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AIRLINE PASSENGER SERVICE COMMITMENT

Airlines in Europe have developed the Airline Passenger Service Commitment following consultation with representatives of air travellers, European governments and the European Commission.

Strong competition between airlines has provided Europe's air travellers with an increased choice of airline, airport, price and service. The Airline Passenger Service Commitment contains non- legally binding commitments to deliver defined standards of service to air travellers. The code covers 14 areas: services provided before travel, during travel and after travel. It describes the level of service air travellers may expect consistently from signatory airlines. It will enable air travellers to make a more informed choice of airline when planning their travel arrangements.

The airlines that are signatories to this Airline Passenger Service Commitment will continue to compete vigorously to meet the needs of customers by offering different products and different levels of customer service. They will endeavour to achieve the standards set out in this Airline Passenger Service Commitment on the most consistent basis possible.

Signatory airlines will each develop their own individual service plans incorporating the Airline Passenger Service Commitment. Signatory airlines will establish staff training programmes and introduce changes to their computer systems to better implement the Airline Passenger Service Commitment. During this implementation period, some elements of the Airline Passenger Service Commitment may not be delivered by every airline.

Signatory airlines agree to:

1. Offer the lowest fare available through each of its direct outlets

- a) Each airline will offer the lowest appropriate fare available for which the passenger is eligible through its own telephone reservation system, through its own website and through its own ticket offices for the date, flight and class of service requested.
- b) Each airline will inform passengers that different fares may be available through these different outlets.
- c) Each airline will inform the passenger about the terms and conditions which apply to the fare chosen and any applicable taxes, fees and charges.

2. Honour the agreed fare after payment

After payment for the ticket has been made, no fare increase will apply for the date, flight and class of service booked. However, any change in taxes, fees and charges will be subject to additional payment or refund.

3. Notify passengers of known delays, cancellations and diversions

Each airline will notify passengers at the airport and on board an affected aircraft, as soon as possible, of the best available information regarding known delays, cancellations and major changes to flight times.

4. Assist passengers facing delays

- a) Each airline will provide the appropriate assistance, for example refreshments,

meals and accommodation, to its passengers facing delays beyond two hours provided that local conditions allow for such assistance to be delivered. This assistance may not apply in situations involving political unrest or long strikes in essential services or other exceptional circumstances beyond the airline's control. Also, assistance may not be provided if to do so would further delay departure.

b) The assistance described in the previous paragraph may not be offered on routes operated under public service obligations in accordance with the policy of the authority defining the obligation or when weather causes disruption on routes on which the regularity of operations is significantly affected by weather conditions or on routes of less than 300 km serving remote airports operated by aircraft with fewer than 80 seats.

c) Each airline will produce a clear and concise statement of its policy, which will be made available to its passengers. This will include a list of routes on which any exceptions apply.

5. Deliver baggage as quickly as possible

Each airline will make every reasonable effort to deliver all checked baggage to the Arrivals Hall area as quickly as possible. In the case of mishandled checked bags, each airline will make every reasonable effort to deliver the mishandled bag to the passenger within 24 hours of its arrival at final destination, free of charge. Immediate assistance sufficient to meet the reasonable short-term needs of the passenger will also be offered by the airline.

6. Allow telephone reservations to be held or cancelled without commitment or penalty within 24 hours

Subject to applicable ticketing and ticket claiming deadlines, each airline will allow the passenger either:

- I) to hold a telephone reservation made directly with the airline without payment for a minimum of 24 hours or,
- II) where the airline requires immediate payment at the time of booking, to cancel a reservation without penalty within 24 hours.

Passengers will be advised which reservation method applies at the time of booking.

7. Provide prompt refunds

a) Where a passenger claims and is undisputedly entitled to a refund on a ticket purchased direct

from the airline, each airline will issue refunds within 7 business days for credit card purchases and within 20 business days for cash or cheque purchases.

b) Any taxes, fees and charges collected with the fare and shown on the ticket will be refundable where the ticket is not used. This will include non-refundable tickets and the refund will be issued within the same time limits as above.

