

## **HAAG Minutes: 30 October 2018**

### **Attendees**

Roberto Castiglioni (RC)– Chair HAAG

Christiane Link (CL)– Deputy Chair HAAG

Clive Locke (CLO)– HAAG

Chris Wood (CW)– HAAG

Athena Stevens (AS)– HAAG

Graham Race (GR)– HAAG

Martyn Sibley (MS)- HAAG

Michael Carver (MC)– BA

John Fishwick (JF)– BA

Geraldine Lundy (GL)– VAA

Edwina Silo (ES)– AOC

Samantha Berry (SB)– OmniServ

Ian Mitchell (IM)– OmniServ

Jonathan Coen (JC)– HAL

Tonia Fielding (TF)– HAL

Daniel Platt (DP)– HAL

Scott Fuller (SF)- HAL

Ciara Thorn (CT)– HAL

Paul Ford (PF)– HAL

Claire Milburn (CM)– HAL

Emma Jager (EJ)– HAL

### **Guests:**

Elisabeth Kotthaus (EK)- Head of Unit, Social Aspects, Passenger Rights, & Equal Opportunities, European Commission

Andras Mogyoro (AM)\_ Policy Officer, Social Aspects, Passenger Rights, & Equal Opportunities, European Commission

Andrew Davies (AD)- University Student

### **Apologies:**

Panita Vig – HAAG

### **9.30 – 9.35 Chair welcome and updates**

RC welcomed everyone and states that the quorum has been met and the meeting can proceed.

### **9.35 – 10.20 Review of ECAC data and survey responses**

PF covered performance over the period from July to September. 430,654 passengers in this period compared to 334,192 the year before. 89% of all PRMs requested assistance. Inform is fully rolled out and operational. Challenging summer with unprecedented growth which resulted in a dip in customer satisfaction however the numbers are back on an upward trend now. Overall performance has remained fairly static. The 100% of pre-booked within 2- mins on chocks SLA was not met, however Inform will support the achievement by the end of the year.

### **10.20 – 10.40 Complaints handling and stats update**

NH advised that Overall Passenger satisfaction took a dip in July and this affected overall satisfaction of 3.70 Aug-Oct 18. However, the lowest satisfaction score is 3.35 in connections. 60% of PRM were happy with staff courtesy, an improvement from previous years. Passenger satisfaction has decreased by -0.2 compared to the previous period. There have been individual staff members who have been consistently complimented and Heathrow and Omniserv are working together to ensure that agents are recognised and good news stories are shared internally.

The aim remains to increase passenger responses as survey responses for connecting journeys are the lowest. GL raises the issue of capturing passenger responses and CL views feedback card distribution as problematic because of experiences that agents only hand out cards when the passenger has had a positive experience, CL raised a concern that feedback may not be balanced. CL also pointed out that the passenger is unlikely to give negative feedback if the agent is still with them and they need onward assistance, however survey responses are completed once the passenger has completed the whole journey. GL believes that any opportunity to give feedback should be encouraged and the feedback cards should be continued and supported. RC pointed out that the recorded volumes may be lower than the actual number of customers who may have received an unsatisfactory experience.

NH advised that passenger complaint volumes have decreased and the number of compliments have increased year on year and IM states that the tea party staff recognition events are very well received. However, July was the first month with Inform in place and this month performance decreased due to a higher staff turnover and large increase in PRM volumes.

NH explained the most common theme for complaints are wait time and PRM having to walk. GL raises that walking is hugely problematic particularly for those with lung problems. Omniserv are reviewing complaints to highlight frequently mentioned staff names to enable individual performance improvement and training plans.

Heathrow and Omniserv have a monthly deep dive to understand whether wait time is perceptive or actual and to explore the granular level of detail and drive terminal specific performance

improvement plans. Operational teams now work across the terminals which has resulted in an increase in feedback and makes staff more visible and active at the gates.

CL raised a complaint about how many changes there are in the arrivals process for a customer travelling on Virgin. CT pointed out that Virgin is on Pier 7 which has an infrastructure difficulty due to level changes, improvement projects are currently being working on. CT confirmed that Heathrow have put in a request for an infrastructure change, supported by the AOC. ES raised the question whether OmniServ have considered a One To One service proposition. IM confirmed OmniServ are looking at more efficient ways of working and confirmed there are still improvements to be made to existing processes., however with Inform OmniServ are able to be more flexible and dynamic with deployment of the staff. ES registered the Airlines frustration that Inform has taken so long to implement.

MS advised that there can be inefficiencies in the process, the biggest asset are the agents and the more invested in recruiting the right people and ensuring their values, the better the service. CLO asked to focus on flexibility in respect to the range of people with disabilities who require assistance. IM confirmed that auto allocation is switched on from landside host areas and Inform is now fully operational. ES commented that it has taken 10 months to achieve this.

