

**59th CONFERENCE OF
DIRECTORS GENERAL OF CIVIL AVIATION
ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONS**

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AGENDA ITEM 1: THEME TOPIC

**MAPAGKALINGANG PALIPARAN (CARING AIRPORT):
AIRPORT FACILITIES AND ACCESSIBILITY**

(Presented by Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP))

INFORMATION PAPER

SUMMARY

The Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) has advanced accessibility and gender equality through its 2023 Mapagkalingang Paliparan (Caring Airport) program, enhancing facilities such as all-gender restrooms, lactation stations, and play areas for passengers, and living quarters and clinics for staff. Despite resource and space limitations, especially in satellite airports, CAAP is finding innovative ways to improve infrastructure and services. Continued efforts in facility upgrades, training, and awareness will be key to further enhancing inclusivity, benefiting both passengers and staff, and contributing to more efficient airport operations.

Mapagkalingang Paliparan (Caring Airport): Airport Facilities and Accessibility

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Accessibility and gender equality are paramount in ensuring that airports function effectively for all users. Airports are not merely transit points; they play a crucial role in shaping the overall travel experience, impacting passenger satisfaction, safety, and operational efficiency. Thus, the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines (CAAP) launched in 2023 the *Mapagkalingang Paliparan* (Caring Airport) Program that focused on efforts to provide accessible, safe, secured and gender-inclusive facilities for the public transiting or working in CAAP airports, particularly those who require special assistance due to their reduced mobility or disability, and in compliance to Philippine law, Batas Pambansa Blg. 344, an Act to Enhance the Mobility of Disabled Persons that requires certain buildings, institutions, establishments, and public utilities to install facilities and other devices, to make them more accessible.

1.2 The program was primarily identified and designed for the benefit of the flying public and airport workers of diverse genders or disability. Aside from providing the basic and required safety and security features of all facilities in the airports, the different situations of Special Category Passengers (pregnant women, passengers with young children, unaccompanied minors, senior citizens, wheelchair-bound passengers, or any passenger with physical and psycho-social difficulties) and similarly-situated airport workers were purposely taken into consideration by including their mobility, accessibility, comfort, communication and health needs, and the alleviation of the additional burdens of passengers travelling with young children. Thus, the right of the flying public and airport workers to travel or work safely, securely, comfortably, and equitably in all CAAP airports is ensured by the program.

1.3 To this end, CAAP has implemented a range of services and facilities aimed at meeting both gender-specific and accessibility requirements. These include all-gender restrooms, diaper-changing stations, breastfeeding/lactation stations, play areas, prayer rooms, and medical clinics. For staff and employees, provisions such as living quarters, restrooms, a clinic, and leisure equipment demonstrate efforts to cater to their well-being. However, despite these advancements, challenges remain, particularly in the training of personnel and the visibility of gendered and accessible facilities.

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Inspections of all CAAP-operated airports have been undertaken since the start of 2024 to explore their current state of accessibility and gender equality. A separate study was also conducted and was participated by airport managers, tower personnel, and airport staff composed of technical, administrative, safety, and maintenance personnel, to highlight existing facilities, identify areas for improvement, and provide recommendations for future enhancements. By examining the findings, we aim to provide a comprehensive overview of the progress made and the ongoing challenges faced in ensuring that airports meet the needs of all users effectively.

2.2 CAAP airports are equipped with a range of facilities designed to support diverse needs:

2.2.1 Gender-Specific Facilities:

- **All-Gender Restrooms:** These facilities provide a safe and inclusive space for all passengers, irrespective of gender identity. I
- **Diaper Changing Stations:** Available in various locations, these stations cater to the needs of parents travelling with infants.
- **Breastfeeding Rooms:** Designed to provide privacy and comfort, these rooms support breastfeeding mothers, although, these breastfeeding rooms still lacked facilities to be able to accommodate several breastfeeding mothers.

- **Play Areas:** These provide entertainment and safe spaces for young travelers while awaiting flights.
- **Prayer Rooms.** Space is provided for individuals requiring a quiet space for prayer.

