

# LAWA DISABILITY ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE



## Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, 20 July 2022

Meeting held via Teleconference

### ATTENDANCE

#### PRESENT

1. Myrna Cabanban, Chairperson
2. Louis Herrera, Vice Chairperson
3. Kathleen Barajas, Community
4. Paul Herrera, LAWA Airport Operations
5. Seyed Torabzadeh, Community
6. Suzana Ahmed, (TBITTEC) Airline Rep.
7. William Miranda, LAWA Planning

#### ABSENT

1. Julia Mockeridge, Community
2. Grant Firestone, LAWA Administration

#### EXCUSED

1. Brandy Welch, Community
2. James Corpuz, TSA

**Meeting Started at 1:04 p.m.**

#### I. **Call to Order/Roll Call**

Ms. Cabanban requested a call roll from Ms. Bradley. A quorum is present.

#### II. **Opening Remarks and Introductions**

None

#### III. **Chairperson Report**

None

#### IV. **Presentations**

None

#### V. **Public Comments (Non-Agenda Items)**

No public comments.

#### VI. **Approval of Minutes**

- June 15, 2022, meeting minutes approved
- July 14 2022, special meeting minutes approved

#### VII. **Consent items for DAAAC Action**

Ms. Cabanban: Determine in accordance with Section 3E3, that this body has reconsidered the circumstances of the state of emergency continues to directly impact the ability of the members to meet safely in person and/or state or local officials continue to impose or recommend measures to promote social

**VIII. Regular items for DAAAC Action**

None

**IX. Landside Access Modernization Program (LAMP) Report**

None

**X. Operations Report**

Mr. Herrera: We are getting busier. The last 4th of July holiday resulted in high numbers in our passenger areas and terminal areas. Roadways are busy. We had a few incidents in the last weeks related to aircraft. One significant incidence was the U-Haul truck parked on the upper-level roadway. It resulted in a partial evacuation of the terminal and below on the lower deck. Some lessons were learned on communications and ensuring we keep operations flowing throughout these anomalies. We also had passengers needing to evacuate from an aircraft. Some ADA passengers needed to evacuate. It was more of a controlled evacuation. ADA considerations were met. We look forward to a busy summer peak period.

Some airlines returning and some new start up carriers in the month ahead. With that, information is solidified, I know Rodney will place the carriers in the 1.5 terminal. We are operating the busy operations and maximum capacity we could push. There are no gates at 1.5. We need to shuttle them over to TIBET west. That is all I have unless there are questions for day-to-day operations.

Mr. Torabzadeh: If you don't mind, talk about the evacuation of the passengers with disabilities. Explain how it was handled. I would appreciate it.

Mr. Herrera: When an aircraft wants priority to land, it varies in giving us advanced notice. Sometimes it is 20 minutes. They have on average 10-to-15-minute ETAs. We can have the police division expect the emergency landing. The aircraft landed on runway 24. When it came to a stop, it blown a tire. The gravity or necessity to have an emergency evacuation was not present for yesterday's event. Every incident is incident driven in terms of what we do. The stair truck is brought up for fire personnel to enter the aircraft. That same truck could be used to evacuate people from the aircraft. If it is not a dire situation, the airline will fix it and have the airplane towed. If there is time, we can get the ADA truck deployed to assist anyone with any sort of mobility impairment that would need to evacuate from the aircraft if it is a nonemergency evacuation. The Fire Department has different ways to evacuate those that need additional assistance. That is generally what we do. Most of our emergencies, we try to keep everyone on board. We don't want to have passengers evacuate and ADA type lifts on the runway. 90 percent of emergencies tend to get towed. Every incident is different. We get maybe 3 to 6 Alert 2's. Aircraft that report an emergency, they land and taxi back how many people have reduced mobility and require the truck to deploy.

Mr. Torabzadeh: Did you have to take measures?

Mr. Herrera: The Fire Department does their assessment. The truck is a resource request from the field or command post to the ARCC. They are in close communications. Yesterday, it was not necessary.