Inform ensures that the Hosts are freed up to help with the passengers rather than being split with allocations. This has a positive impact on the operational management and enables OmniServ to gain more granular detail to determine whether any staff require additional training and allocation deploy staff correctly. CLO advised that the agents aren't always clear on what assistance is required when they attend a request, passenger requirement details should get passed on to the agents to ensure they attend with the correct equipment. CT advised that Heathrow are working with the airlines to share gate opening times cross the terminals in order to support OmniServ to allocate resource more efficiently and this specific feedback will be taken back to the airlines. CLO asked whether the information can be relayed from the onboard crew to the ground and GL confirmed that all airports have this problem where the information is not transmitted to the service provider. CT added that sometimes airlines are not giving OmniServ the correct SITA codes.

(European Commission arrives Elisabeth Kotthaus and Andras Mogyoro.)

CL wanted more information on agent recognition schemes and IM explained that OmniServ have a couple of programmes, including a recurring tea party invite to recognise agents in the terminal. OmniServ have the 110% club where staff spend time with Anthony Marke and where they will receive vouchers should they gain 110 points over the course of the year. CL raised the concern that it is always the same people in the 110% club and as such it is always the same people doing the right things, however IM advised that there is a number of methods of recognition which are conducted more frequently.

RC advised that the previous reporting system was not accurate. AS sought clarification regarding the difference in the feedback categories "lack of resources" and "OmniServ no show". NH explained that the passengers perceive that there has not been enough resource to meet demand whereas a no show is where no one shows up to meet the passenger. RC advised that "No show" could potential be due to a lack of resource. CL noted that there should be plenty of wheelchairs as it was raised at the first HAAG meeting and NH confirmed that Heathrow brought more wheelchairs onto the system three weeks ago. RC noted that himself and the vice chair will meet with Omniserv monthly to get an update.

NH continued to advise that Omniserv are within their 5 day SLA of reviewing complaints. However, there have been challenges with the BA correspondence teams sending 20 complaints in a batch rather than when the complaints were logged. NH from Heathrow is working with the BA customer relations teams to resolve this. CT points out most airlines want to respond to complaints themselves. JF advised of a confusion over which complaints are specific to Heathrow and which are BA- wheelchair, therefore complaints will go to Heathrow however “Return to Aircraft Door” correspondence sits with the airlines. CL advised that historically the airlines will get the beating rather than the service provider, for example British Airways will get a complaint on twitter for OmniServ not showing up. CW mentioned that Heathrow is also mentioned in such tweets.

ES advised that the airlines are not prepared to sit back and the AOC has escalated this issue. ES requested a meeting with NH to discuss the complaint resolution SLA as 5 days is a long time to receive any response when there has been a grievance.

Assistance with transport into the terminal is currently a low scoring section in the passenger survey and OmniServ included this in their improvement plans. Heathrow and Omniserv are working on help point processes and CT advised that the Central Bus station can be an operational challenge. Heathrow are working to change the system of call allocation with the aim to connect passengers directly to Omniserv rather than APOC. CL advised that there is a lack of proactive engagement at the station. CL has to approach staff and feels that there is virtually no disability awareness at the stations.

#### **10.40 – 11.10 Security Care proposition update (Scott Fuller)**

SF advised that it is recognised that every customer must go through security whether they are departing or connecting, as such it is vital in the overall passenger experience. Security is also the area where passengers have the least control. The Security High Care scoping document is finished, induction training has been accredited by disability rights UK and security colleagues are getting involved. In April, there was an awareness activity around the sunflower lanyards and training in disability awareness was launched. Everyone has access to mandatory training and a masterclass programme for those who would like to go further. Each terminal developed an improvement plan in collaboration with OmniServ. GR asked why the masterclasses are not mandatory and SF explained that Security Officers have mandatory training which covers disability awareness, however there is a finite time and budget. CT continues by pointing out that Heathrow have been supported by Disability Rights UK who were involved with putting the piece together. Heathrow have 12 accredited Care Champions to deliver the training.

SF turns to what is coming up in particular looking at Family Pre- Security Preparation. CL noted that the Gatwick model is terrible and worse than any other security line with longer wait time. She advised not to mix children and disabled people. SF advised that Heathrow are doing a consultation on this and will take it into consideration.

ES asked whether the wait time is within the SQR as the AOC will hold Heathrow accountable to meet the SLAs, so if these new style lanes are excluded Heathrow would not be fined if SQRs are missed. RC advised that the lanes should be taken out of the SQR because there are different checks and conditions for PRMs. ES noted that it is the AOC’s view that everyone should have the same level of service as such these lanes should be within the SQR.

SF pointed out that a 25 minute queue is not acceptable from a service point of view, however a 5 minute queue standard could be difficult to achieve. ES advised that the AOC cannot agree the exemption today.

