Manchester Airport Accessibility Forum Meeting Minutes

Date:2nd December 2025
Location: Radisson SAS Hotel, Manchester Airport and online

A summary of key points are documented below and we'd like to thank participants for the constructive dialogue throughout the session.

Attendees

Charles Van Berckel	Chairman - Independent	Matt Austin	Assisted Travel Manager - MAG
Christina Smith	Assisted Travel Services & Standards Coordinator - MAG	Caroline McWhirter	Head of Passenger Security - MAG
Emma Roberts	National Autistic Society	Alex Shaw	Security Training Manager _MAG
Daniel Hartley	Lead Engineer - MAG	Lisa Birtles	Deafness & Sensory Network
Rachel Zimbler	The Thomas Pocklington Trust	Marlene Evans	Ileostomy Association
Paula Hansen	World Accessible Holidays	Chris Bright	JDRF
Jon O'Brien	Training Manager - ABM	Stephen Rigby	Airport User - Mobility
Steve Wilson	Accessibility Manager – Jet 2	Alison Loose	Airport User - Mobility
Sally Chalk	Synapse	Laura Beattie	Airport User - Mobility
Jon O'Brien	Training Manager - ABM	Anwar Hussein	Operations Manager - ABM
Andy Ellis	Trainer - ABM	Ryan Clark	Ramp Manager - ABM

Action Tracker

Action	Owner	Status	Comments
Review security graphics / processes for neurodiversity	MAG	Open	Ongoing
Arrange review of existing ABM visual & deaf impairment training	CVB	In progress	Update by JO - ABM
Launch mystery shopper programme	CVB / EK	In progress	Ongoing

Introduction

MA welcomed everyone to meeting and thanked everyone for their attendance.
MA provided an update on the action tracker - included above

JO provided an update on visual and deaf awareness training for ABM colleagues
CVB advised still keen to get mystery shopper programme up and running.

Performance Data

MA provide updates and initiatives during the last 3 months.

-Introduction of the Portaramp, developed at MAN with ABM. First UK airport to use as standard. All vehicles fitted with a ramp; next step is to offer for airbridge disembarkation. Supports Dft TFG recommendation.

-TUI boarding trial. to offer priority self-boarding for wheelchair users to improve customer experience and OTP.
Trial – July to September 2025 with10% of TUI wheelchair users self-boarded , up from 3% in pre-trial assessment. No negative feedback from customers, airline crew or ABM. No delays attributed to the trial. CAA supportive & MAN will present to the wider industry in December.
Next steps - Process now BAU for TUI and will become standard across all airlines following consultation with the community

-Aviramp Lite procured for use on AT7 Dash-8 and EMB 145 aircraft types with the commitment from Loganair and Prime Flight to use on flights with WCHS or WCHC. Offers a safer and improved customer experience. Expected March 2026. Supports DfT TFG Recommendation.

- New team member – introduction to Christina Smith – Assisted Travel Services & Standards Coordinator, having previously worked at Liverpool Airport in a similar role to support general admin, 'Try the Airport tours' & flight auditing.

- Face to Face Disability Awareness Training with Enhance the UK delivered by persons with lived experience and attended by the MAG Assistance team, CETLs and Security technical trainers. Supports DFT TFG recommendations

-Assisted Travel rebrand to move away from 'Special Assistance' to ' Assisted Travel' to align with STN & EMA. Website updated, ABM uniform being updated. Terminal wayfinding to be updated through natural replacement cycle, most T2 signage already refers to 'Assistance'

- Mobility Aid Damage Warning Tape initiative aimed at decreasing potential damage to mobility aids caused by lifting the device from known weak points, supporting Dft TFG

report findings. Trial started in November with ABM vehicles and host areas having information, posters and tape.

-New T2 Assisted travel airside lounge - opened in September with seating for up to 120; Mains-fed drinking water, area induction loop system, choice of seating types, natural light & low-level FIDS; centrally located with easy access to the wide range of retail and food and beverage options

-New T2 Sunflower zone – completion expected September 2026

T2 update

- All airlines, except Ryanair, now operate from Terminal 2 (c.70% of passengers). Final stages of MANTP openings due over winter including extension of departure lounge, new route from Security, Domestic arrivals and new shops in landside arrivals.

ABM Update

Update on recent activities including ongoing training, including BSL , First Aid and Level 2 in Team Leading. Introduction to ABM's Got Talent to identify and develop rising stars in the workplace

Trials had recently taken place with the TEMI robot, and Y-Push power assisted wheelchair and Sensolus asset tracking devices at another ABM airport, to be introduced to MAN.

The training team attended the SIA Rebuilding Lives Conference, and will lead on the Purple Light up on the 3rd December, having previously delivered a Macmillan Coffee Morning and Let's Chat pop up cafes recently

Group Speakers & Presentations

DA – MAG – Introduced MAG ACCESSIBLE & INCLUSIVE AIRPORTS DESIGN STANDARD

CW – MAG – provided a security update

SC – Introduced – SYNAPSE

CS – Updated on MAGS plans to celebrate International Day of Persons with Disabilities extending this to the 12 Days of Allyship exploring difference subjects from the 1st – 12th December. As well as collaborative activities with ABM.

AOB