Mr. Scott: I am from the Fire Department. I want to say it was a great question. We worked on these incidents in the past. This was a significant incident. They were all blown out on that landing gear. Unified together from some of the training, we had 190 people evacuated off. We get anxiety, people coming downstairs. They did a great job, Airport Operations, and police. That was the first thing that came out. Things worked out great. You only hear the negative things. Delta and the passengers would have been on the media had things have not gone well. It is a big significance. We were concerned. This was a normal alert. There was no fire or any fuselages. It was still an operation for us to get 190 people off. Thanks to you and your group. Regards to you beating me up over the years and making sure ADA is our first concern regarding the rescue piece. I wanted to give you a special thanks.

## **XI. Planning Report**

Mr. Miranda: LAWA released the design and construction handbook. It is the guidelines LAWA uses for projects to ensure they follow the consistent quality and safety to give some uniformity throughout the project. In June, we released the 2022 version.

Ms. Cabanban: Only LAWA can see them?

Mr. Miranda: It is accessible online on our website. The easiest way is to go to search and type in 2022DCH. It is one of the top two links.

Ms. Cabanban: We could review that. Anyone questions for William Miranda? Maybe we should look at that online and review it at the next meeting.

Mr. Miranda: General questions also, I am not in charge of the whole thing. It is quite substantial. It is thousands of pages. It home in on each subject matter and divides construction into planning phase and design phase.

Ms. Cabanban: We still have the handout. I think he has left us.

## **XII. ADA Coordinator Report**

Mr. Ihle: Good afternoon. Going back to what Paul Herrera said, him being humble. He is very humble. He was recently promoted to Van Nuys airport manager. He will not be participating in DAAAC as we go forward. We will have to get a new individual to provide the operations report. It is an incredible opportunity. I wish him the best of success. We'll keep you posted on internal changes.

Richard sent out an email, The Department of Transportation announced a Bill of Rights for passengers with disabilities. It is on The Department of Transportation's website. It has good information. A lot was requirements under code and

federal regulations. The way it has been arranged makes it easy to understand what the ADA requires the airlines to provide and what their responsibilities are. I would recommend you give that a look.

Ms. Goldkorn: I wanted to know, were you supervising the incident with the flat tire and the way people were being handled at the airplane?

Mr. Ihle: Those are for police.

Ms. Goldkorn: As the compliance officer for the airport, you were not out there to make sure everything was, okay? You left it to the authorities?

Mr. Ihle: I don't roll out to every emergency. If there was an issue, I would be notified if I need to come on scene. There was no request.

Mr. Herrera: This was something that was done rapidly.

Mr. Torabzadeh: What time was the incident?

Mr. Herrera: Around 12, in the afternoon. I will say we get anywhere between 3 to 6 Alert 2's in most months. Most are nonevents. We work closely with the coordinator. We raise awareness. It is our job through the ADA coordinator and discussions, we have an 8 A.M. and 4 P.M. conference call. It is every day. Our emergency responders share information. We have monthly meetings to raise awareness on ADA needs. His presence is there through the airport superintendent. He speaks on behalf of a lot of the work Tim Ihle and Oscar Scott tries to share with us, making sure we have situation awareness and all our resource needs. These are the developmental opportunities to ensure our programs have elements of, that way our staff are being considerate of meetings the needs for the people on board.

Mr. Ihle: They won't wait for me. Operations and I work closely. If this is a time for a need, I would be dispatched. It was a normal evacuation. It didn't require anything out of the ordinary.

Ms. Barajas: Are there any updates on the LAX fly away stops?

Mr. Ihle: Yes, I did a walk through. Markings were in place. We identified where the busses should stop. I haven't heard complaints on issues. LAWA put out a request for proposals for a new Fly Away operators. The commissioners picked another company for the upcoming contract period. It could be a different style bus. I don't know when they will start the operation. There will be a transition period for where the existing operator moves out and the new one comes on board. I forgot the name of the new one. They are looking at different things. Smaller busses, better use of a mobile APP. They do post all of their meetings online. If anyone wants to go back and look at a board meeting. You can click on agenda items and listen to the decision making in regard to any kind of commissioner action. Including the one taken last week or two weeks ago.

Ms. Cabanban: When does the contract start?

Mr. Ihle: I don't know the exact date the new contract goes into effect.

Ms. Cabanban: I want to get them on our committees to make inputs and stuff like that.

Mr. Ihle: I will keep you posted, once I hear more about coach USA leaving and the new operator is coming on board.

