

17th MEETING OF THE ACCESSIBILITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (ACC)
Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport
Leeson Lane, Dublin 2
18 September 2019

Attendance

Kevin Doyle (Chair)	Dept. of Transport, Tourism and Sport (DTTAS)
Eilis O'Connor	DTTAS
David Ball	DTTAS
Priscilla Wolf	DTTAS
Deborah Maguire	Commission for Aviation Regulation (CAR)
Elaine Howley	Disability Stakeholders Group (DSG)
Annette Costello	DSG
Nóirin Clancy	Inclusion Ireland
Joan Carthy	Irish Wheelchair Association (IWA)
Tom Kilfeather	County and City Managers Association (CCMA)
Fiona Kelty	National Council for the Blind of Ireland (NCBI)
Jackie Mullen	National Transport Authority (NTA)
Naomi Rooney	NTA
Declan O'Leary	Sport Ireland
Sarah O'Donnell	Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)

Apologies

Brendan Lennon	Chime
Donie O'Leary	DSG
Tara Kerry	Fáilte Ireland
Niamh Fawl	NDA
Geraldine Browne	RSA
Mairead Hayes	Irish Senior Citizens Parliament

1. Introductory remarks and tour de table

Chair welcomed all to the meeting, noted the apologies received and advised that Geraldine Browne would be the RSA representative from now on. He welcomed Naomi Rooney the recently appointed Transport Accessibility Manager with the NTA and Tom Kilfeather, CCMA, to his first meeting.

2. [CAR Accessibility Presentation](#)

Deborah Maguire, CAR gave a [presentation](#) regarding CAR and accessibility, with a particular focus on EU Regulation 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air. The main points arising from this presentation and the subsequent discussion were as follows:

- Passenger Numbers using different airlines - CAR believes the age profile of passengers typically using the carriers, would explain the difference in numbers between Aer Lingus and Ryanair.
- In response to concerns raised about airlines not accepting wheelchairs, CAR said that it needs to know about such incidents so that it can follow up on them.
- CAR also referred to size restrictions on wheelchairs, as these are limited by the size of the hold.
- CAR said that the issue of ground handlers having problems with disconnecting batteries from wheelchairs was raised at ECAC. The use of air safe keys was suggested, as a way to deal with the issue of removing wheelchair batteries for flights.
- The difficulties experienced with PRM seating on planes, was also raised and CAR said that this matter is in hand, with proposals for power of enforcement with its legal advisors.
- CAR advised the ACC that it is seeking volunteers, representing people with disabilities, to join its Passenger Advisory Group, which will take part in airport inspections.
- Public awareness for people with hidden disabilities: reference was made to the sunflower lanyard, in use in the UK, and to the work being done by the NTA on the JAM card. Issues around copyright, and the scope of the sunflower emblem (used in some international countries) were discussed. NTA agreed to send details of the JAM card to CAR.
- The growth in the number of people not pre-advising is causing issues for OCS.
- There was positive feedback about the work of OCS.
- How to ensure there is no erosion of what is currently available to PRMs, and how to lobby at EU level for this and for further rights.

The Chair thanked Deborah Maguire for her presentation and continued engagement with the Committee.

3. Minutes and Actions from ACC Meeting on 12 June 2019

Minutes agreed as circulated beforehand by Secretariat. Actions were reported on as follows:

No.	Action	Responsible	Outcome
1.	The NTA, in conjunction with IWA, to seek to identify possible solution to the issue of smaller wheelchair spaces on the new single deck buses in Waterford and in the GDA.	NTA	See discussion below.
2.	Convey concerns by members of the ACC concerning Bus Connect project and advise ACC on next phase of public consultations.	NTA	See discussion below.
3.	Update on access issues in new Fáilte Ireland building in Cork City.	Fáilte Ireland	Held over.
4.	Circulate BÉ's new policy on motorised scooters and motorised wheelchairs when finalised.	Secretariat	See discussion below.
5.	Consider request for statistics from Dublin Airport about the overall numbers of passengers using the different carriers.	CAR	Done. See CAR presentation
6.	Alert ACC members to public consultation on the review of public transport policy when it happens.	Secretariat	Public consultation to commence shortly.
7.	Undertake high level review to identify possible solutions to address problems in the vicinity of Connolly Station/Busáras /Luas. TII and NTA to discuss setting up of a multi-agency interchange group.	TII and NTA	See discussion below.
8.	Circulate Scoping document in relation to MetroLink.	TII to provide and Secretariat to circulate	Done.

