sudden slopes on platforms, suggesting the addition of handrails, and pilot testing for any such equipment.

Dublin Airport stated that it will revert on this, and that the health and safety and compliance teams are constantly assessing and refining assets to ensure safety for passengers.

Subjective Metrics

- 1.8 *Definition of PRM:* Alzheimer Europe asked for a definition of the term passengers with reduced mobility, and whether it includes those with cognitive disabilities.

Dublin Airport defines the term as the need for assistance. It does not add additional context to the term, noting that it is for passengers themselves to decide if they require assistance, rather than Dublin Airport deciding generally what categories of passenger require assistance.

- 1.9 *Feedback Surveys:* Voice for Vision Impairment stated that it has never encountered staff from Red C carrying out surveys on behalf of Dublin Airport, at the airport.

Dublin Airport responded that the interviews are carried out by Red C staff, and passengers are selected randomly, including PRM passengers. It pointed out that with the number of passengers travelling through Dublin Airport each year, the chances of any individual passenger being selected for a survey is small.

- 1.10 *Wayfinding:* Voice for Vision Impairment raised the issue of wayfinding, stating that the signage is not sufficient, particularly for visually impaired passengers trying to locate the PRM Assistance desk. It also questioned whether there are screens displaying bus numbers and their destinations/locations at the entrances of the airport, referencing the use of both dynamic and static signage. It also asked about inconsistencies in display of cancelled or delayed buses and about the possibility of a big panel for bus departures, similar to that of Berlin where information is collated with both static and live signage. It believes this is inexpensive and would serve PRM passengers better rather than having many signs with multiple arrows, preventing confusion and difficulty.

Dublin Airport noted that multiple signs are installed throughout the passenger journey in both dynamic and static form. In terms of the display of cancelled, delayed and arrival of buses, Dublin Airport noted that there are live updates in place, but the onus is on the service provider to provide these updates.

- 1.11 *Help points and portable ramp booking:* Voice for Vision Impairment further stated that on occasion, despite booking a portable ramp, PRM support services are not always aware that it has been booked. It asks what the passenger is expected to do in this situation. Voice for Vision Impairment acknowledged the proactiveness of staff to help, as well as the number of help points in T2. However, it notes that not all doors have help points installed.

- 1.12 *Bathroom Unavailability in T2:* Alzheimers Europe asked why T2 accessible bathrooms have been locked on multiple occasions. It stated that Alzheimers is often overlooked in terms of people's perception of the term reduced mobility and that Alzheimers is not recognised as a disability in Ireland. It notes negative experiences at the airport on occasion, and calls for Dublin Airport to provide additional training and education to prevent this from happening in the future.

Dublin Airport will investigate the reason for closure of the referenced T2 bathrooms and why this issue is arising. In terms of passenger experience, Dublin Airport apologises, with the intention to bring this issue back to the business and act on raised issues. Dublin Airport notes that it has carried out a pilot programme to train staff on hidden disabilities. Last year, this programme was carried out in security, with Dublin Airport planning to implement this across the workforce.

- 1.13 *Penalties for airlines:* The National Disability Association (NDA) asked whether there are

penalties for bad service provided by airlines.

The IAA responded that the focus of this process, being discussed at the PAG, is specifically on Dublin Airport.

The IAA also clarified that under EU Regulation (EC) 1107/2006, compensation is only available in cases where a passenger's mobility equipment is lost or damaged while in the care of the airline or handling agent at the airport. No monetary compensation is provided for in the Regulation for service-related dissatisfaction or negative experiences outside the loss or damage to mobility equipment. The IAA takes steps by investigating complaints, engaging directly with both airlines and airports. The IAA also conducts audit inspections. The outcome of the complaint investigation and audits will result in additional training where needed to improve service delivery. The IAA further noted that revisions to PRM-related legislation are currently being discussed at EU level, specifically in relation to potential revisions to compensation.

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- 1.14 The National Disability Association (NDA) asked if Dublin Airport receives negative feedback even if, in its view, negative experiences can be attributed more to airlines than the airport operator itself. It also asked whether this would feed negatively into the overall passenger satisfaction score of Dublin Airport.

Dublin Airport confirmed it does receive complaints that are out of its remit/control, but is still expected to solve the issues, which can be difficult.

