

Participant Input Summary

Aviation Disability Standards Co-Design

Workshop 1 – Planning and Booking Stage

July 2025

Main themes — ideas and solutions

Following is a collation of the main themes for ideas and solutions that participants recommended could be addressed by or included in the standards for planning and booking air travel.

- **Clearer and accessible information** such as using pictorials, social stories, videos etc to show information prior to air travel (including plane information and walk through airports) + information in easy read formats.
- **Web accessibility requirements** are met across all information and booking systems. Requirements that systems are designed and fully tested with people with disability.
- **Clearer requirements up front to provide information through the whole travel journey**, including as people need to move between flights.
- **National process for companion cards and subsidies**, and use of things like National Assistance Cards across airlines and airports.
- **Traveller profile** with the ability to use this to choose the right type of / priority seating that will be accessible and equitable. A profile should have as much information as a person wants to share in it to support their travel journey. And it could be shared by airports and airline systems.
- **Supplying interactive sessions and information for traveller requirements** — where a person with disability inputs their needs /requirements and it provides clear steps for what needs to be done in the booking process.
- **Specific planning and traveller support line** — a dedicated accessibility phone number and support system in place across airports and airlines.
- **Training for staff** that is mandatory and led by people with disability with lived experiences. This should be for all staff, not only customer-facing staff. Airports and airlines should also be proactively hiring people with disability and with intersectional experiences.
- **More consistency and national standards across the travel requirements processes** and who/when/how someone needs to put things like assistance animals in to the process to travel.
- **Equitable access to booking systems and ticket prices** — including during sales when people with disability can be excluded.
- **More consistent regulations across industry for travel requirements** — e.g. what is and declaring dangerous goods — and a consistent process for how this information is shared.

- **Dedicated portal and more support for people with disability through the booking systems** to make travel more equitable (including access to same pricing options).
- **Changing attitudes** so people with disability travelling by plane is known as an equal right and an asset (e.g. an untapped market) — ensuring that industry understand benefits and **apply universal design across air travel**.

Summary of key ideas by stage of journey for planning and booking travel

The following key points are a collation of key themes for ideas and solutions across each stage of the journey segment for **planning and booking air travel**. This list brings themes together from each traveller group.

Stage 1: Finding and accessing information

- **Improvements to consistency of information** — what it says, how it is shared or found on a website or other places and the forms required to be completed.
- **Easy read** needs to be available across all aspects of travel.
- **Accessing information on websites** — requirements for accessibility across all web and booking platforms.
 - Make online accessibility standards similar/same requirement across all airlines.
 - Knowing where to go on the website to find accessibility features for flights and airports — this could be more consistent.
- **Suggest having another page on booking websites** for disability/accessibility accessed from a clear button.
- **Requirement for interactive maps** with dynamic filters to help navigate the airport.
 - Clear indication and information or signage about where you go to when you check in (so much self service).
 - Clear indication of low traffic or low sensory areas within airports.
- **Having social stories and more information** about what the experience is likely to look like.
 - Video or series of videos for different types of disability.
- **Information in other languages** including First Nations as their first and traditional language — language can be a major barrier. Requirements for airlines to account for this.
- **Communication about air travel and changes** to air travel should be in **simple and clear language**.
- **Specific accessibility phone number** in place across airports and airlines.
- **Clarity around extra leg room seats and who can book** or shouldn't — consistent policies.
- **Choosing seats** — **clearer and more consistent information about exclusions** and why certain seats may be chosen — noting that 'I have a disability' is not all the same. Change language and be clear on the policy to be able to help in an emergency.

- **Considerations for remote communities (and others) who have internet connection issues**, or people who don't use the internet and may need additional assistance — consider how they get information and make bookings on an equitable basis.
- **Dangerous goods form on webpage** — showing any requirements for dangerous goods when looking for flights.
- **Advanced messages** about changes to airlines and airports (e.g. construction). Delivered in a range of formats and accessible ways.
- **Have someone onsite to access information.**
 - Information people / staff able to help people with finding and accessing information.
- **Advanced registration and information on assistance animals** — Have a process to register assistance animals in advance that lasts for a period of time (e.g. a passport).

Things that would support making information and planning more accessible:

- **Planning for travel in a culturally safe way.**
 - There isn't information about culture or a welcoming environment for people to plan their travel.
 - Hub of information at their airport, including with First Nations specific information
- **Airport workforce strategy** — so people with disability can see themselves represented in people they interact with at the airport. Trust in information.
- **Online and phone booking prices the same** to improve accessibility, for those who need or prefer to use phone bookings.
- **Consistency in pricing used by travel agents.**

Stage 2: Traveller requirements

- **Travel requirements should focus on outcomes** of travel not just the framework for what an airline needs.
- **Avoid restricting requirements.** Standards need to say more clearly who is able to access things and make sure it is faster to get approvals for the requirements people need for their travel (e.g. assistance animals, approvals of dangerous goods).
- **Be clearer when the requirements are needed because of a legal requirement.**
- **Have agreed standards of what information is needed** by airlines and make it consistent.
- **Enforceable timelines for travel requirements to be taken into account for someone to travel** (e.g. approval of assistance animal).
- **Offer priority check in option as part of booking process** to help meet people's traveller requirements.
- **Address discrepancies in ability for people to do online bookings and check-ins.** For example, online check-in not possible with an assistance animal which can disadvantage and make the travel experience harder. This is even when someone travels regularly.

