

LAWA DISABILITY ACCESS AND ACCOMMODATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, 20 November 2024

Meeting held via Teleconference

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT

1. Myrna Cabanban, Chairperson
2. Louis Herrera, Vice Chairperson
3. Kathleen Barajas, Community
4. Julia Mockeridge, Community
5. Seyed Torabzadeh, Community
6. Brandy Welch, Community
7. Sandra Mendoza, LAWA Administration
8. Tim Ihle, LAWA Airport Operations
9. James Corpuz, TSA
10. Jaun Flores, (TBITTEC) Airline Rep.

EXCUSED

ABSENT

Meeting Started at 1:01 p.m.

I. Call to Order/Roll Call

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

II. Opening Remarks and Introductions

Ms. Cabanban: New people attending the meeting introduce yourselves

Ms. Smith: Nikki Smith from Customs Border Protection.

III. Chairperson Report

Ms. Cabanban:

- Housekeeping – When speaking please speak slow for the interpreters and transcription.
- Final in-person meeting – We're trying to make it a holiday celebration. Keep it at finger foods style. Cass offered to bring the beverages. We should have a good time at that meeting, but we will conduct business as usual.
- Commission meeting update - We've had several meetings with the Deputy

Mayor, Erin Bromaghim. She's in charge of all international events that are coming into the city or has anything to do with the city. We have been talking about The LA28 Games, the Olympics and Paralympics preparations. I discovered that FIFA 26 is also going to be in the picture now. We have been meeting quite a bit along with the Department on Disability on this issues. The Mayor's office and the Department actually had formed an advisory committee making sure that all the accessibility matters are at least addressed. The airport will play a big part. I have an open invitation to for the committee to invite somebody from LAWA so we can all work together on the accessibility issues.

- New rules per DOJ – Since we have meetings online, anything that is transferred via website and I think Cass could talk a little bit on this one later, but they've been trying to train a lot of the departments with the city. I'm sure this will affect everybody who has any kind of website contents as far as this coming disability is concerned.

Mr. Torabzadeh: My director at CAL trans has honored to me to serve on the LA committee for 2028. I will be involved in that. That involves the MPA, Amtrak, and more. I will serve on both committees. I thought I just let you know.

IV. Approval of Minute

- October 16, 2024 minutes – Minutes were approved

V. Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items

None

VI. Regular Items for DAAAC

- Sam Overton - All those who are voting should have received the survey monkey from Cassandra. We need to order the plaque. If you haven't done that, tomorrow is the deadline. It takes a minute. You should be able to take an extra minute to finish that.
- Holiday celebration - We are meeting in person at LA NeXt. If you need the in-person interpreters, they must notify us so they can get that taken care of. We need two weeks. It is difficult to schedule in person. We need the time crunch. This information will be included in all agendas so that we are reminded.

Mr. Torabzadeh: What about parking?

Ms. Heredia: There's an employee's parking lot across the street. It is wide open. I made arrangements to park in that lot for the in-person meeting. There is plenty of space. You walk across the street to the building. I'll send everything out in advance so the members know where they can park and how to get there.

VII. Airport Operations Briefing

Mr. Ihle: Terminal four, some gates at the Southern end opened up. The new ticket lobby and baggage claim will open in the new year.

Statistics, comparing the past two years. 2023, January to September 2023, 56 million passengers come through. For 2024, for the same period, January through September, 57 and a half million. That is about 1.5 million passengers.

It is not a huge increase, but I do know that even though there has been a minor

increase in passengers, there has been a significant increase in the number of wheelchair service requests. At last year, the total number of passengers was a little over 75 million. Based upon the numbers here, we will have a small increase. I am guessing between 78 and 79 million. They won't be final until Spring of 2024 when they go through with numbers. That is my quick rough guess.

Planning mentioned that concourse zero has been put off for an indefinite period of time. Same with terminal nine. MSC south is coming along. Modules are in place. That addition will open up sometime next year. I don't have specific dates on that.

VIII. Planning or Facilities Briefing

NONE

IX. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Briefing

Mr. Smith: No current projects or plans.

X. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Briefing

Mr. Corpuz: Our year started in October of this year. FY25. For the month of October, we had 216 requests for assistance through our TSA cares program. I can't urge enough how we need to promote the TSA cares program to passengers and wheelchair service providers.

Only 25 passengers with disabilities using wheelchairs. Our number one request was for autism, 71 requests. We had 11 complaints regarding persons with disabilities. We're providing our screening leaderships more granular data so that we can marry up the complaints with the actual manager on duty and do comparisons. Those with good scores obviously share the best practices, those that do not will require some additional guidance on that. The number one complaint of the 11 complaints that we receive are personal disabilities was rudeness and unprofessional behavior which is really uncalled for self-inflicted. We have been drilling down on every single complaint and we will continue to do so. So hopefully we'll see some improvement throughout the remaining fiscal year.