9.	Agree reporting mechanism by agencies on NDIS universal actions	DSG representatives and DTTAS	Done. DTTAS raised this at a meeting with the DSG Chair who will include it in her report to the NDISSG. DTTAS also raised it with the Dept of Justice and Equality.
10.	Outline role of Local Authorities in relation to accessible bus stops	CCMA	See discussion below.
11.	Colours on new bus poles. Convey the concerns expressed and revert with update.	NTA	See discussion below.
12.	Ask Irish Rail if driver announcements could be made on the DART, pending the introduction of the new CISS.	Secretariat	Done. See discussion below.

In the context of discussion on actions the following main points were raised:

Action 1: New single deck buses

- NTA advised that NTA fleet engineer met with IWA and the CRC about 3 types of buses. The new low floor single decker buses allow for roll on/roll off instead of requiring a lift and the removal of 4 seats. There is some difficulty with manoeuvrability internally for some larger wheelchairs. Possible ways to address this issue viz. adjustments to the pole, using a flip up seat, or adjustments to the handle of the driver door, are to be raised with the manufacturer to see what can be done. IWA asked that IWA edits to the report for the manufacturer be included.
- In response to criticism that the NTA consulted at a late stage, the NTA said, with her appointment as Transport Accessibility Manager it is the intention to engage at an earlier stage. The NTA also said it was learning a lot from the meetings it has had and that for any future bus purchases it will see what design changes can be made in advance. The NTA noted however that buses are built to current EU standards and the NTA can only purchase what is available on the market.

- It was stated that the EU regulations are outdated and that Ireland should be lobbying for change. The role of the European Disability Forum in lobbying for change was also referred to. It was suggested that the NTA might contact the National Standards Authority of Ireland (NSAI) to be informed of the process for changing standards. The NCBI said it would send its NSAI contact details to the NTA.

Action 2: Bus Connects

- NTA met with NDA and NCBI and is meeting with IWA next week and is drafting an Impact Assessment.
- It was stated that the invitation to the IWA - to a member of the DB user group is to a “closed” meeting and it was asked whether there would be a wider meeting inviting more input.
- NTA explained that the invitation is to a workshop on bus stop design and installation involving various interest groups (walkers, cyclists, Persons with Disabilities - PWDs). The NTA will advise the ACC of the outcome of this workshop.
- The next stage of the Bus Connects consultation will be in mid-October and will involve a leaflet (with details of the proposed routes in the area) drop to all houses in Dublin. There will be a set of public information events held in many locations in Dublin in November.

Action 4: BÉ new policy on motorised scooters and motorised wheelchairs

DTTAS provided the update received from BÉ. BÉ plans to implement its new policy in the next couple of months. It is currently working on the SOPs (standard operating procedures) for carrying out the assessments and organising training for its instructors.

Action 7: Undertake high level review to identify possible solutions to address problems in the vicinity of Connolly Station/Busáras/Luas. TII and NTA to discuss setting up of a multi-agency interchange group.

- TII has set up an internal multi-disciplinary group, which is working on issues within its remit.
- Setting up of multi-agency high level group is within the NTA’s remit. Scoping document has identified the issues. Bus Éireann, Irish Rail, TII and Dublin Bus

need to be involved and TII has made the case to NTA for establishing a multi-agency group.

- The involvement of PWDs was raised. TII said that the multi-agency group would be high level at first and then PWDs would be brought into it.
- The possibility of putting in a Changing Place toilet was raised.
- It was noted that this has the potential to be a good pilot project if it works well and could be used elsewhere.

Action 10: Outline role of Local Authorities in relation to accessible bus stops

- An NTA audit of towns with a population over 5,000 which have bus stops serviced by high floor coaches, identified 43 towns which require accessibility enhancement to accommodate two stops (one in each direction) for coaches. The wheelchair lift used on high floor coaches requires approx. 3 metres of footpath width to operate which may require land acquisition or moving the bus stop to an alternative location which may not be suitable for other users.
- NTA outlined the need to have this matter prioritised as high level in Local Authorities. The CCMA noted this. The NTA will send the list of towns to the CCMA representative.

