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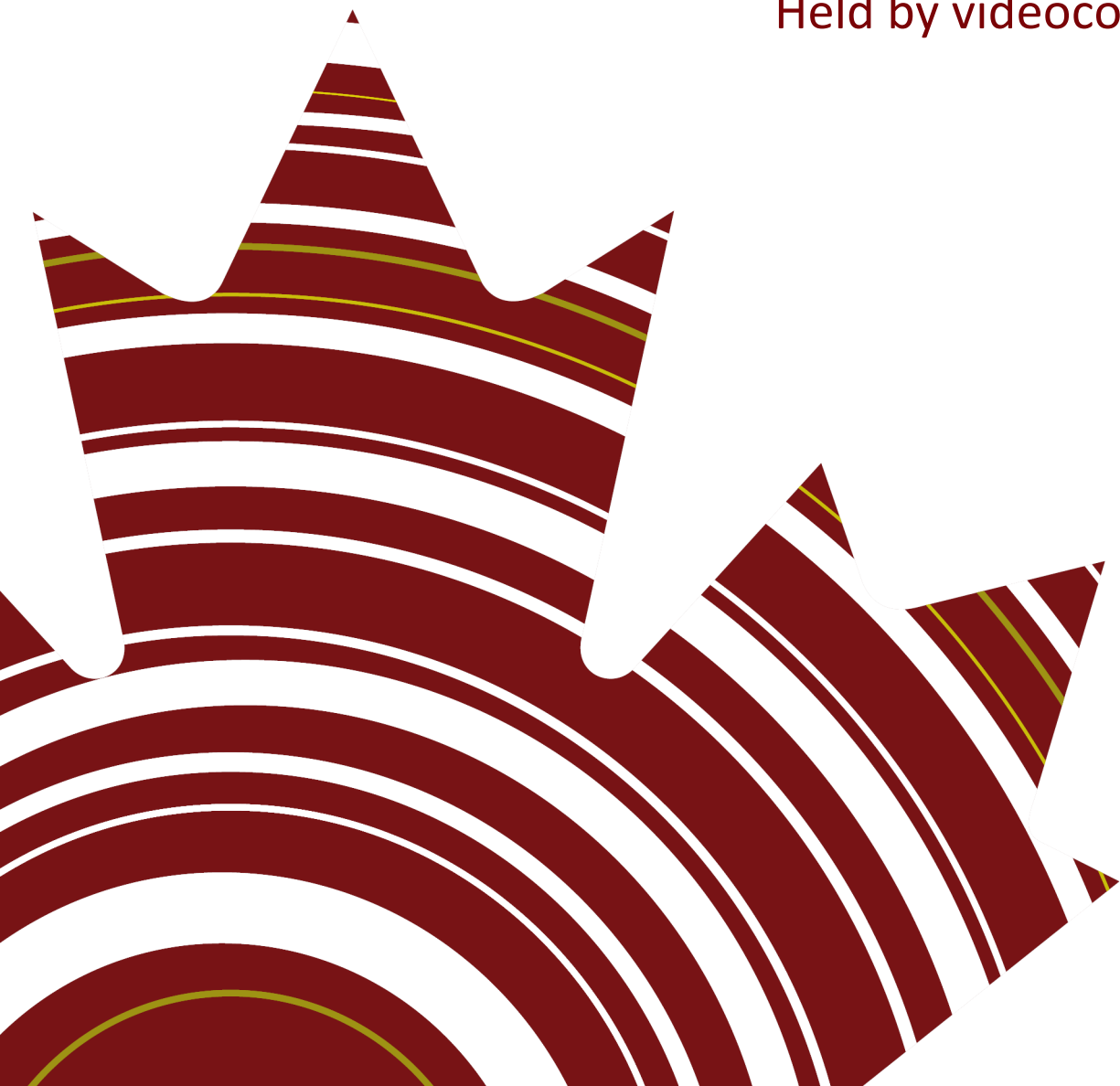
Office
des transports
du Canada

Working group on ATPDR temporary exemption requests

Canadian Transportation Agency

March 16, 2021

Held by videoconference



Canada 

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Disclaimer

Personal statements

Please note that participant comments expressed during the public consultations events are considered personal statements and do not represent the official position of the Canadian Transportation Agency. All participants were given the option to make their oral submission in the official language of their choice.

