

Accessibility Progress Report – 1st year (2023/2024)

SCOPE:

As mandated by Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations (ATPDR), the Azores Airlines SATA Office of Social Responsibility, Safety and Health produces the present Accessibility Progress Report.

This report outlines Azores Airline's progress in implementing accessibility measures for its people with disabilities and the representative organizations, including information received through the feedback process, to remove barriers and improve accessibility for passengers with special needs.

Parts of ATPDR Progress Report

- (a) General**
 - 1. Contact Information & Feedback Process
- (b) Progress Report Elements**
 - 1. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)
 - 2. Communication, other than ICT
 - 3. Design and Delivery of Programs and Services
 - 4. Built Environment
 - 5. Transportation
 - 6. Procurement of Goods, Services and Facilities
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(a) GENERAL

The present Accessibility Progress Report serves to demonstrate that the Transport Service Provider (TSP), hereafter referred to as Azores Airlines' intent to fully comply with the Accessible Canada Act (ACA), Accessible Transportation Planning and Reporting Regulation (ATPRR). As a regulated national entity, Azores Airlines prepared and published an accessibility plan, thus established, and maintains feedback and assessment processes, and reporting procedures to continually enhance resources for accommodating the needs of Azores Airlines passengers with disabilities.

This report was produced as part of the accessibility plan for persons with disabilities in accordance with the ACA Transportation requirement to ensure that all modes of transportation are accessible to persons with disabilities.

Azores Airline's designated representative and official position to receive feedback on behalf of the Azores Airlines is Mr. Jose Raposo (Office of Responsibility, Occupational Safety & Health Coordinator), which may be contacted via e-mail jose.raposo@sata.pt or by cellular phone, at +351 912 653 398, on a 24/7 daily basis.

The mailing address to be used, when applicable, is SATA Azores Airlines, Rua Dr. José Bruno Tavares Carreiro, N.º 6, 5º Piso, 9500-119 Ponta Delgada, S. Miguel, Azores – Portugal.

Mr. Raposo is also the person the public can contact for alternate request format of the description of the feedback process or an alternate format of the progress report, by the same means, as listed below, mailing address, cellular phone or email address.

In addition to the contact above, the following contacts are also available:

- **Online form:** Accessibility feedback online form
- **By Mail:**

Loja de Vendas Toronto Sales Office
Azores Airlines
1274 Dundas St. West, Toronto Ontario, M6J 1X7
Canada

Head Office Rua Dr. José Bruno Tavares Carreiro, N.º 6, 9º, 9500-769, Ponta Delgada Açores – Portugal

Tel. 351 296 209 710/1 Fax. 351 296 672 090

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• **By Telephone:**

Contact Center

Toll-Free from Canada and the United States: 1-800-762-9995

From Portugal, dial: 296 209 720

International callers, please dial (+351) 296 209 720.

*Call to Portuguese national fixed network. The cost of communications depends on the tariff agreed with your operator.

Toronto Sales Office: 416-515-7188

• **By Email:**

accessibility@sata.pt

Azores Airlines will provide this Plan in the following alternate formats on request:

- Print
- Large Print
- Braille (please allow 45 days)
- Audio (please allow 45 days)
- Electronic format that is compatible with adaptive technology

(b) PROGRESS

Having this in mind, it immediately sought to understand what improvement opportunities SATA could plan, implement, monitor and correct, in a short- and long-term basis in that sense, the initial plan was developed to meet the intent to be effective and supported on a high level of organization commitment to serve our customer that may require special assistance.

The main purpose of the plan is to indicate policies and procedures that must be monitored and adjusted in accordance with feedback received. The progress report addresses the status report of this plan, and is summarized below:

1. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

Barrier	Desired Outcome	Target Date	Progress report
WCAG 2.1 level AA on website	Improve accessibility	Q4 2024	On going - This commitment is not immediate. Some measures have already been taken. SATA expects to have a report on the work done over the last year by the end of the year.
Difficulties in navigation and selection for keyboard users on some of the website calendars	Address these difficulties for keyboard users	Q4 2024	On going - This commitment is not immediate. Some measures have already been taken. SATA expects to have a report on the work done over the last year by the end of the year.

2. Communication, other than ICT

Barrier	Desired Outcome	Target Date	Progress report
Written documents	Investigate the possibility of introducing printed information and placards in Braille, such as Safety on Board	Q1 2024	Braille Safety Cards are already available on board. Forbidden articles to transport in the cabin or in hold are also available on the check in counters at the airports.
	Investigate if we can have all information and placards readable for passengers with impaired or no vision	Q1 2025	Availability of some placards with relevant information to be in braille – work in progress
Voice relay service	Improve service assistance for customers with hearing or speech disabilities. Explore options and consult prior to any planned implementation.	Long term	Developed in a long-term period.
Information video	Create information video with signing and add this to the website and IFE	Q4 2025	Done – a video was produced: SATA Azores Airlines Inclusiva - YouTube

3. Design and Delivery of Programs and Services

Barrier	Desired Outcome	Target Date	Progress Report
Consultation	Review training programs to identify areas for any further improvements	Q4 2024	Done. With regards to training, the Passenger Assistance training programs, including passengers with disabilities and reduced mobility, given to all Ground Handling, Basic Passenger Assistants and Commercial Employees, have been revised. The new programs became effective in January 2024. A meeting was held between the Passenger Assistance trainers and the Cabin Trainers to analyze the training content that needs to be provided to cabin crew, the content of which is included in the "CSOP - Cabin Standard Operating Procedures" module.

