



WORKING PAPER

ASSEMBLY — 41ST SESSION

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda Item 13: Facilitation Programmes

**ACCESSIBILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN IN AIR TRANSPORT FACILITATION
ESTABLISHMENT OF GENERAL GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES RELATING TO
PASSENGERS WITH REDUCED MOBILITY**

(Presented by the Dominican Republic with the support of Aruba (Kingdom of the Netherlands), Belize, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of))

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Notable progress has been made in the Dominican Republic with respect to Air Transport Facilitation. Specifically, with regard to Accessibility and Universal Design in Air Transport Facilitation, the country has distinguished itself for having an advanced regulatory framework and proven procedures in this field.

With an industry that has unique characteristics in terms of the relationship between infrastructure, airline operators, service providers, airport authorities and inspection bodies, sharing best practices related to the awareness raising efforts made in terms of Accessibility and Universal Design in Air Transport Facilitation is a way to call attention to compliance with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 9 — *Facilitation*, as well as Doc 9957, *The Facilitation Manual*.

Action: The Assembly is invited to:

- a) take note of the information presented in this working paper; and
- b) urge the ICAO Council to adopt the necessary measures for the development of education and awareness raising programmes on Accessibility and Universal Design in Air Transport Facilitation, thereby promoting compliance with Annex 9 and Doc 9957.

<i>Strategic Objectives:</i>	This working paper relates to the Strategic Objective <i>Security & Facilitation</i>
<i>Financial implications:</i>	None.
<i>References:</i>	Accessibility and Universal Design in Air Transport Facilitation/ Establishment of General Guidelines and Best Practices relating to Passengers with Reduced Mobility

¹ Spanish version provided by Dominican Republic.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Since 2017, the Dominican Republic, through the Dominican Republic Civil Aviation Board (JAC), with logistical support from the technical staff of the State Representative Platform for Persons with Physical Disabilities (PREDIF), based in Spain, has been developing in conjunction with the airport management companies of the country's international airports, an ambitious project on Universal Accessibility and Design in Air Transport Facilitation, which has focused on training, awareness raising and needs assessment in relation to the criteria of universal accessibility and facilitation in the country's busiest airports, in accordance with the provisions of Annex 9, Doc 9957 and the Organic Law on the Equal Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the Dominican Republic (Law No. 5-13 and its Implementing Regulations, approved by Decree No. 363-16).

2. GOOD INCLUSIVE PRACTICES IN AIR TRANSPORTATION FACILITATION — “RD INCLUYE” SEAL

2.1 JAC has twice received the “RD Incluye” seal award, in 2018 and 2021, for its inclusive good practices in favour of persons with reduced mobility and for raising awareness on accessibility and universal design in air transport facilitation processes in civil aviation. These awards were bestowed by the National Council on Disability (CONADIS) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

2.2 The “RD Incluye” Seal of Good Inclusive Practices aims to promote good practices employed by public and private institutions, non-profit organizations and international agencies, aimed at promoting full inclusion and quality of services to foster the development and equal participation of persons with reduced mobility in the Dominican Republic.

3. ACCESSIBILITY AND UNIVERSAL DESIGN IN THE AIRPORTS OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

3.1 In 2017, the Dominican Republic continued to make progress in airport facilitation, accessibility and universal design, as evidenced by the initiatives undertaken at the International Airport of the Americas, “Dr. José Francisco Peña Gómez” (AILA-JFPG) and Punta Cana (PUJ), to expedite the movement of travellers with accessibility needs through their facilities.

3.2 With respect to the Punta Cana airport terminal, the investment consisted in the rehabilitation of the 23 boarding gates, with the objective of facilitating access to persons with reduced mobility, guaranteeing them a greater level of autonomy and the enjoyment of their universal rights as air transport users.

3.3 Meanwhile, at the “Dr. José Francisco Peña Gómez” International Airport of the Americas, a series of actions were implemented, including the installation of tactile signage at critical points such as stairs and elevators, ischial support chairs in the customs area, as well as clearly marked reserved parking spaces.

4. TRAINING, SOCIALIZATION AND RAISING AWARENESS

4.1 In 2019, continuing with the socialization and awareness efforts, JAC conducted the Basic Course in Sign Language, consisting of more than 150 hours of classroom instruction, aimed at the personnel of the different institutions of the sector involved in the facilitation of air transport, with the aim of providing them with tools for a more inclusive society. Given the positive impact of this training, which benefits air transport users, the course was conducted again in 2021 and 2022.