- **Training for staff (including consistent protocols for staff training and education)** — including their understanding and a way to waive the price for requirements that people need.
 - Staff training and competence. Some level of staff training led by people with disability and lived experience.
- **An interactive web or other type of session** where you can put your requirements and it can tell you what you need to do.
- **Luggage courier options from house** rather than taking to airport, to speed up and simplify traveller requirement processes at airport.
- **Reasonable adjustments** — a list of what adjustments and assistance a person can request, and a national table of what is available at each airport/airline.
- **Passenger profile with accessibility needs and supports (requirements already included).**
 - Need for consistent profile to use over many / different flights.
 - Profile that has all of your information so that you don't have to keep doing it — for all airlines and airports.
 - Consistent profile templates.
 - Opportunity to provide more detail in booking process.
- **Recognise essential equipment as not extra baggage** — make consistent as a requirement across all booking systems.
- **Be clear where there are limitations through a person's travel journey** — limitations of equipment or another requirement as they move through different types of airports or planes in their journey.
 - Make sure it's clearer where there are differences in traveller requirements between regional and metro airports.
 - Make sure accessibility information that is supplied is carried across all parts of the aviation journey.
- **More cultural awareness and understanding** about the travel requirements — e.g. travelling with companions.
 - Culturally safe places allocated for indigenous communities to get support.
- **Make sure the right people are managing the traveller profile process** and this is consistent across the board to support meaningful travel across the journey and for all journeys.
 - Requirements for names of staff in airlines dealing with sensitive information of a traveller to be given (rather than general mailboxes).

Stage 3: Booking process

- **Access to equitable ticket prices is essential.**
 - Equitable ticket pricing is needed — this means having some additional opportunities for people with disability through the booking process.
 - When sales on flights are happening there needs to be a more equitable phone booking system so that people with disabilities and their families don't miss out.
 - Allow people with disability who have their profile with the airline to open up otherwise blocked out seats to make it more equitable.
- **Able to book specific seats** for accessibility (premium seating) near the front of the plane and making this consistent across airlines — this happens when purchasing tickets for concerts, for example (and booking is done through the mainstream system).
- **National process (led by Government) for a national companion/carers or other type of card to improve consistency across airline travel.**
 - Include consistency in the payment and subsidies that can be made for carer/companion support (built into use of card).
 - Vouchers should be accessible and responsive to the experience of people with disability, including how they work when changes occur.
- **More simplified ticket booking page with no bells and whistles** (lots of ads etc on booking pages clutters it) — a more accessible version, even just for those who need or prefer it to access.
- **Make working with interpreters to help with booking flights easier** — and who can also make suggestions for flights to book (linking in with online and phone booking systems).
 - This includes addressing issues with using the National Relay Service (NRS), which has a consent/privacy issue whereby airline won't speak to a third party person to make booking.
- **Help with booking systems** — There used to be an assistance system that was clear on how to access and use.
- **Dedicated portal that links to all airlines**, with information about disability aids and seating preferences. The standard could be link to this portal so that it's clear standards are being followed.
- **Priority seating** to include disability and any other groups that need priority seating, similar to on a train... as a starting point, a 'quick win' since there is already priority seating for people with infants.
- **Pictorial or graphic seating plans with measurements** that are easy to read (including about restrictions like hard arms and which armrests go up).
 - Provide dimensions of seats in the booking process.
- **In the disability standards, need option to book seats with larger legroom / seating that is actually accessible** (over time space between plane seats have gotten smaller across airlines).
 - Consider regulating distance between seats — **universal design to apply to airplanes.**

- **More personalised service for people with disability when flights get rescheduled** — airlines to provide personal service, assist to rebook, avoid replacing flight with less accessible option. **Need to examine the process and have better policies.**
 - Method to communicate directly with people about changes or delays to make arrangements when changes happen, especially when at the airport.
- **Change booking timeouts (on websites) because it can take additional time to book tickets**, especially when using assistive technology or having to add in more information about requirements.
- **Booking process to help people know what is available on board so we know what to take** (e.g. iPad if no screens) — includes for people who might need sensory supports for the plane environment.
- **Disability and diversity awareness for airports and airlines** — to better help people with disability when dealing with check in, other issues.
- **Consider people with disability as a valuable market in the booking process** so booking processes and seat availability need to be equitable so more people with disability fly.