8. Offer assistance to persons with reduced mobility and other passengers requiring special assistance

Airlines will always inform passengers requiring special assistance of the services they have

available and of their capacity for assisting passengers with reduced mobility. Such arrangements will be implemented within the constraints of aviation safety regulations. For passengers with

reduced mobility, the airlines commit themselves to support the attached paper on 'Meeting the Needs of People with Reduced Mobility'.

9. Meet passengers' essential needs during long on-aircraft delays

The airline will make every reasonable effort to provide food, water, lavatories and access to medical treatment for passengers on board an aircraft that is on the ground for an extended period of time without access to the terminal, as consistent with passenger and employee safety and security concerns. Airlines will make every reasonable effort not to keep passengers on board in long delays.

10. Take action to speed up check-in

Airlines will set reasonable deadlines for checking in and aim to collaborate with airports to reduce congestion in check-in halls. Airlines and airports will also collaborate to speed up the check-in process so that passengers can make their flights in time. These measures could include e-ticketing and automated check-in systems, self-service check-in, mobile check-in stations, off airport check-in, fast track check-in and queue combing.

11. Reduce the number of passengers denied boarding because of overbooking

When there are more passengers wishing to board an overbooked flight than there are seats available, airlines will first ask for volunteers to rebook to another flight. This will be done at the airport within the constraints of aviation safety and/or operational considerations.

12. Provide information to passengers regarding its commercial and operational conditions

Airlines will provide their passengers with the following information relevant to their journey:

A) At the time of booking (if available):

- I) scheduled time of departure and arrival of the flights
- II) airport/terminal of departure and arrival
- III) number of en-route stops
- IV) any change of aircraft, terminal or airport
- V) any conditions attached to the fare to be paid
- VI) name of operating carrier and flight number
- VII) whether a non-smoking flight is in question

In the event of substitution of operating carrier which has not previously been disclosed and which is not acceptable to the ticket holder, the passenger will be given the right to a refund or carried on the airline's next flight on which space is available in the same class.

B) With the confirmation invoice or with the ticket:

- I) confirmation of flight times
- II) free baggage allowance and liability limits
- III) cabin baggage allowance

If, after purchase of the ticket, the airline makes a significant change to the scheduled flight time which is not acceptable to the passenger, and the airline is unable to book the passenger on an alternate flight which is acceptable to the passenger, he/she will be entitled to a refund.

C) On request (for the airline's own services and where available for services operated by other

carriers), information on

- I) the aircraft type scheduled for operation on the route and the seat pitch
- II) services normally offered on board
- III) facilities for passengers with special needs and any charge made for using them (except for passengers with reduced mobility as provided for under Article 8)
- IV) whether specific seats can be allocated or pre-booked
- V) charges for excess baggage
- VI) its Conditions of Carriage
- VII) details of frequent flyer programme, if any
- VIII) assistance programs for baggage lost, damaged or delayed
- IX) details of the Airline Passenger Service Commitment and airline's own service plan

13. Provide information on operating carrier

In the case of flights operated under a code share, franchise or long term planned lease agreements, airlines will:

- I) inform passengers of the name of the carrier actually operating the flight; passengers will be informed of this
- II) - upon reservation, whenever such reservation is made through a distribution channel under the direct control of the airline, i.e. the airline's own offices, telephone reservation centre and websites; and
- III) - at check-in at the airport
- IV) as regards a reservation made through a channel which is not under the direct control of the airlines, i.e. travel agencies and websites other than airlines' own websites, airlines will remind travel agents and websites' operators to systematically inform passengers, at the time of reservation, of the airline actually operating the flight
- V) make it clear through appropriate wording that the passenger's contract is with the marketing airline, i.e., the airline whose designator code appears on the flight coupon or routing slip next to the flight number
- VI) inform passengers travelling on code shared services that the level of service may be different and the Airline Passenger Service Commitment may not apply

14. Be responsive to passengers' complaints

Under normal circumstances each airline will provide a substantive response to written complaints within 28 days from the date of receipt. When this does not permit sufficient time for the complaint to be properly investigated an interim response will be provided giving the reason for the delay.