Another item I want to bring up, I think they were planning to open today, Paul may know, there's a new baggage claim in terminal 6. Because of renovations that are going on in our terminals. They redid the baggage claim area in terminal 6. One of the items I would like to bring up with the new renovation is there will be a changing room or there is a new adult changing room in the baggage claim in terminal 6. Now we have three adult changing tables throughout the airport; two of them are post screening, one at terminal 1 in Southwest, one at the MSC, you may have seen that during our sight visit back in December, now the new one in baggage claim. There will be another adult changing room in terminal three when that opens up. Right now, it's partially open with, I believe, two gates. Also, there would be an adult changing terminal four when the renovations are completed in 2024. They are being expanded throughout the airport.

In April, we had 4 complaints. I also want to point out these complaints, even though I log them, they are not all specific to ADA. They come in a variety of things. It's not that we are out of compliance. It could be poor consumer service or other issues. The it does not mean the airport is out of compliance.

In April, we had a complaint regarding a lack of assistance. A Jet Blue passenger said the wheelchair provider did not ride the shuttle to terminal 5 to gate 209. This was a case for whatever reason, the Jet Blue flight change gates from terminal 5 to gate 209. The wheelchair agent did not know they were supposed to ride with the passenger out to the midfield. So, we have now made it clear. to Jet Blue, that whenever there's a gate change and they have a passenger that requires mobility assistance they are to ride on the bus with the passenger out to the new MSC facility.

We had a complaint regarding poor taxi service. A passenger stated she had to wait for over an hour in front of terminal one. It was more of a communication issue. She was standing at the inner curb process where the transit stop is, while two different taxis were dispatched to pick her up at the outer curb where the ADA loading and unloading zone is.

Another complaint in April is extensive wait time during arrival. The passenger complained it took over an hour for custom clearance and another hour for the wheelchair to assist the baggage claim. We did identify several issues that led to the delay. The wheelchair provider is going to address these issues. Some of the issues include when the airline initially requests four wheelchairs and then the flight arrives and then all of a sudden 8 are needed. Then they have to pull staff to assist with this. Which makes it difficult for the deployment of staff to assist in the baggage claim area. There could be not enough luggage porters dedicate to assist the wheelchair agents. The wheelchair agencies are responsible for assisting passengers and pushing them through the facility and out the door. There's a different company that's supposed to provide luggage assistance. They help anybody, not just people that require wheelchair service. At the international service there's a lot of luggage. Anyone can hire or ask for a porter to assist them. There has been an increase in the number of passengers coming

through. We do not have control over the staffing of CBP officers. As the number of passengers come through the terminals it can lead to a delay if there's not sufficient number of personnel to assist. These are several items that can take a while for a person to exist customs.

We had another complaint, not an ADA complaint, but the passenger was a diabetic. Their debit card was lost and they were low on sugar and want to buy some food at the terminal. The concessionaries were not accepting cash. As many of you have noticed during the covid pandemic a lot of places no longer accept cash. Wherever you go, the movie theater, they no longer accept cash. I go to a lot of places. I'm going to a concert where the stadium is a cashless place. I know a lot of people like to carry cash, but a lot of businesses are turning to a cash less society. Our commercial development has reached out to all of saying they should all take cash going forward so. LA X will not be a completely cashless facility. They can use cash here at LA X. This was a good complaint. It was not an ADA complaint, but it came through. Action was taken for the betterment of everybody.

In May, we had eight complaints. Once again, this was one regarding extensive wait time. The wheelchair provider does take time records of their passengers. Even though the passenger stated it took 3 hours to get from ticketing to gate. Their records indicated less than an hour and a half for their time. Definitely, one of those things people may say it take a lot longer but they are not looking at the clock and putting down times like the person who is doing the job. We have documentation that it only took an hour and a half and not the 3 hours they claimed. There is a legitimate complaint of multiple transfers being required. This is something that is just the nature of the logistics. A person in a wheelchair have to go through the security screening via the wheelchair. Then transferred on to a cart which will then take them to the longer distance to the gate. It's a multiple transfer. We can't take the TTV through the screening check point.

That's just the logistics that are made. Then this passenger was transferred from one mobile transport to another mobile transport because the final one was fast and could get the person to the gate a little bit quicker.