Action 11: Colours on new bus poles

- NTA met with the NCBI again in relation to the colours of the new poles, carousels, headplates and timetables. The NTA had incorporated the changes requested previously by the NCBI on them. There will be a yellow carousel which will break up the silver of the pole, more yellow on the flag, and a new type of printing. The NTA stated that the change in pole colour (from yellow to chrome) is for maintenance reasons.
- The point was made again that those with impaired vision, or who use wheelchairs, find yellow poles easier to see than stainless steel.
- NCBI is to show the proposed new design to its members and will revert to the NTA.

Action 12: Ask Irish Rail if driver announcements could be made on the DART, pending the introduction of the new CISS.

- DTTAS raised this issue with Irish Rail (IR) who provided the following response. There are potential issues with making continuous announcements which could cause a distraction to the driver, as well as issues with being able

to deliver the message consistently across the driver network. However, drivers will assist if notified of any visually impaired customer on-board. IR recommends visually impaired customers give 4 hours' notice in advance, except at the 13 hub stations on the DART, where staff is present, so no advance notice is required. Hubs are: Connolly, Killester, Raheny, Howth Junction, Howth, Malahide, Tara Street, Pearse, Sandymount, Blackrock, Dun Laoghaire, Dalkey, Bray.

- The station staff member would assist the user on-board to a designated carriage and would then ring ahead to the station hub to tell the staff member there what carriage the user is on. If the assistance is within the hub station zone, the staff member would travel with the customer.
- The workability of this was questioned. Some people get multiple buses and trains per day so advance notice is not possible.
- DTTAS advised that 47% of the DART fleet requires an upgrade of its Passenger Information System and Irish Rail is developing a proposal on the necessary upgrade work for submission to the NTA for funding. Following a tender process, it is understood the work will take approximately 2 years to complete.

4. DTTAS - Developments since last meeting

- 1. Q2 2019 Update on Work Programme circulated** – captures progress on the various actions up to 30 June.
- 2. Minister Ross appeared before Joint Oireachtas Committee on TTS on 26 June 2019** re update on implementation of recommendations of the Committee's Report on 'Accessibility of Public Transport for People with Disabilities.' Minister's opening statement/debate is available on the Oireachtas [website](#).
- 3. NTA Consultation on Potential changes to the licence conditions for public bus passenger services with regard to accessibility:**
The NTA has conducted a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA), investigating different options for the implementation of accessibility and the potential

impacts associated with these different options on the licensed 'commercial' bus services sector.

The consultation documents are available on the NTA's website. NTA will also be directly emailing interested parties. The [link to the consultation](#) was sent to ACC members on Monday last. The consultation closes at **5pm, Friday, 25 October 2019**.

- 4. New gov.ie website:** Content from the DTTAS website has migrated to the new government website www.dttas.ie. [Gov.ie](http://gov.ie) is a central portal for online government services, the aim of which is to allow citizens the ability to search and find all government services in a single, convenient manner. Services have been aggregated from across the public sector, and new services are constantly being added.

One of the primary aims of the portal is to highlight and promote the delivery of innovative digital services to citizens and businesses. The portal is seen as a good way to increase the profile of the government's digital service offering, raise awareness and facilitate improved access to these services.

- 5. Mid-term review of the NDIS and UNCRPD** was on the agenda for the last meeting of the NDIS Steering Group on 27th June. At that meeting it was agreed that the NDA would undertake gap analysis of the potential of existing information regarding NDIS actions and other legislative provisions to measure the progressive realisation of UNCRPD.
- 6. Bilateral with Chair of DSG** - PTCSD met with Renee Dempsey on 22 August at her request. She is holding similar meetings with Chairs of other ACCs to exchange views about how things are operating and any issues arising.
- 7. Irish Rail App** - Latest update is that IR expects the iPhone App will be ready for live testing later this month.

There has been some delay which IR say is due mainly to the layers of complexity it is uncovering for an app of this scale and the requirement for more detailed user flows.

IR is still asking for volunteers to assist, as there have been a low number of volunteers to date.

8. **Local Link** - Two new pilot schemes were announced on 16th May to further address gaps in transport provision in rural areas.