5. PROJECT FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GENERAL GUIDELINES AND BEST PRACTICES FOR PASSENGERS WITH REDUCED MOBILITY

5.1 In 2021, the Dominican Republic was selected to be part of the **Project for the establishment of general guidelines and best practices for passengers with reduced mobility**, organized by the North American, Central American and Caribbean (NACC) Regional Office of ICAO, for the purpose of collecting regulatory information, procedures and best practices from States with well-established regulatory frameworks for passengers with reduced mobility, which can be an invaluable reference for developing a common ICAO baseline, complementing the existing Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) on the subject.

5.2 The Project focused on the analysis of current practices and regulations in the selected States, providing a draft of potential recommendations based on the information gathered, the development of a baseline checklist based on the recommendations and the monitoring of compliance in the field, all within the framework of Annex 9 and Doc 9957.

6. VISIT BY ICAO NACC TO THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

6.1 From 28 March to 1 April 2022, a team of technical specialists from the NACC Regional Office, together with the Facilitation Division of JAC, gathered information that would make it possible to assess the scale and objectives achieved by the Dominican Republic in terms of Accessibility and Universal Design in the Facilitation of Air Transport, as well as in the Establishment of General Guidelines and Best Practices for Passengers with Reduced Mobility. For this important work, the Punta Cana International Airport was chosen because it is one of the airport terminals in the country with the most passenger movements, and the work carried out by JAC regarding the aforementioned issues was evaluated. Presented below is some of the preliminary information resulting from this activity.

7. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MISSION WITH RESPECT TO JAC

7.1 High compliance with the standards and methods recommended in Annex 9.

7.2 Regulatory framework that establishes access to transportation for persons with reduced mobility, guaranteeing respect for dignity and non-discrimination.

- 7.3 Good coordination and dialogue with CONADIS.
- 7.4 Annex 9 monitoring activities that include accessibility.
- 7.5 It has dedicated staff dealing with accessibility in air transportation (an Analyst in Accessibility and Universal Design).
- 7.6 JAC has instructional initiatives (awareness raising workshops, sign language course).

8. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MISSION REGARDING THE PUNTA CANA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

8.1 The staff have a strong culture of passenger service, and the commitment to improving passenger service and enhancing passengers' travel experience is noticeable at all levels.

8.2 The airport has parking spaces for passengers with reduced mobility that are well marked and close to the terminals. Passenger movement within the airport is fluid and the routes are not extensive and are free of obstacles. Passengers with reduced mobility have priority access lines at security, immigration and customs, as well as preferential boarding of aircraft.

8.3 There are adapted and well-marked restrooms in the public and security restricted areas of the airport. There is sufficient seating in the waiting areas. The elevators have Braille buttons at accessible heights. Other design principles to improve airport accessibility are being implemented in the design of the new terminal C (e.g., tactile paving, paths without slopes, flight information screen).

8.4 Another project that is being developed through JAC's Facilitation Division is the implementation of modules to provide information to passengers. Currently, we have two, one located at the Dr. José Francisco Peña Gómez International Airport and the second at the Cibao International Airport.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 Over the last five years, JAC has worked to raise awareness, socialize and promote good practices in terms of accessibility and universal design in the facilitation of air transport. Through the training offered by the staff of its Facilitation Division, it has established guidelines for the humanization of the treatment of passengers with reduced mobility, and has thus been able to convey the message to the personnel in charge of making decisions regarding the design of the country's airport terminals, as well as to the personnel whose jobs entail face-to-face dealings with passengers. We hope that over the next five years, the multiplier effect of the good work on the issues discussed in this working paper will contribute to the establishment of a country brand in terms of air transport facilitation culture.

10. **ACTION BY THE ASSEMBLY**

10.1 In the light of the contents of this working paper, the Assembly is invited to:

- a) take note of the information presented in this working paper; and
- b) urge ICAO to take the necessary measures for the development of education and awareness raising programmes on Accessibility and Universal Design in Air Transport Facilitation, thereby promoting compliance with Annex 9 and Doc 9957.

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