4. Built Environment

All airport facility, company offices that support the Azores Airline activities and fleet are prepared to accommodate worker and passengers with special needs, as described in Azores Airlines Accessibility Plan. All feedback contrary to this assumption, SATA will plan accordingly, implement corrective and preventive measure, monitor their effectiveness and act in a responsible manner to remove all administrative obstacles and fiscal barriers to accommodate people with limitations and special needs.

5. Transportation

At all regional and national airports where SATA operates, it is committed to contract all necessary and available passenger with reduced mobility assistances services.

Azores Airlines has recently transported a group of 32 blind passengers, accompanied by 5 service dogs, and had previously transported a group of 5 blind people with 3 service dogs, so it has sought to improve its services and facilities, building a favorable environment for transporting passengers with special needs, with success.

We believe that the increase in the transportation of people with special needs shows that passengers with special needs feel truly welcome and continually choose Azores Airlines as their preferred airline.

All these efforts are detailed in the present, from the Office of Responsibility, Occupational Safety & Health Coordinator, which shows that Azores Airlines employees with special needs have also been consulted and integrated.

6. Procurement of goods, services and facilities

Since the last audit, no new risk factors or opportunities were noted and registered. The open items, including the production of a video and the braille cards (prohibited articles and safety on board instructions), were completed as scheduled. The office of social responsibility requested the assistance of a blind person, specifically an Azores Airlines employee, to proofread the braille card. The individual confirmed that the card was correct in terms of literacy and grammar.

7. Employment

Since the last audit, no new employment issues, risks and opportunities were noted and registered. Azores Airlines is committed to uphold fair labor policies and non-discriminatory employment practices. Azores Airlines is zero-tolerance when it comes to employee or third-party discrimination, especially concerning current and future employees and including passengers with special needs.

Open Item: Azores Airlines is at the final phase to obtaining an international certification in Management of Social Responsibility, under NORM NP 4469:2019 (ISO Standard 26000).

Commitments that SATA must adhere to this new certification:

- **Enhanced Reputation and Improved Internal and External relationship:**

Airlines that follow ISO 26000 principles demonstrate commitment to ethical practices, which positively impacts their reputation among passengers, including those with special needs, investors, and the public, in general.

- **Attracting and Retaining Workers and Customers:** ISO 26000 principles attract and retain employees and passengers by emphasizing social responsibility, especially those requiring special assistance.

8. Provisions of CTA Accessibility-related regulations

- **Communication needs:** Azores Airlines complies with communication needs for its passengers.

- **Fleet and Equipment:** Azores Airlines is an airline carrier that is prepared to transport passengers with reduced mobility. It operates Airbus A321 LR, which is equipped with the essential training in the care of passengers with special needs. Azores Airlines is in the process of analyzing the operational need for procuring cabin wheelchairs to allow movement on board, mainly to sanitary installations. This is an open item.

- **Terminal Facilities:** Azores Airlines only operates flights to locations where terminal facilities and support is provided and adequate for passengers with special needs.

- **Training:** Azores Airlines complies with the requirements issued by IATA, ECAC, and European, US and Canada regulations, regarding the training of its employees involved in handling passengers with reduced mobility. We, through the training programs, ensure that all employees have adequate training and awareness of the assistance that must be given to passengers with reduced mobility
- **Security Screening and Border Clearance:** The outsourced services are subject to screen and the reporting or irregular systems and personal conduct towards passenger and employees with limitations and special needs.

(c) FEEDBACK INFORMATION

As means of gathering feedback, on May 21, at Azores Airlines 's request, an Azores Airlines blind employee conducted as a mystery guest passenger an evaluation on a Azores Airlines flight from Ponta Delgada to Porto. Based on the mystery guest's feedback, upon entering the airplane, the senior cabin crew asked if it was the passenger's first time flying. The senior crew member then asked if the passenger was interested in receiving the braille card, to which the response was affirmative. The braille card was provided before the general safety instructions were given to other passengers. Additionally, the cabin crew helped by allowing the blind passenger to touch the life vest and mask, explaining their correct use. During the return flight, the braille cards were promptly presented to the passenger upon seating. The second crew provided further assistance during the meal service, including handling the meal tray and adjusting the coffee and teacups.

However, during the distribution of the meal, the cabin crew placed the meal tray on the table but did not assist in opening the meal box or describing its contents. The blind passenger expected more assistance in this regard. When the crew member served coffee, the passenger explained the location of the coffee and juice cups relative to the table.

During the last audit, no new risk factors or opportunities were noted and registered. The open items, including the production of a video and the braille cards (prohibited articles and safety instruction on board), were completed as scheduled.

(d) CONSULTATIONS

As a first-hand means of consultation, the office of social responsibility requested the assistance of a blind person, specifically a Azores Airlines employee, to assist and, as a consultant, recommend the betterment of operations and special aids for passengers that require special traveler needs, for example, this person proofread the braille card, before production, in which he suggested changes to grammar and sentence structure for the bail cards. The individual confirmed that the card was correct in terms of literacy and grammar.

Azores Airlines has established an Accessibility Plan Workgroup to periodically review plan requisites, non-conformities, and opportunities to enhance Azores Airlines' performance. The workgroup comprises a multidisciplinary team of Azores Airlines workers, including two individuals with limitations (a blind person and a deaf person). Their respective associations will also be in attendance.

The Azores Airlines Board of Directors has approved a voluntary program to train Azores Airlines employees in handling and assisting passengers using sign language. This initiative deserves commendation.

(e) CONCLUSION:

As the Social Responsibility, Safety & Health Manager, to the best of my knowledge, states that Azores Airlines complies with the intent and requirements of the ACA.

Ponta Delgada, 30th of July 2024.