Ms. Cabanban: One the complaints of rudeness, when you investigate, do you find out that they are like new people, or is it just what's going on, that rudeness is becoming prevalent?

Mr. Corpuz: It's not necessarily new people. They're not as experienced with the traveling public. Dealing with traveling public can be rather difficult. When I briefed our new hires, the expectation is you know this. I asked them when somebody buys an airline ticket. Is there an aptitude test? No.

Is there a behavioral test? No.

Is there a bigotry racism test? No. So anyone can buy a ticket, so you'll experience a bunch of different personalities and maybe traveling against you or maybe transference, because they got in a car accident on the way here or they're going to see a loved one who's passing away. You'll see a bunch of those situations and what we see what I've seen personally is that those who don't have a strong customer, service oriented personal skills tend to display the rudest unprofessional behavior. The fortunate part is that we're tracking it and we're addressing it, and so we advise passengers feedback. We now have QR codes at the back of the checkpoint when passengers go through,

you don't have to speak with anyone. They just do the QR code with their phone again, let us know what happened and we investigate with cameras. We sit down with the officers involved, some of them, a small amount is not. We get those that say, oh, yeah, this this certain race did this and this certain race did that and you need to hire better. The majority of them, it's the rolling the eyes, the way you talk to people when you know it's like you need to do this or you need to do that. Do you want to make your flight or not? That type of behavior is uncalled for, and we're working towards more professionalism. But Madam Chair, it's not necessarily the new hires. It's those that have been dealing with their, you know, 200 passenger in the first hour and they just don't have good tolerance. But we'll, we'll get to that.

Ms. Heredia: TSA cares program, they have been an incredible resource for passengers anxious about the airport when they have a special issue. There was a family that reached out to me. I think it has been three weeks now. They were flying in from OKC to LA. A father, mother, and teenage son who has an injury and bed bound. They were coming into LAX to get treatment in west LA. Just by mentioning things like the TSA cares program, so many people don't know they have the option. James Corpuz was successful in reaching out to his cohorts. This can make the experience so much less stressful. They did put in the request. Everything went swimmingly. I wanted to give a shout out. TSA cares has never disappointed the passengers I have recommended making a service request. I wanted to add commentary.

Mr. Corpuz: Great feedback. TSA cares are handled by passengers. They are trained with certain disabilities and certain skill sets to be better and be more interpersonal skills in dealing with situations. You can identify these officers. You will see one of those stripes having yellow. That person has been trained as a support specialist. You can approach the checkpoint if you have needs. You can ask for a Passenger Support Specialist. We are required to provide one to you at that time that you requested. They are identified with the yellow stripe.

Ms. Cabanban: Are thy handled on every shift?

Mr. Corpuz: Yes. We have almost a better percentage than most. Almost half of the workforce trained in that. There is a requirement that we have to have one on staff at every checkpoint.

XI. TBITEC Briefing

Mr. Flores: Today was the first day for the ADA shuttle pilot program in which a lot of the shuttle stop for the ADA busses are relocated to proximity entrances of the elevators and entrances of the airports. So far haven't received negative feedback. we will keep a close eye and monitor that moving forward. Secondly since we know the holiday rush is coming, we have ramped up the staff available to assist passengers who need additional assistance with baggage and in order to accommodate for the holiday season coming up.

Ms. Heredia: I just wanted today to clarify that the lower-level shuttle program was launched last Thursday the 14th. Today was the day that we got feedback from all of the wheelchair service providers. The north side terminal, TBIIT and the south side.

While TBIT and south side terminals which are floors 4 through 7 saw a significant benefit from the shuttles on the lower level, the north side shuttles 1, 2 and 3 are having challenges making it work to the passenger advantage. After we had the briefing call today I provided a snapshot of the commentary to the executives to make a decision whether or not we should continue with the lower-level shuttle program through the holiday or if we should postpone additional implementation and I want to clarify that has been ongoing since the 14th.

XII. Executive Level Briefing

Ms. Mendoza: nothing to report.

XIII. Airport Police Division Briefing

NONE

XIV. Los Angeles Fire Department Division Briefing

NONE

XV. LAWA Guest Experience Briefing

Ms. Saldivar-Chavez: Nothing to report.

Ms. Heredia: I will be reaching out to both Airport Police is and LAFD to get some sort of information on their participation. I know that Scott had root canal this week and that may have impacted his availability and I will check in with airport police to see that they are more available in 2025. May have something to do with the invitations and I am not sure and I wanted to let you know that is on my radar

XVI. ADA Coordinator Report

"Because of the extent of information relayed for this agenda item, the full transcript is provided, with minor edits."