CL noted that a PRM lane only makes sense if PRMs get served quicker and have the room to do what is needed. At Gatwick PRMs are made to go into that line regardless of whether it meets their needs or not. CL advised she would never have gone in this lane if she had known, it is her experience that this is more of a family line which also served PRMs.

SF moved on to way finding and advised that Heathrow is introducing the assistance branding for the assistance security desk to make it easy for those who need assistance at security. CL raised the question of why there are no Egates for wheelchair users. CT pointed out that the main issue with Egates is that the camera is not adjustable and as such it cannot scan the faces of someone in a wheelchair. CL advised that the budget of the Department of Transport gave Heathrow more money for Egates and CT noted that the bill has been passed to border force. MS advised that there is always going to be more of a need for a hands-on approach which is why he is glad that there is collaborative working. AS noted that it must be specified that it is passengers only to prevent people who wish to take their family member to the plane.

CT advised that CB is leading wayfinding projects and Heathrow facilitated working groups which focused on the branding, roll out is planned for the near future.

SF asked for support on the following. One of the areas missed for security research was the environmental study. Heathrow would like to do a review of the private search rooms, and would appreciate HAAG recommendations. CLO would be willing to support. SF would also like to capture the conversation around what the new security lane product would look like in a working session.

AS noted the need of a method for a PRM to ensure that everything that has been taken out of their bag at security has been replaced, particularly when considering expensive electronic equipment, CL agreed. Therefore, OmniServ need to be involved in the decision-making process.

ES sought clarification whether the PRM security lane is definitely going ahead and SF advised that the decision is not final, however Heathrow are leading with the CAA. ES noted that the traveling public was upset as it had been removed in the past. SF clarified that the team are focused on ensuring that Heathrow is doing it properly and to provide suitable improvement in the service. ES continued to note that Non-PRMs are abusing the system and a way must be found to stop this. CW advised that Heathrow will ensure that the lane is not left empty when there are no PRMs. ES asked whether there a way of ensuring that there is a shorter table for repacking or one at an adjustable height. DP raised the question why Heathrow is behind other airports, an exception is needed. CL suggested looking at the models in Lisbon and Vienna as she states these are effective. RC requested for SF to get access to the members part of the HAAG website to continue the debate.

### **11.10 – 11.15 Coffee break**

JC joined for the 1 year anniversary with the HAAG and present a thank you to the HAAG.

### **11.15 – 11.30 Elisabeth Kotthaus, Passenger Rights Presentation, European Commission**

EK presented The European Commission air passenger rights proposal, which is currently stuck in the council and has not moved since 2015, however EK wanted to discuss some pragmatic approaches in the meantime. Some of the areas that the European Commission are focusing on are hidden disabilities, temporary impairments, the right to request evidence of one's condition, situation of assisting persons (do passengers have to pay for tickets), what is an assistance animal (particularly in discussion with the US who have a broader definition), the definition of medical equipment,

compensation for mobility equipment, booking methods which help to better transmit the assistance need of a PRM to an airport. In the end, the aim is to have guidelines which are accepted by the stakeholders. A consultation is due spring 2019 and will be published in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2019. The more the European Commission work across modes of transport the better, if something is decided for air travel it has a knock-on effect across the others. The European Court of Auditors report on Passenger rights will be published in November 2018 which examines all modes of transport. The European Commission plan to take this seriously and should be helpful from a passenger rights perspective, which will ensure everyone knows their responsibilities. A new passenger rights campaign shall begin from November 2018 across all modes of transport.

The Commission participates as an observer at the meetings of ECAC and the subgroup on the transportation of persons with reduced mobility. They also participated in the ACI Accessible Airport Award: Commission experts in the jury. (EDF European Disability Forum). It shows that things are improving and places the limelight on excellence.

Other Activities that the European Commission are involved with:

An EP Pilot project on the best practices for the transportation of PRMs, an EP Pilot project on mapping accessible transport for PRMs and research project surrounding the needs of women on transport which touches upon PRMs.

EK welcomed suggestions from the group and CL noted the need for compensation on PRM services, if the service is not delivered or is an hour late this is equivalent to a flight delay. Furthermore, there are still airports which refuse to deliver mobility equipment to the aircraft door. CW asked whether the focus should be greater on aviation rather land and sea transport as they are currently more accessible. EK pointed to the history of the passenger rights committee and advised that it took 4 years to be adopted. These guidelines are a help in-between these legislations coming in. The European Commission have proposed something more ambitious than what will be adopted. CW raised the point that there is a difference between travel within the EU and outside of the EU. EK advised that The European Commission are working with passengers overseas, however accessibility in terms of infrastructure is a different area. GR asked whether passengers know their rights and EK responded that in 2014 only a 3<sup>rd</sup> of passengers were aware. The carriers have the responsibility to inform passengers and there is a lot of improvement needed as these means have to be accessible for everyone. There has been a new association founded and often claim agencies will take a large percentage of the passengers' claim, therefore passengers must be warned that they will not get the full compensation. There are also Consumer protection centres, however all these instruments can confuse the passenger. CL advised that complains don't always get responded to and EK advised that the current set up is far from ideal and the European Commission are trying on different levels to help. There are two ongoing studies, one for air passenger rights and a study on all transport modes, these will run throughout 2019.