- 1.15 The NDA asked who oversees airlines in terms of service quality and if there is a metric to measure this.

Dublin Airport stated there is potential for a shared metric with how ground handlers (GH) perform and the impact this may have on Dublin Airport. However, this is a complex issue.

The IAA noted its oversight role in this regard, with reference to EU Regulation (EC) 1107/2006, ECAC Doc 30, PRM complaints from the general public and the European Accessibility Act (EAA) implemented into Irish law through the European Union (Accessibility Requirements of Products and Services) Regulations 2023.

- 1.16 *Ability to phone Airlines:* Voice for Vision Impairment emphasised the importance of a telephone number being available to PRM passengers to use for feedback (which may be positive or negative), whereas in some cases airlines have also removed their email address to request assistance and is now requested through a web form. It also mentions that it takes up to 2 hours to file a complaint on some websites.

The IAA acknowledged these points and notes if the issues raised relate to barriers in accessing customer services due to accessibility limitations, then this would fall under the

scope of the European Accessibility Act (EAA) and will be investigated by the IAA as the compliance authority.

- 1.17 *Paper Boarding Passes:* Autism Ireland and Alzheimer Europe both stated that the option of paper documents, primarily boarding passes, need to be available, as not all people can use a smartphone.

Dublin Airport strives to make it easy for all but is limited in what it can do in this regard. It will take the feedback from this meeting and use it to lobby for improvements. It will seriously look into this issue as it feels that all passengers should be able to independently check in.

The IAA stated that all air passenger transport services must be accessible in accordance with their obligations under the European Accessibility Act. Therefore, airline's services must meet the accessibility requirements in the EAA. The EAA places obligations on airlines to ensure their services are accessible to all users, including people with disabilities.

Dublin Airport 3rd Presentation- Deep Dive on Selection of Objective Metrics

- 1.18 *Security Scanners:* Voice for Vision Impairment reiterated that security (body) scanners may have a ramp leading up to it, which means PRM passengers may need canes for stabilisation, however this cannot be taken through the scanning machine. *Security Scanners:* Voice for Vision Impairment reiterated that security (body) scanners may have a ramp leading up to it, which means PRM passengers may need canes for stabilisation, however this cannot be taken through the scanning machine. Therefore, PRM passengers are taken for a manual search, where standing is needed for a long period of time.

Dublin Airport stated that items such as the cane do not go through the CT scanners because the heavy curtains could damage it, and cannot go through the body scanner because those are very sensitive to anything other than human tissue. So it must be hand searched. Dublin Airport stated that they will consider other possible options for passengers with reduced mobility and try to find a solution.

- 1.19 *QoS Bonus:* Voice for Vision Impairment asked where the bonus for surpassing QoS metrics comes from, is it the IAA that pays this to Dublin Airport.

Dublin Airport explained that this bonus is received through an adjustment to the price cap.

- 1.20 *QoS Bonus:* Voice for Vision Impairment asked whether it is ultimately passengers and airlines that pay this, and if airlines charge a different fee to passengers if Dublin Airport exceed bonus thresholds.

Dublin Airport explained that this is broadly correct, there is a base price cap set which has a range of adjustments for various elements such as QoS metrics and capex triggers, which depend on how projects and investments are carried out, along with an inflation adjustment, leading to the final price cap.

- 1.21 *Electric powered Ambi-lifts:* Voice for Vision Impairment asked if Dublin Airport is planning to implement electric ambi-lifts, warning that there is a risk of failure of such equipment during cold weather, which can affect battery life. While acknowledging the general requirements to transition to sustainable vehicles, it asserted that four times more electric ambi-lifts are needed to equate the battery life of a single diesel powered ambi-lift. As such, diesel powered ambi-lifts may be better for reliability and continuity or to have a balance of both.

Dublin Airport states that there has been significant investment in PRM equipment but is unsure of how many electric ambi-lifts are currently in operation. Dublin Airport states that there has been significant investment in PRM equipment but is unsure of how many electric ambi-lifts are currently in operation. It will follow up on this, while making sure that there are adequate provisions in place for weather related situations.

- 1.22 *PRM service Satisfaction Stats:* The Irish Society for Autism question whether Dublin Airport captures statistics on satisfaction with the PRM service.