Ms. Heredia:

- Briefing with new executive - Tim and I were fortunate enough to meet with Doug webster and new executive Ian Law. I know I mentioned that before as part of the reorg that LAWA just underwent. Based on the meeting we had yesterday Doug will still be involved just our direct reporting for executive level will be to Ian. It was very constructive. He appears to be very engaged with regard to ensuring not just compliance but accessibility and improving the passenger experience overall for persons with disabilities through LAX. He has asked that Tim and I join a meeting with him at some point to be schedule where we brainstorm and flush out how the improve accessibility at the airport. Once we have something sketched out I am sure involving the DAAAC and getting feedback from you whether we are looking at things the right way or taking the correct approach from an operational standpoint tone sure accessibility it is something that will come up in 2025. It does start with strategic goals and I draft add few. Ian seemed favorable to the strategic goals I came up with and intent is to have a type of comprehensive accessibility program where we make improvements and kind of tie everything together cohesively but it would be a multiyear project. I am very enthusiastic about his engagement level. I did want to make sure everybody is aware of

that.

- TOSC meeting - Tibet and our T5. Multi use terminals meeting Tim runs it. Basically, I just gave an ADA coordinator report which provided things like metrics and where we stand with the FAA compliance review. I do it maybe once a year. If there's something important, I'll do it twice a year, but I have tried to inform most of the service providers in our multi use terminals. like Tibet, NSC and T5, some of the important pieces of information because outside of that, typically what I do is coordinate meetings directly with the wheelchair service providers and ground transportation..
- Thank you letters going out to Capital improvement Projects (CIP) teams – The thank you letters going out to the Capital Improvement project teams. I will get that done before the end of the year. It's difficult to get to the level of admin work, field work and review by myself. It is on the list and by the end of the year we will make sure to give the CIP teams a thank you letter for presenting to the DAAAC and include follow up questions we had about items regarding the project.
- Capital Improvement Project Status – Wayfinding: I have a meeting on November 27th with the lead of Wayfinding which is a larger of all capital improvement project. Daniel Sneed coordinates the meetings. That is what he does. The intent is to make sure that the experience in terms of getting information and knowing where you are going, to make as accessible and seamless as possible. I think everybody here who travels through LAX understands that. In addition to construction and different types of ageing infrastructure seem like a patch work. The intent of the way finding team is to provide that information from a more streamlined and like I said seamless experience that will include things like the CONRAC and APM and making information accessible to everybody once they are on our footprint.
- Pilot lower-level shuttle program - Juan brought up it is working well for TBIT. I emphasize the issues we are having on the north side verses benefit for south side and TBIT terminals. I will keep everybody posted on the decisions that the executives make regarding that. I think items that are a challenge for north side, some of them can be addressed. Things like giving more advanced notice to wheelchair dispatch for a terminal once the ADA shuttle is about to arrive. I think part of the learning curve now is because the shuttles are traveling in probably anywhere from a third to half of the time on the lower level as they were on the upper level is being able to give lead time to wheelchair dispatch. That meeting the shuttle at the curb has been shortened. Before the ADA shuttle would let a terminal know it's on the way. With passengers and the agent would have to wait for the shuttle, sometimes for an extend period of time. Now we have the shuttle showing up so quickly the agents can't get there in time. More lead time regarding notifications to the wheelchair service providers is one item and try to go see if there is some way we can provide seating where it is not available. Southwest and Delta both have sky caps at the curb. The wheelchair service providers tap into that as a supplementary resource if the ADA shuttle shows up sky caps can kind of facilitate the transfer of the passenger from the shuttle to the wheelchair and serve that purpose that is required by the carrier access act at the curb. Those resources are not available on the arrivals level for other airlines are

having a difficulty in how to make that that adjustment or if they can make the adjustment. We'll just have to see what the executives say with regard to pressing forward on this with Thanksgiving week coming up so quickly.