Privacy notice

All participants were informed that information they shared during the public consultation process will form part of the public record and will be posted on the CTA's website in due course.

Accuracy disclaimer

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Naming Convention

All references to speakers have been changed to first and last names for clarity and in accordance with our Inclusivity statement.

Attendees

Meeting host

Marcia Jones—Chief Strategy Officer

Agency staff

Jordan Doyle

Rachael Donovan

Marcia Jones

Sonia Gangopadhyay

Susan Clarke

Glenda Nicol

Shafi Askari

Anthony Sealey

George Ross

Elysia Van Zeyl

Valérie Sicard

Air Terminals

Wayne Harvey, Canadian Airports Council (CAC)

Joanna Zyma, Hamilton Airport

Jackie McIver, Thunder Bay Airport

Merilee Adamson, Calgary Airport Authority

Robert R. Manlig, Whitehorse Int'l Airport

Jennifer Lutzko, Saskatoon Airport

Kurush Minocher, Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA)

Peter Humele, Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA)

Atul Sharma, Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA)

Sophie Lambert, Quebec City Airport

Tracey Hutton, Yukon Aviation

Air Carriers

Len Corrado, Sunwing

Kelly Knutson, Air Transat

David Atkins, Air North

Kerianne Wilson, Air Canada
Linda Ristagno, International Air Transport Association (IATA)
Attila Ulku, International Air Transport Association (IATA)
Jared Mikoch-Gerke, WestJet
Sheila Duhaime, WestJet
Olga Young, Jazz Aviation
Erin Follet, Jazz Aviation
Wayne Gouveia, Air Transport Association of Canada (ATAC)
Graham Keithley, Airlines for America
Suzanne Acton-Gervais, National Airlines Council of Canada (NACC)

Marine Sector

Natalie Musseau, Marine Atlantic

Bus Sector

Stevie McKeeman, Motor Coach Canada
Mardi Schueler, Motor Coach Canada

Disability Rights Organizations

Trish McAuliffe, President, National Pensioners Federation
Jérôme Plante, Confédération des organismes de personnes handicapées du Québec (COPHAN)
Donna Jodhan, Barrier-Free Canada
Lui Greco, Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB)
Heather Walkus, Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD)
Janet Hunt, National Coalition
Bill Adair, Spinal Cord Injury Canada
Corry Stuve, Alliance for the Equality of Blind Canadians
Louise Gillis, Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB)

Other Gov't Observers

Steven Winters, Transport Canada (TC)

Court Reporter

Mathieu Bastien-Marcil

Technical support and simultaneous translation

LMB Interpretation Systems Inc.

Opening remarks by Marcia Jones

Marcia Jones : Good afternoon, everybody, and welcome to our second working group meeting on the request for exemptions from certain provisions of the *Accessible Transportation for Persons with Disabilities Regulations*, ATPDR.

First, I will hand things over to LMB to go over technical details and information for this meeting.

LMB : Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome. Before we get started, we have a few instructions we would like to mention to help with the success of your meeting.

First of all, for accessibility purposes, please be sure to edit your name on Zoom to include your first name, last name and the name of your organization. Simply find your name in the list of participants at the bottom of your screen and click on the arrow next to your name to change it.

Please be sure that your microphones are muted at all times when you are not speaking. You will find the "Mute" button at the bottom left of your screen. The icon is a small microphone. You will see a red line across the microphone when you are muted.

For those participating by telephone, you can press "*6" to mute and unmute your microphone.

To raise your hand when you would like to speak, you can press "*9".

Participants on Zoom can raise their hand by clicking on the icon at the bottom of your screen.

To access the ASL services provided for this meeting, simply click on "View" at the top right of your screen and select "Gallery View". You can then hover your mouse over the video feed of ASL1 and/or ASL2 and select "pin" by clicking on the three dots at the top right of the video.