We had a complaint about a passenger being dropped off at the incorrect terminal by the ADA shuttle. The passenger arrived and should have been dropped off at terminal 2, but they were dropped off at 7 and missed the connecting flight. It's a sad situation but we're going to work with the ADA shuttle operator to put processes in place so this does not occur to prevent this from occurring again. From our investigation, it was likely a communication issue. The passenger did not speak issue. The ADA shuttle had to stop at terminal 7 to drop off and pick up passengers. The individual thought they were at terminal two and got off the shuttle and moved on. The driver should have realized when they got to terminal two that the passenger, they were going to drop off was not there. But the driver did not follow up on that. I do fault the driver for that one. Even though it could have been the passenger leaving to shuttle on their own accord.

This is another in regard to a complaint saying a security office was rude at the Fly Away. This was a passenger that parked at the Fly Away in the 30-minute short term load/unloading zone and started pulling out bags for a long trip. The security office went up to her and stated that this area is just for loading and unloading. Only 30-minute time limit. There are ADA parking spots in the structure. The individual file a complaint, stating that because she has a disabled

plaque card in her vehicle, she's entitled to park anywhere she wants regardless of the time limits. That's true the California law does allow for that. I believe in this case the security office thought she was not doing that for which the space was intended. It's a short-term parking spot not for someone leaving for a week taking up the spot that could be used by other individuals that have a short-term need. They were many ADA parking spots available.

Another complaint is a lack of assistance at terminal 2. They said no one showed up to assist him and he missed his flight. The complainant never responded back to my calls. I get that frequently that people make a complaint and don't provide a lot of information. When you request additional information, they don't respond back after multiple times. So, I have to close it out. I cannot investigate claim that is do not have enough information for me to go on.

Complaint was received that they were unable to hear announcement clearly through the public address system. Most monitors are visual paging and our IT department is evaluating technologies that will put announcements to mobile devices.

We had a complaint at the Fly Away. An employee did not allow him to help the disabled mother with a bag on to the bus. The operator is working with the staff to provide better service and understanding in that circumstances. There will be a change of fly away operators in the very near future.

I had a complaint of poor customer service by an agent at TBIT. They identified the employee and stated they would re-train him on customer service. The wheelchair agent was rude and unprofessional.

We received a suggestion that there will be a moving walkway for the incline that exit the TBIT baggage claim and up to the meet/greeter area. I checked with our planning department and there are no existing or future plans to install a moving walkway in that location. In baggage claim there are people to provide assistance as well as requests wheelchair assistance to exit baggage claim.

In June we had five complaints. One was another complaint at TBIT for lack of assistance. An "8-year-old passenger, he did not request wheelchair assistance but he was upset he could not ride on a cart to baggage claim. This is now something we are encountering that people do not believe they need wheelchair assistance and then they start a walking the distance from the MSC to baggage claim and then they realize it's a lot farther than they planned. But unfortunately, these carts are used only to transport passengers that have requested the wheelchair service in advance from the airline.

A LAWA employee said that her friend told her the LA X exit shuttles were not ADA compliant. I informed the employee that all of our LA exit shuttles are ADA compliant. But if she provided additional information I could investigate further. She reached out multiple times and her friend never got back to her. This is another one of those people making accusations. Once they are called on it, they realize they were probably wrong to begin with.

We had a complaint about poor customer service at terminal 7. She states she had a disability and was sitting in an ADA seat. A wheelchair agent asked her to get out of the seat so the wheelchair passenger could sit down. This is one of the situations where the passenger all visual indications, why you cannot judge by visual indications. The wheelchair agent thought she was not disabled. This happens a lot of times. People sit down if there's signage on them for priorities, for disabled individuals. The wheelchair agent asked the individual to get up and

the individual took offense at it, because she stated she was disabled. The individual did get up, so that the person in the wheelchair could sit down at the seat. ABM which is the wheelchair service provider will provide training to all of their employees to inform them that just because a person doesn't appear to be disabled there are hidden disabilities. So just because they are not in a wheelchair, does not mean they do not have mobility issues. I think that's a really good training. But it's always unfortunate because many of you have personally seen individuals that are fully able-bodied individual that take up seating for an area that's served for individuals with disabilities.