(i) Pilot of Local Area Hackney – The plan is to have one pilot project in each of the fifteen Local Link Office areas. The NTA launched the pilot scheme in August, seeking applications for the provision of the local area hackney service in each of the 15 designated areas nationwide. The pilot specifically relates to those areas where a full time taxi or hackney service does not appear to be viable.

Under the pilot scheme, the NTA is offering grant funding of €6,000 to individual drivers over a twelve month period. This funding is designed to contribute towards the costs associated with providing the service. Details of the scheme are available at www.DLAH.ie

The pilot scheme seeks to simplify the application process and make the provision of a service in rural areas sustainable. The pilot will enable the NTA to test this operational model and will help inform the NTA's local transport plans over the next five years.

(ii) Pilot of Community Transport Service – The plan is to have one pilot Community Transport Service project in each of the fifteen Local Link Office areas, at a cost of €5,000 per project for a twelve month period. The grant aid under the pilot is designed to provide a contribution towards the overall costs of running the service.

NTA is looking at options of how best to address provision for those with a disability, as part of the Community Transport Service pilot.

DTTAS will alert the members of the ACC when the pilot is launched.

6. Work Programme Updates

Written progress reports were received, and circulated in advance by the Secretariat, from the following

- County and City Managers Association
- Commission for Aviation Regulation
- National Disability Authority
- National Transport Authority
- Sport Ireland
- Transport Infrastructure Ireland

7. User Group Referrals

None.

8. AOB and date of next meeting

i. National Transport Training Centre

Issues were raised in relation to this project, including

- lack of consultation,
- relevance in terms of what issue it is trying to address and whether it should be a priority,
- one organisation training people with different types of disabilities, and
- the process involved.

The Chair explained that this is not an NTA project; it is a NCBI project being grant aided by the NTA. He said that as a condition of funding, it will be open to disability groups other than the NCBI.

The NTA explained that the centre will be more than a training centre for people with all disabilities. It will also be for transport operators to train their staff, and a place to bring engineers and planners together, as well as a place to test new equipment, systems and fleet. Transport Operators were approached by NCBI for support.

NCBI has had discussions with a number of other organisations representing people with disabilities and will be undertaking formal consultation. The representatives of the disability organisations at the meeting stated that no consultation had taken place with their organisations.

ii. Sport Ireland updates:

- a. The Sport Inclusion Disability Charter has 175 agencies signed up. This includes 100% of the 29 Local Sport Partnerships (LSPs). The target for 2019 is 250.
- b. The National Sports Strategy 2018-2027 indicated that a Sport Inclusion Disability Officer (SIDO) would be appointed to each LSP. This has progressed in 2019 and will be completed by end 2019 or early 2020.
- c. The National Seminar for Inclusion, co-hosted by Sport Ireland and Cara, is scheduled to take place on 21 November next in Castleknock Hotel, Dublin – SAVE THE DATE! All are welcome. More information is available at <https://caracentre.ie/event/national-seminar-for-inclusion/>.

iii. Next meeting is at 11.00 hrs on 27 November 2019.

Actions agreed at meeting/carry over actions

<u>No.</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible</u>
1	The NTA, in conjunction with IWA, to seek to identify possible solution to the issue of wheelchair spaces on the new single deck buses in Waterford and the GDA.	NTA
2	Advise ACC on next phase of Bus Connects public consultation.	NTA
3	Update on access issues in new Fáilte Ireland building in Cork City.	Fáilte Ireland
4	Circulate BÉ's new policy on motorised scooters and motorised wheelchairs when finalised.	Secretariat
5	Alert ACC members to public consultation on the review of public transport policy.	Secretariat
6	Undertake high level review to identify possible solutions to address problems in the vicinity of Connolly Station / Busáras / Luas. TII and NTA to discuss setting up of a multi-agency interchange group.	TII and NTA
7	Colours on new bus poles. NCBI to revert to NTA on further design changes.	NTA & NCBI
8	Provide CAR with details of the JAM card initiative.	NTA

9	Provide NTA with a contact in the NSAI, in the context of wheelchair standards for buses.	NCBI
10	Send the list of 43 towns identified as requiring accessible bus stops, to the CCMA representative.	NTA
12	Alert ACC when Community Transport pilot is launched.	DTTAS
13	Advise ACC of outcome of workshop on bus stop design for Bus Connects.	NTA