

Aviation Access Working Group

SUMMARY RECORD: MEETING 8

Date:	Thursday 20 May 2010
Venue:	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (DITRDLG)
Time:	10:00am – 2:30pm
Attendees:	Office of the Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services Australian Human Rights Commission Australian Federation of Disability Organisations National Disability Services Physical Disability Australia Qantas Jetstar Regional Express Australian Airports Association Brisbane Airports Corporation Regional Aviation Association of Australia Board of Airline Representatives of Australia Civil Aviation Safety Authority Attorney-General's Department Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government
Apologies:	Deafness Forum of Australia Virgin Blue
Secretariat:	Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

1. Opening Remarks

The Chair noted Councillor Phillip Silver, Mayor of Ballina, would be offered membership of AAWG.

2. Previous Meeting*2.1 Minutes*

Members agreed to the minutes from Meeting 7, 17 February 2010.

2.2 Report on action items from Meeting 7

Members noted follow-up advice.

3. Current Issues*3.1 Disability Access Facilitation Plans*

Members discussed the status of Disability Access Facilitation (DAF) plans. Key issues raised include:

- Preferred date for publication (1 July 2010) fast approaching.
- Airline representatives reported unanticipated delays.

- Regional Aviation Association of Australia (RAAA) and Board of Airline Representatives Australia (BARA) were encouraging their respective members to participate in the initiative.

3.2 Premises Standards

The Attorney-General's Department (AGD) advised that the *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards* (the Premises Standards) were tabled in parliament on 15 March 2010 and will be effective from 1 May 2011.

3.3 Airport Disability Assistance Service

Members discussed the Airport Disability Assistance Service discussion paper prepared by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (the Department).

Key issues raised included:

- Resource intensiveness and cost in respect of additional infrastructure and staff training requirements.
- Requirement to consult with a number of airport's Airline Operators Committees prior to considering a particular location for a pilot program.
- DAF plans could be utilised to identify opportunities for the disability assistance service.
- The proposal could be progressed once the DAF plans were in place.

3.4 Cabin Crew Ratios

CASA advised it is responding to submissions received to the Notice of Proposed Rule Making (NPRM) on proposed changes to cabin crew ratios.

3.5 Community Aviation Consultation Group guidelines

The Department presented information on the draft Community Aviation Consultation Group guidelines announced in the National Aviation Policy White Paper. Key issues raised include:

- The consultation groups will enable local communities to have direct input on airport planning matters, with appropriate arrangements for engagement with airport operators, airlines, governments, users and other relevant stakeholders.
- The Department to monitor if any disability access issues are raised and consult with AAWG as required.

4. Ongoing Issues

4.1 Security Screening

The Office of Transport Security (OTS) provided information on the Methods and Techniques and Equipment for Screening (MTES) document. OTS sought feedback from AAWG disability advocates on this issue before finalising the new MTES document.

4.2 ICAO Persons with Disabilities Working Group

The Department advised it attended the ICAO Facilitation Panel meeting in Montreal. The Persons with Disabilities Working Group (PWD WG) met and discussed revisions to Circular 274 and changes to the PWD WG terms of reference.

4.3 Transport Standards Review

Members noted the report of the Transport Standards is expected to be published shortly.

4.4 Assistance Animals

AGD advised that the Queensland Department of Communities has been tasked with convening an inter-jurisdictional working group to consider a national identification system for assistance animals. Key issues raised included:

- The Queensland Department of Communities to report to the Community and Disability Minister's Advisory Council at its next meeting.
- Existing aviation safety regulations permit hearing and guide dogs in the cabin, however specific exemptions need to be issued to permit other categories of assistance animals.

4.5 Individual Pre-flight briefings

Members noted CASA advice that this work was ongoing.

4.6 Other Business

Members noted Parliamentary Secretary Shorten had referred correspondence to the AAWG. The Chair advised that correspondence would be addressed by the relevant agencies unless common themes emerged that could be discussed by AAWG members. The chair noted individual correspondence must not be circulated for privacy or legal reasons.

The AAA noted industry members had advised the National Emergency Planning Advisory Group that airport operators may need to consider their arrangements for passengers with disabilities during emergencies.

The Physical Disability Australia (PDA) representative presented a special lightweight folding wheelchair that she uses for travelling. Members noted the wheelchair as a useful aid for air travel but indicated the chair may not meet some international standards and would not be suitable for all types of disabilities.

5. Next meeting

Members agreed to schedule the next meeting for Thursday 19 August 2010 in Sydney.