

Animal and Plant Health Agency

PT33 Memorandum of Understanding: Agreement between APHA and Community air carriers and UK air carriers for carriage of Recognised Assistance Dogs

October 2024

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Section 1: General information

Part 1: Application of the Memorandum of Understanding

This Memorandum of Understanding applies in relation to flights carrying Recognised Assistance Dogs into Great Britain operated by:

- Community air carriers*
- UK air carriers**

hereinafter referred to as “air carriers”.

* an air carrier with a valid operating licence granted by a Member State in accordance with Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on common rules for the operation of air services in the Community as it has effect in EU law (this includes European Economic Area (EEA) states and Switzerland).

** an air carrier with a valid operating licence granted by the Civil Aviation Authority in accordance with Chapter II of Regulation (EC) No 1008/2008 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 September 2008 on common rules for the operation of air services in the United Kingdom.

A Recognised Assistance Dog refers to a dog which the air carrier reasonably believes to be an assistance dog accompanying a disabled traveller or a traveller with reduced mobility for the purpose of providing appropriate support to that person, informed by any relevant guidance from Government (Department for Transport (DfT)) and/or Regulators (Civil Aviation Authority (CAA)). Any other dog is not covered by this Memorandum of Understanding and a separate approval is required for carriers wishing to transport them as a regular pet.

Part 2: Legal obligations on community air carriers

- 1. Air carriers have a legal obligation to accept disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility on their flights and should not refuse transport on the grounds of disability or lack of mobility except for reasons which are justified on the grounds of safety and prescribed by law. This obligation extends to the carriage of Recognised Assistance Dogs.**

2. **The legal obligations are set out in full in assimilated Regulation (EC) No. 1107/2006 concerning the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility when travelling by air (“Regulation 1107/2006”). The main obligations relating to the carriage of Recognised Assistance Dogs are as follows:**

Article 7.2 of Regulation 1107/2006

Where use of a Recognised Assistance Dog is required, this shall be accommodated provided that notification of the same is made to the air carrier or its agent or the tour operator in accordance with applicable national rules covering the carriage of assistance dogs on board aircraft, where such rules exist.

Article 10 of Regulation 1107/2006

Assistance by air carriers - An air carrier shall provide the assistance specified in Annex II of the Regulations without additional charge to a disabled person or person with reduced mobility departing from, arriving or transiting through an airport to which this Regulation applies provided that the person in question fulfils the conditions set out in Article 7(1), (2) and (4).

Annex II - Assistance by air carriers

Carriage of Recognised Assistance Dogs in the cabin, subject to national regulations.

Part 3: Status of Memorandum of Understanding

1. This Memorandum of Understanding sets down the common position agreed between the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) and air carriers regarding how they will facilitate the carriage of Recognised Assistance Dogs by air into Great Britain and work with the managing bodies of airports to ensure Recognised Assistance Dogs are presented to the appropriate persons at airports for checks.
2. By signing the Memorandum of Understanding, the air carrier agrees to use all reasonable endeavours to comply with the written procedures set out below.
3. APHA and air carriers will review the operation of the Memorandum of Understanding at least every two years.

Air carrier name:

Review date (to be completed by APHA):

Date of completion/amendment:

Section 2: Agreed procedure

Operation	Description of the process
Check-in procedures	
<p>1.</p> <p>(i) Air carriers are required through their ticketing and booking systems to identify travellers carrying Recognised Assistance Dogs.</p> <p>(ii) On arrival at the airport of embarkation, checks should be made to ensure that the air carrier is satisfied that the dog is a Recognised Assistance Dog informed by any relevant guidance from the Government (DfT) and/or Regulators (CAA).</p> <p>(iii) Checks should be made to ensure the passenger travelling with the Recognised Assistance Dog has a valid and completed pet passport or health certificate.</p>	<p>The air carrier will transmit information in accordance with Regulation 1107/2006, and relevant Government or regulator guidance. This will include identifying passengers who are travelling with a Recognised Assistance Dog, through the use of designated codes e.g. PETC - Passenger travelling with an assistance dog.</p> <p>For passengers who have advised Community air carriers 48 hours in advance before departure, this data will be transmitted (e.g using the PAL/CAL system) no later than 36 hours prior to flight departure.</p> <p>For bookings within 36 hours of departure, at the time of reservation a notification will be sent by SITA message or to the designated email address at the recipient airport. If there is a change of reservation a CAL list will be sent. The airline should ask the owner to supply proof that the dog is a Recognised Assistance Dog. An identification card supplied by the organisation which trained the dog would satisfy this.</p> <p>The air carrier should follow relevant Government and regulator guidance on assessing whether the dog is a Recognised Assistance Dog including on any relevant evidence they should seek from the assistance dog user.</p>