- Notable Complaints – I wanted to make sure that DAAAC is aware that I'm seeing an uptick in complaints regarding ground transportation. They are not legitimate complaints. One in particular where we had an issue, an alleged issue with the Fly Away where a passenger reached out to me saying that the lift for the bus on the fly away was inoperative and he had to wait for the next bus. Then he arrived at LAX from the Van Nuys Fly Away and then took the Union Station Fly Away. He stated that the driver denied him access onto the bus until I'm quoting, "until all of the passengers refused to board unless he was allowed to get onto the bus." First, Van Nuys lift was operable. Unfortunately, it was the remote that was broken, and there's a proficiency issue with the driver. Fly Away did address the issue regarding driver proficiency on how to manually deploy the lift if the remote is not available, but the next bus was there in under 10 minutes. This gentleman came to LAX, told me in the e-mail that he thought he was going to miss his flight. and then we came to realize he did not have a flight; he was using the fly away from a phishing perspective. We have video that shows the driver did not deny him access, that he deployed the wheelchair lift promptly and allowed the passenger to board first and the entire time the complainant was videotaping with his phone. He contacted me the same day on my cell phone at 5:00 p.m. and threatened litigation. At that point before I had all of the pieces of information such as the video that he was basically utilizing by the nigh away and union station fly away as mass transit without having a flight and try to go catch us doing something wrong so to speak. When he called me he had announced that he works for a law firm in downtown Los Angeles and that is why he was taking the union station fly away. My response is if you want to pursue litigation we have to end the call that is not my purview. If you work for a law firm, follow up with the city clerk to start the process and I will investigate the complaint and provide you with a response. This is one of a couple of instance that happened to happen within four weeks of each other. The reason they are notable is because I have been made aware and had the to share with ground transportation providers that sometimes people are looking to abuse the system and it makes it difficult for everyone who has a disability who is expecting standard of support and assistance. If you are phishing for a lawsuit, unfortunately you end up causing a level of defensiveness or a level of, a response where people are apprehensive and that is detrimental. I did respond within 24 hours and I will let the executive knows and I have not heard back from him and the complaint that came within two weeks after that was actually somewhat related.
- Update on FAA final report - The FAA said they would get the final report within three weeks, it took a little over two months. It has 14 items on it. 14 corrected action item we need to address and a couple of them are already being addressed or have been address. They were kind of what I want to call them the easier items, at the lower hanging fruit. But there are a number of items that are going to take longer and debrief Doug and Ian on the approach

I want to take. I got their guidance yesterday during a meeting. I will be reaching out to the executives who have oversight over the units or divisions that are responsible to take a corrected action and I will let those executives direct me to who they want their point of contact to be for the corrected actions. It is also going to be a bit of a multiyear process, revising contractual language for tenants and airlines at the airport, in and of itself will take some time.

- Reference Materials and Announcements - I regularly get additional webinar links from the U.S. access board as well. When Myrna brought up the DOJ rule on the web content accessibility guidelines, the new rule that, there is some training that is already been put out and there are U.S. access board webinars on that that have gone out. Please let me know if you want me to forward those and they are obviously available to the public. Tim and I also made a request to meet with User Way and our IT folks internally and provided us with the first step of reviewing all of our web site content. Include what gets displayed on mobile platforms to do an audit to see whether or not we have any gaps in accessibility to meet the new DOJ rule so we can take action to correct it before the DOJ rule goes into effect or expected to be met in the 2026. That is a lot of stuff and I am done now.
 - [U.S. Access Board Resolves 85 Architectural Barriers Act Complaints Through Corrective Action in Fiscal Year 2024](#)
 - [Accessible Bus and Van Transportation](#)

Mr. Herrera: I want today very briefly comment on Cass's comment regarding the person with a wheelchair issue. It is something that is sadly becoming a trend. Not just for the people in wheelchairs there are some blind people which in my line of work, in the working for utility company, we constantly get those kinds of things. It doesn't surprise me. I want to give credit to TSA about my experience with LAWA or the LAX airport because I traveled on the 25th of October. It was a real early flight and to have somebody take the time to not only stop what they were doing and also show me where, how to get to the counter to get my ticket process and had then go to the, through TSA. TSA was fantastic. Except they still want to pat Hugo down in case had been carrying illegal contraband. I see why they want to do it and I am okay with it. The quality of service is fantastic they are getting better and better. I want to make sure you are aware for them to go out of their way and be descriptive where we are at and telling me their job is to make sure I get there safely was very well received and I appreciate the quality of service we are getting from LAX.

Ms. Heredia: I forgot to mention housekeeping issue. Please note that after this meeting today the virtual meeting series for 2024, I am going cancel it. We will only see the meeting invite for the in-person meeting for December. Then, starting January there will be new recurring meeting invites again like I do every year. The one adjustment I am going to try to make after having conversations with Myrna and Tracy about the number of people that get added to the invites get, I am if going to call it bulky. I think what I am going to try to do is once I initiate the invites for 2025. Which will just be the core members. I am going to go try to give Tracy permission to send stuff on my behalf so that, say, in February, if we have a guest presenter.

She can just go into my calendar and send the presenter the invite for that month verses having to manage all of the people that get added along the year. But that is a level of technical proficiency I am not sure I have yet. Just hoping for the best. That is my game plan new year's resolution.

XVII. Presentations

None

XVIII. New Business

NONE

XIX. Adjournment

1:57

Minutes were presented to the Disability Access and Accommodation Advisory Committee (DAAAC) for approval at its regular scheduled meeting on December 18, 2024. The minutes of the October 20, 2024 meeting were approved by DAAAC.

Tracy Bradley 12/18/2024
Administrative Support Date