We also received the travel distance. This is similar to the one I mentioned earlier. Passenger, elderly, did not realize how far the distance was between MSC and TIBIT.

The final one was at terminal 6 poor customer service. They were rude and unprofessional and did not know the complainant was sitting in the seating for 20 minutes. The wheelchair provider identified the person, said they would retrain the employee on customer service etiquette.

Mr. Torabzadeh: Any update on our walk through by the member of the committee?

Mr. Ihle: No but let me coordinate it with Myrna, because I think we just need to work out a date like we did for the site visit. We need to work out a time and date so that a group can go and take a look at it. Whoever is interested could send myself an email and we could reach out to you to figure out what dates would work best. Also, to ensure under brown act that there will not be a quorum of the committee present for the site visit. Whoever is interested send Myrna and me an email. We can do this within the next month or so.

Ms. Cabanban: I think we should set up something this month. AMIR send us both an email. I'd like to do that as well. Send us the dates that are most convenient, and we'll all take a vote on it.

Mr. Torabzadeh: The reason I ask, was the experience of the last walk through of the Tom Bradly. I thought it would be necessary to have another walk through for the new terminal.

Ms. Cabanban: I'd be very interest in that.

Mr. Ihle: I'm looking at the calendar right now. Would Thursday August 4th be a good option?

Mr. Ray: No, would you send us a few dates?

Mr. Ihle: I'll set up a variety of dates and days then we'll go from there.

Mr. Ray: In regard to the ADA wheelchair service again. I flew back from New Orleans and upon my arrival they offered wheelchair service at LA X. Again, it was nice. But I was thinking I would put my cochlear implant in the chair. I didn't need to do that. Again, I'm just thinking of educating the team about how to offer the wheelchairs. Because I'm mobile. I can walk. I didn't need a



wheelchair. I would like to keep those preserved for people that really need it. Just some information.

Mr. Ihle: That's a great point Richard. When I read the bill of rights. It addresses that. It says here on part 5, The Right to Assistance in Airports - Airlines cannot require the passenger to accept a specific form of assistance that he or she does not request. For example, requiring a wheelchair when a sight guide was requested. Maybe this is something that goes into the entry if special services are requested. A person types in they are sight impaired or hearing impair and had that wheelchair service is not requested but a specific service for that specific form of assistance is necessary. I'm not sure when you enter it in, when you purchase the ticket, if there's a click box says special services or if a person can type what exactly it is the assistance that's requested. They do identify that in the bill of rights. That a passenger doesn't have to accept a specific form of assistance that he or she doesn't request.

Richard if you want to send me the specific information about your flight. I'll send an e mail directly to the manager of you mentioned it was a united flight. So, they are aware that of the issue.

Mr. Ray: Thank you so much Tim. I appreciate you doing that. I also just want today to remind everyone that Larry Roland was in the Bill of Rights working group to develop that Bill of Rights. I wanted to give appropriate credit to Larry for his work in that Bill of Rights.

Ms. Barajas: I'm interest instead doing the visit also.

Ms. Cabanban: Kathleen, send in your available dates as well.

### **XIII. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Report**

None

### **XIV. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Report**

None

### **XV. New Business**

Mr. Torabzadeh: Is everything okay with Julia?

Ms. Cabanban: She started a new positions. She would be able to continue with us. I haven't heard anything. She is okay.

Mr. Torabzadeh: Our meeting is one hour? Two hours? What is the duration usually?

Ms. Cabanban: 1 to 3.

I did ask Randy from Access to keep us informed of complaints they receive regarding pickups or drop offs issues that may be occurring to passengers who are using the services when they come in or get picked

up from the airport. We will have that as an extra input if we get any.

Mr. Johnson: At the moment, there is no complaints. Operations and the contractors will share the information. We should have resolved it by the time the meeting comes up.

**XVI. Adjournment**

Ms. Cabanban: I appreciate the patience. We will see you at the walk through or the next meeting. Thank you, everyone. **2:03 P.M.**

Minutes were presented to the Disability Access and Accommodation Advisory Committee (DAAAC) for approval at its regularly scheduled meeting on 21 September 2022. The minutes of the 20 July 2022 meeting were approved by DAAAC.

<u><i>Tracy Bradley</i></u>	<u>9/21/2022</u>
Secretary	Date