AM advised that in Heathrow terminals there are lots of signs about passenger rights, however this is not the case at stations or bus stations. There is growing contact with national organisation who supported the European Commission's campaign. DP asked whether Brexit will influence the conclusion of the European Commission and EK advised that The European Commission hopes that this will be the case, however it is currently still unknow. DP advised that there should be collaborative working post Brexit and RC noted that ECAC will remain, therefore this can be the way of bridging the gap. DP recognised all the good work going on and Heathrow would like to be involved and play a part. EK confirmed there are a number of developments going on around the world in terms of transport, in Finland and Canada in particular. The European Commission want to

work on a national level and have a study looking at multi-modal travel because PRMs should be protected no matter what method of transport they are on or if they switch methods. Technological progress (PRM multimodal process) discussions are ongoing. The European Commission run workshops to discuss. CW asked whether anyone can get involved in these workshops and EK advised that they are expert workshops and people come from all over the world, however it is possible to apply.

ES asked whether EK engaged with Rialto and EK confirmed. The European Commission normally also invites stakeholders to meetings with the National Enforcement bodies. EK sought feedback as The European Commission can push for it more with the stakeholder's request.

### **11.30 – 11.50 AIRA trials feedback (Graham Race)**

GR presented the findings following the World Sight Day ATF event on the 11<sup>th</sup> October, when guests with a visual impairment were invited to Heathrow where they were shown the service in Terminal 2 and looked at new services to see if they were worth investment. These new services were AIRIA and ADI roommate.

AIRA is an app which allows the user to connect with a remote agent who will use the camera on the phone to direct the person with a visual impairment through the airport in real time. JF shared his experience with the app, and stated this genuinely offered him independent travel. GR advised that there was a positive response to the software, however it could be difficult to download.

The ADI roommate prompts and informs visually impaired people about the washroom layout which they have entered. The feedback was less enthusiastically received as the voice needs to be clearer and louder, plus people should be made aware of it before entering the room.

The feedback from the visitors who attended the day was that people are warming to the effort that Heathrow is making, however it is not very well communicated. CL asked whether the website had been updated and CT confirmed the 1<sup>st</sup> November. CLO asked whether the ADI roommate can be offered in a different language and GR advised that this was not possible. CW advised that the system might distress people with hidden disabilities and GL advised that she is no longer supporting the product after experiencing it.

RC returned to the conversation surrounding AIRA and suggested proceeding with large scale trials. CL raised that security staff and immigration would need to be briefed as you are not allowed cameras in those areas. MC asked whether Aira is available in different languages and RC advised only English for the moment, however as they expand through Europe it is expected they will expand languages. RC continued to call a vote on AIRA of HAAG members and it is unanimously in favour of the trial. The HAAG members also agreed to abandon the ADI Roommate. JF stated Aira is very useful for a person with a visual impairment and calls for further investigation. MC asked whether the toilet could be scanned with AIRA, however JF stated that he would not be comfortable with this and asked if ADI could only be placed in some toilets. CT suggested for JF to join Heathrow to the meeting on ADI and RC postponed the discussion on smart toilets until the next meeting.

### **11.50 – 12.10 HAAG discussion on PRM agents' bodycams (Not discussed at this meeting)**

### **12.10 – 12.30 Andrew Davies PHD Presentation**

Border force uses the terminology medical lane which is an archaic term and can cause confusion as a PRM specific security lane does not exist.

CT asks if it is a requirement that PRMs sit by the window to ensure they are not blocking the escape routes? ES states that most of the aircraft use dual aisle's now as such this is no longer required. CT then raises the point of short haul flights which tend to only have one aisle? ES is unsure what the protocol is.

AD's conclusions about the future of PRM travel through airports. The CAA need to collect their data better and publish it, the IATA codes need to be revisited as they are too broad, is there the potential for someone to fly in their wheelchair so that they do not have to be removed and placed into a seat as well as potentially keeping their mobility on board an aircraft and further training and investigation is needed so that PRMs, airlines and airports can understand each other.

CL agrees that not getting the codes right is a real problem while RC notes that some airlines are reluctant to use them.

### **12.30 – 12.35 AOB**

RC closes the meeting.

### **12.35 – 13.15 light lunch**