Each airline will designate a convenient point of passenger contact for all complaints and the

address and/or phone number and departmental name of this customer service function will be

provided in timetables, on websites and any other public information source and will also be

available at all travel agents accredited by airlines.

ATTACHMENT

MEETING THE NEEDS OF PEOPLE WITH REDUCED MOBILITY (PRMS)

Foreword

The purpose of this document is to improve the accessibility of air travel for persons with reduced mobility (PRMs) by ensuring their needs are understood and provided for, and their safety and dignity are respected. It is aimed at airlines providing services and facilities at airports and on aircraft, and forms the basis on which a voluntary Code (or Codes) of Practice may be prepared.

When preparing Codes, the appropriate provisions of the European Civil Aviation Conference (ECAC) Document 30 (Section 5), and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO Annex 9) will be considered. These documents provide technical information and, following consultation with the airline industry, have been drawn up by the governmental agencies concerned with establishing the abovementioned international standards and recommended practices.

Definition of a person with reduced mobility

A person is considered a person with reduced mobility (PRM) if his/her mobility has declined due to a physical disability (sensory or motor), intellectual disability, age or other impairment to such an extent that it prevents him/her from using transport services normally and his/her condition requires particular assistance or the adaptation of services intended for all passengers to his/her particular needs.

Principles

PRMs have the same rights regarding freedom of movement and freedom of choice as other citizens. This applies to air travel as to all other areas in life.

- Airports and related service providers have a responsibility to meet the needs of PRMs. PRMs also have a responsibility to identify their needs to the proper channels at the proper time.
- Information must be made available in order to enable PRMs to plan and make their journey.
- Disability should not be equated with illness and therefore PRMs must not be required to make medical declarations about their disability as a condition of travel.
- Organisations representing PRMs can be consulted on issues relevant to PRMs, where necessary.
- Staff will be given appropriate training in understanding and meeting the needs of PRMs.
- Control and security checks should be undertaken in a manner which respects the dignity of PRMs.
- PRMs must be enabled to remain independent to the greatest possible extent.
- The cost of providing for the needs of PRMs must not be passed directly onto the PRMs.

Airline practices

- No carrier will refuse a PRM access to a flight except where he/she cannot safely be carried or cannot physically be accommodated. When the carriage of a PRM is refused, carriers will explain clearly and explicitly the reasons for refusal.
- When a PRM declares that he/she is self-reliant (self-sufficient and capable of taking care of all of his/her physical needs independently in flight), the airline should accept that declaration. The airline should then be under no obligation to provide onboard assistance in relation to health, safety or hygiene requirements where such declaration has been made.
- Airlines will pursue technical and operational options for improving access and facilities on aircraft of all sizes, particularly when major refurbishment is undertaken.

- Where a direct route is not possible for a PRM, (e.g. because of small aircraft),

airlines will endeavour to suggest an acceptable alternative.

- Regardless of the size of airport and aircraft, arrangements for embarkation and disembarkation

should respect the dignity of PRMs.

- Airlines will, where space permits, provide on-board equipment/facilities to aid the self-reliance of PRMs within the limits of health, safety and hygiene.

- PRMs will have equal choice of seat allocation, subject to safety requirements. Airlines will explain clearly and explicitly the reasons for not allocating a specific seat when the request is not met for safety reasons.

- Certified Service Dogs will be carried in the cabin, subject to national importation and airline regulations. Where they are carried, there will be no charge.

- PRMs will not be charged for the carriage of basic mobility equipment or other essential disability assistive devices.

- Airlines must take all reasonable steps to avoid loss or damage to mobility equipment or other disability assistive devices. Where loss or damage occurs, airlines will make appropriate arrangements to meet the individual's immediate mobility needs