Operation	Description of the process
Check-in procedures	
	<p>The air carrier will additionally endeavour to encourage passengers, through a suitable message within the website and call centre booking process, to contact the applicable supplier if required, for provision of booking and supplementary data, ideally in advance of the above timescales.</p> <p>The air carrier will ensure they are satisfied that the dog is a Recognised Assistance Dog, using any relevant guidance from Government or the regulator, including any assessment of evidence provided to them by the assistance dog user. Where the air carrier does not consider a dog to be a Recognised Assistance Dog, the air carrier will require a carrier approval from APHA to transport the dog as a pet.</p> <p>All pets, including Recognised Assistance Dogs, must comply with the relevant pet travel requirements included in Regulation 576/2013 (and associated regulations 577/2013 and 2018/772). Full guidance is available on GOV.uk. The air carrier should supply a checklist for the passenger to confirm that they have the required paperwork to comply with GB entry for Recognised Assistance Dogs and must identify animals that need checking and make sure they are presented on arrival.</p>

Operation	Description of the facility etc.
Routing of declared Recognised Assistance Dogs	
<p>2. Registered air carriers should ensure that they only land Recognised Assistance Dogs travelling in the cabin at airports in Great Britain which have been approved by APHA. Where for reasons of safety or in exceptional circumstances an air carrier is required to divert to another airport, the air carrier should follow its contingency procedure for transporting Recognised Assistance Dogs to alternative airports.</p>	<p>The air carrier has a written contingency procedure for transporting Recognised Assistance Dogs to an appropriate airport for checks in the event of an emergency diversion to an unapproved airport</p> <p>In the case of a Recognised Assistance Dog needing to be transported to an alternative airport, or if a contingency plan related to diversion to another airport leads to a significant delay in the clearance of a Recognised Assistance Dog, the duty officer at Guide Dogs or any relevant assistance dog organisation should be informed. Appropriate support should be provided for the Recognised Assistance Dog user.</p>
<p>3. The Recognised Assistance Dog should be presented by the registered air carrier to the personnel responsible for checks (the PRM provider or this may be managed by authorised pet checkers in some larger airports).</p>	<p>The cabin crew will not allow the passenger and Recognised Assistance Dog to disembark from the aircraft without being collected and escorted by the PRM provider or the personnel responsible for the checks. The PRM provider, or the authorised pet checkers will be responsible for performing the relevant identity and documentary checks in the location agreed in the airport protocol.</p>

Operation	Description of the facility etc.
Routing of travellers with undeclared Recognised Assistance Dogs	
<p>4. The identification of undeclared pets carried by any traveller is an essential part of prevention of smuggling. Whilst it is recognised that a smuggled assistance dog would be a very rare occurrence, air carriers should describe the instruction and training given to all staff and points in transit through the journey where an undeclared Recognised Assistance Dog might be detected.</p>	<p>In the event that an undeclared Recognised Assistance Dog is smuggled into the cabin and is detected by cabin staff, the aircraft captain should radio ahead to inform the airport which should be asked to inform the Local Authority and APHA.</p> <p>If a Recognised Assistance Dog is smuggled into GB or fails the checks at the airport of arrival, then the owner or person on who a notice of quarantine is served will be responsible for any costs and charges incurred should the dog be placed in quarantine.</p>
Operation	Description of the facility etc.
Welfare in Transport	
<p>5. Recognised Assistance Dogs must be transported in a way that does not adversely impact the animal's welfare.</p>	<p>Animals are protected from injury or unnecessary suffering during transportation by a general duty of care provision in Article 4 of The Welfare of Animals (Transport) (England) Order 2006 (WATEO) and equivalent national legislation in Scotland and Wales. WATEO requires that animals, including dogs, are transported in receptacles or means of transport under conditions (in particular with regard to space, ventilation, temperature and security) and with such supply of liquid and oxygen, as are appropriate for the species concerned.</p>

This form must be submitted to the CITC at: Imports@apha.gov.uk

Animal and Plant Health Agency
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Data Protection:

For information on how we handle personal data visit www.gov.uk and search Animal and Plant Health Agency Personal Information Charter.

APHA is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and also works on behalf of the Scottish Government, Welsh Government and Food Standards Agency to safeguard animal and plant health for the benefit of people, the environment and the economy.