2.2.2 **Staff and Employee Facilities:**

- **Living Quarters/Staff House:** These facilities provide accommodation for airport employees, facilitating their stay during shifts.
- **Restrooms:** Staff restrooms are available for employees' use, especially in towers.

2.2.3 **Emergency Facilities:**

- **Fire Station:** An emergency facility equipped with staff is present to handle fire-related incidents.
- **Medical Clinics:** Clinics are available to address the health concerns of airport clients, although there is a noted shortage of trained medical professionals. Some airports do not have medical personnel and only rely on a few trained personnel, usually from the Fire Station, to provide immediate medical attention before referring them to nearby health facilities.

2.3 **Areas for Improvement**

Despite the progress made, several areas require attention:

2.3.1 **Training and Professional Expertise:**

There is a significant concern regarding the lack of trained medical personnel, particularly nurses. While some airport staff receive training to manage medical concerns such as Basic Life Support (BLS), First Aid, and Fire Safety, this may not be enough to support the needs of the passengers and the personnel. Often, referrals are made to LGUs and Provincial Hospitals to cater to the needs of those needing medical attention.

2.4 **Visibility and Awareness:**

2.4.1 There is a need to improve the signage on the available facilities of airports.

2.4.2 Some concessionaires and other stakeholders lack familiarity with the gendered facilities available, which can affect their use and visibility. Improving awareness and visibility of these facilities can enhance their utilization.

2.5 **Recreational and Childcare Facilities:**

2.5.1 Employees have expressed a need for additional recreational facilities to support their social lives and alleviate boredom.

2.5.2 A childcare facility is necessary for employees who bring their children to work, ensuring they have appropriate care during their shifts.

2.6 **Environmental Comfort:**

2.6.1 Airport clients have highlighted the need for better ventilation and the installation of air conditioners to improve comfort in airport facilities.

2.6.2 Some airport clients note that there are lack of seats especially during the peak hours of departure.

2.7 **Support for Hazardous Tasks:**

2.7.1 Some maintenance staff are engaged in hazardous work such as clearing debris. They are provided with personal protective equipment (PPE), along with medical assistance, financial support, and referrals through the LGU.

2.8 **Water Supply and Maintenance:**

2.8.1 **Water Supply:** There are issues with the water supply in restrooms, necessitating repairs and improvements.

2.8.2 **Flush Systems:** Problems with the flush systems in some restrooms need addressing to ensure proper sanitation.

2.9 **Facilities for Persons with Disabilities and the Elderly:**

2.9.1 There is a need for more facilities tailored to the needs of persons with disabilities and the elderly, including accessible restrooms and pushcarts to ease passenger burdens.

2.9.2 Wheelchairs are provided by airlines and CAAP also has standby wheelchairs.

2.10 **Signage and Communication:**

2.10.1 Enhancing the visibility of signages can help improve navigation and accessibility for all users.

2.11 **Critical Facility Upgrades:**

2.11.1 **Fire Station Location:** The current location of the fire station in some airports is situated near the runway, is below minimum standards and requires relocation to improve safety and operational capacity.

2.11.2 **Communication Facilities:** Upgrading outdated radar and tower facilities is necessary to enhance communication and safety.

2.12 **Space and Resources:**

2.12.1 **Passenger Space:** Small airports, face challenges with limited space for passengers, necessitating design improvements and relocation of concessionaires.

2.12.2 **Basic Supplies:** Addressing shortages of basic supplies like tissues, hand soaps, and sanitizers is essential for maintaining hygiene in toilets.

2.13 **Breastfeeding/Lactation Stations:**

2.13.1 While two airports have been certified by the Department of Health (DOH) as Mother-Child Friendly Facilities due to their breastfeeding/lactation stations, in some airports, additional facilities such as refrigerators and air conditioning are needed to fully function. Also, the DOH standards on mother-child-friendly facilities may not be fully implemented by the airport given the resources and personnel needed to operate such.

2.13.2 Challenges with power outages in some airports further complicate the installation of air conditioning and other necessary fixtures.

3. **ACTION BY THE CONFERENCE**

3.1 The Conference is invited to note the information contained in this Paper.