

Southampton Airport

SOU Southampton
Airport

2024 PRM Report

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1. Executive Summary

This report outlines the efforts and initiatives undertaken by Southampton Airport in 2024 to support and enhance accessibility for passengers with reduced mobility (PRMs). The airport has continued its commitment to inclusivity, engagement with the community, service improvement, staff development, and adherence to Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) standards.

2. Overview of PRM Services

Southampton Airport provides comprehensive services for PRMs, including those with hidden disabilities. These services are in line with EU Regulation EC1107/2006 and UK CAA CAP1228 guidance. Key services include:

- Assistance from entry to departure and vice versa.
- Mobility aids including wheelchairs and ambilifts.
- Designated accessible seating and rest areas.
- Coordination with airlines for pre-notified and ad-hoc assistance.
- Accessibility signage and hearing loops.

3. Passenger Data and Service Volume

In 2024, Southampton Airport supported nearly 10,000 PRM passengers. With increased airline traffic, there was a notable rise in PRM demand, particularly during peak periods. OCS, our assistance provider, implemented forecast modeling to better manage peak times and maintain high service standards.

4. Service Performance

- 98.7% of all pre-notified PRM passengers were met within 10 minutes of arrival.
- All PRM agents use a GPS tracking system to ensure accurate timestamp tracking.
- Performance KPIs were consistently met or exceeded.
- PRM Assist App launched to improve planning, communication, and feedback collection.
- 10 compliments received with no recorded formal complaints.

5. Staff Training and Awareness

All frontline staff underwent disability awareness training, including practical exercises delivered in partnership with Open Sight and Treloar's College. This included manual handling, use of PRM equipment, sighted guide techniques, and engagement with non-verbal and neurodiverse passengers.

6. Consultation and Feedback

- Bi-annual Accessibility Forum meetings held in May and October 2024 with stakeholders and charities.
- Ongoing partnership with Treloar's College and Open Sight Eastleigh for audits and intern programs.
- Feedback received directly from passengers, via the PRM Assist App, and through partner organisations.

- Specific adjustments made following deaf passenger feedback, including improved signage and manual boarding boards.

6a. CAA Feedback Summary

The CAA feedback received provides a largely positive reflection of our service, with consistent recognition for the professionalism, responsiveness, and proactive communication demonstrated by our team. Feedback frequently highlights our staff's helpfulness and engagement, particularly in their readiness to support audits and address compliance-related matters efficiently.

On average, the team receives between two and four pieces of feedback per month, with a slight increase in volume noted during periods of heightened regulatory activity or significant internal change. Feedback is predominantly unsolicited and provided via email, suggesting that our efforts are well-regarded without the need for prompting.

Several trends emerged from the feedback:

- **Audit Preparedness:** There is repeated commendation for how well-prepared the team is ahead of audits, with specific mentions of high-quality documentation and swift follow-up actions.
- **Collaborative Approach:** Many comments focus on the team's cooperative working style, with particular appreciation for openness during discussions and a solution-focused attitude.
- **Responsiveness:** The team is consistently noted for quick turnaround times and clear, concise communication.

No significant areas for improvement were raised, though the tone of some messages indicates an expectation that our current high standards will be maintained going forward. Overall, the feedback supports a narrative of a team that is both competent and highly professional, contributing positively to our regulatory relationships.

7. Infrastructure and Facilities

- Step-free access throughout terminal routes.
- Accessible restrooms.
- Newly designed PRM waiting areas created in consultation with disability forums.
- Procurement of two new Ambi-lift vehicles

8. Community and Educational Outreach

Southampton Airport expanded partnerships with educational institutions such as Treloar's and Totton College. Internships were hosted and training offered on employment pathways. Engagement events with local schools, BSL communities, and guide dog training exercises were conducted throughout the year.

9. Future Objectives (2025 and Beyond)

- Expand real-time assistance request tracking and digital updates for PRM users.
- Upgrade wayfinding technology including beacon-assisted navigation.
- Continuing to evolve training, including lived experience training and advanced disability modules.
- Maintain and enhance 'Very Good' CAA audit rating.

10. Conclusion

Southampton Airport continues to place accessibility at the forefront of its operations. The airport's proactive approach in collaboration, infrastructure, training, and community outreach ensures that every passenger can expect a respectful and seamless journey.