Dublin Airport responded that it has a standalone satisfaction survey, and also includes questions on this in their passenger panel event.

- 1.23 *PRM service Usage Stats:* The Irish Society for Autism asked whether the number of passengers who use the PRM service are recorded and in terms of how often, age and profile.

Dublin Airport stated that this was something brought up at its passenger panel. To its knowledge, approximately 2% of passenger travelling use the PRM service, with significant increased demand post pandemic. Dublin Airport has to be mindful of those who want their disability to remain private.

- 1.24 *Sensory Room Usage Stats:* The Irish Society for Autism questioned whether Dublin Airport monitors how often sensory rooms are used.

Dublin Airport responded that it does not track this, acknowledging that some users may not want to declare this, and that this allows people to use the room privately.

- 1.25 *Use of Sensory Areas:* Voice for Vision Impairment said that Dublin Airport needs to be careful regarding who is using the sensory areas and that they are not used for inappropriate purposes.

Dublin Airport ensures that this area is located airside and encourage prebooking. This service is not available for the general public to take advantage of.

- 1.26 *Boarding Feedback:* Dublin Airport is asked whether it receives negative feedback regarding boarding procedures of airlines. Alzheimer Europe considers the long standing times (of roughly 20 minutes) before boarding a flight to be inaccessible.

Dublin Airport states that it does, that a lot of aspects of the customers journey are up to the airline to manage, however it is something that could potentially feed into feedback surveys.

- 1.27 *Airline Responsibilities:* Dublin Airport is asked who decides what the responsibility of the airline is, for example, check in and boarding.

Dublin Airport states that it is open to engagement on this, that some metrics it can heavily control and some it cannot. It has considered introducing a joint metric between airlines and the airport, to see how such things impact passenger experience, however this would be hard to implement.

The IAA stated that it has an oversight role in respect of assistance provided by airlines and airports, that it carries out inspections pursuant the EU regulations and ECAC guidance documents. The IAA also investigates PRM complaints and receives feedback from the general public regarding passenger experience.

- 1.28 *Tactile Paving & Dog Welfare Projects:* Voice for Vision Impairment expressed support for the tactile paving and dog welfare relief projects. It suggests that it would be preferable to have an area for dogs that is outside on real grass, however it understands this may be difficult. It also suggests the implementation of handrail signage which could serve as an additional aid for wayfinding which is difficult at times for those with visual impairment. It also questions whether there are any plans for ramps, in terms of resilience and power failure with lifts and further mention the possible issues with the gap between the bus and ground in relation to the possible future introduction of autonomous busses.

With regards to an airside grass area for dog welfare relief, Dublin Airport stated that it will investigate this but that the plan is currently to implement fake grass in the proposed designated area, as open-air facilities airside can be difficult. With regards to ramps, Dublin Airport state that aid ramps are preferable if space allows, but that because of the required low gradient and the rest areas required, ramps they may not be feasible. Dublin Airport further stated that tactile signage is built into its project plans.

- 1.29 *Cargo Handling:* IDA Ireland asserted that there are ongoing and re-occurring issues with the handling of cargo. This is causing a reputational issue for Ireland with clients, particularly large pharmaceutical companies, looking at other locations and possibly moving cargo by road to avoid Dublin Airport.

Dublin Airport noted that there are two separate forms of cargo operations, bellyhold (where cargo is shipped in the hold of passenger flights), and secondly freighter operations which work more independently, often loading the cargo to their own vehicles and driving offsite. Dublin Airport understands the question to relate to bellyhold cargo. Dublin Airport stated that a new working group has been set up to facilitate capital investment in cargo operations.

- 1.30 *Monitoring of Public Bodies in Accessibility:* The NDA stated that it is within its remit to monitor public bodies in relation to accessibility in services and buildings, and that it provides resources and guidelines to ensure accessibility which may be useful for Dublin Airport.

Dublin Airport noted this, and states that it has listed the rationale related to the need for each project in the draft CIP, which in many cases includes compliance with such standards.

- 1.31 *General Comment:* The representative of Alzheimer Europe states that she was unable to fly 14 years ago, however significant improvements have since been made. Significant progress has been made, and hopefully this will continue.

Next Meeting

- 1.32 The next meeting will be held in late April to consult on certain aspects of the IAA's Draft 2026 Determination on Airport Charges.