

# IATA releases guidance to improve transportation of mobility aids



The International Air Transport Association (IATA) announced new guidance on February 8 to aid airlines and handling agents improve the travel experience for passengers with disabilities. The guidelines focus on steps to transport mobility aids safely and efficiently.

“Airlines are committed to ensuring passengers with disabilities can travel with dignity, confidence and comfort. Working with representatives from the disability community, we established that new protocols to improve the transport of mobility aids were urgently required. This new guidance, created in partnership with key players in the travel chain, will improve service, and significantly reduce damage to these vital devices that are often an extension to the body of a passenger with a disability,” said Nick Careen, IATA’s Senior Vice President for Operations, Safety and Security in the release.

Key elements of the new guidance include:

- "Better processes for booking and information exchange, including the use of Special Service Request (SSR) and Passenger Name Requirement (PNR) codes to give advance information on the specifications of mobility aids
- A recommendation to create an electronic mobility aid tag, fixed to the mobility aid and containing technical information which will help airlines and ground handlers transport the aid safely
- Advice to airlines on developing a communications toolkit for engaging with passengers with disabilities, including a clearly signposted and accessible website area.
- Best practices for loading, collection and return of mobility aids
- A recommendation for dedicated specialized ramp personnel to be trained and deployed to handle mobility aids

- Guidance for how to properly resolve instances where mobility aids are damaged
- Revised and enhanced training of ground handlers and airline staff"

"Experience shows that communication is key to improving the handling of mobility aids. This guidance sets out steps for passengers, airlines, and the travel chain to exchange information at every stage of the travel journey. It will help airlines perform better and give passengers using mobility aids greater confidence. We'll be working with our members and stakeholders to operationalize this guidance, and the industry will be reaching out to policymakers to encourage harmonization with national regulations," said Careen.

The guidance builds on industry best practices and will continue to be revised and expanded before industry standards are set. Recommendations for airport designs that meet accessibility standards and specific guidance to ensure compliance with the Dangerous Goods Regulations (for lithium-battery powered devices) are in the works in addition to step-by-step instructions on how to safely and securely load mobility aids on board.

To read more, access [IATA Guidance on the Transport of Mobility Aids](#).