We are also offering live simultaneous interpretation for this meeting. To access the interpretation, simply click on the small globe icon at the bottom of your screen marked "Interpretation" and select the language you would prefer to listen to.

Unfortunately, interpretation is not available for participants joining us by telephone.

Lastly, in order to enable closed captioning for this meeting, simply click on "Closed Caption" at the bottom of your screen and then "Show Subtitles".

We thank you for your participation, and I will now give the floor to Marcia Jones.

Marcia Jones : Thank you very much for that.

Marcia Jones : And just to let everybody know, we will have a short survey at the end of this meeting on the logistics. This is obviously a bit new for all of us, having an accessible Zoom meeting. I think after a year we're getting more used to it. We want to make sure we're meeting people's needs, so we encourage you to fill out the survey at the conclusion of this meeting.

So same as the last meeting. I won't be doing a roundtable or roll call today, but I will identify which organizations are at the table.

And just a reminder for people to please include who you are representing beside your name in Zoom so that others are able to easily identify who is participating in the meeting.

So from air terminals, we have Canadian Airports Council, CAC, Hamilton Airport, Thunder Bay Airport, Calgary Airport Authority, Whitehorse International Airport, Saskatoon Airport, GTAA and Quebec City Airport.

From carriers, we have Sunwing, Air Transat, Air North, Air Canada, IATA, WestJet, Jazz Aviation, ATAC and Airlines for America.

From marine sector, we have Marine Atlantic.

From the bus sector, we have Motor Coach Canada.

And turning to disability rights organizations, we have National Pensioners Federation, COPHAN, Barrier-Free Canada, CNIB, the National Coalition, Alliance for the Equality of Blind Canadians.

I think somebody has their microphone off(sic). Please be sure to turn it to mute. Thank you.

We also have, I believe, CCD. Not sure if CCD was able to attend today. Spinal Cord Injury Canada. Again, not sure if Spinal Cord Injury was able to attend today. If not, they'll be at the next meeting.

Finally, we have staff from the Canadian Transportation Agency. So in addition to myself, we have staff from the Centre of Expertise for Accessible Transportation, Sonja Gangopadhyay, Susan Clarke, Glenda Nicol, Shafi Askari, Anthony Sealey, and George Ross. We also have Jordan Doyle and Rachael Donovan from other branches of the Agency, and Valerie – sorry, Elysia Van Zeyl from our legal services. Finally, we have Steven Winters from Transport Canada observing today.

I also wanted to give a friendly reminder to everybody that there was a request to share the names of organizations and contact information with other members of the working group. We haven't received many confirmations in response to our email, so just a reminder to please respond whether or not you're comfortable sharing your contact information.

So I will take a few minutes now just to recap the purpose of the meeting and where we are in our discussions. So these working group meetings have been set up in response to requests for temporary exemptions from certain provisions of the ATPDR by transportation service providers in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The purpose of these working group meetings is to facilitate a better understanding of the regulatory requirements, discuss potential strategies for implementation of and adherence to those requirements, given the current challenges posed by COVID-19, and explore measures that could potentially be equivalent to those required by the regulations.

In addition, the working group could help identify acceptable conditions under which some flexibility could be given to transportation service providers in implementing their obligations under the ATPDR.

It also bears repeating, this working group forum underscores the importance of the ATPDR, and our intention to move ahead with the ATPDR and ensure that it is in place and in force. The purpose is really to address some specific provisions of implementation – or some specific questions around implementation, sorry, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, and find practical strategies.

Two other points I'd like to mention. So it's important to understand that the issuance of an exemption is an exceptional measure. And so for requests under subsection 170(3) of the *Canada Transportation Act*, the Agency requires transportation service providers to demonstrate that strict compliance with the regulatory requirements in issue will result in undue hardship.

Alternatively, the Agency may consider the issuance of an exemption under subsection 170(4) in circumstances where it is satisfied that the transportation service provider has taken or will take measures to remove barriers that are at least equivalent to those that must be taken under the provisions of the regulation.

So that test that applies under each section of the Act is something that's important to keep in mind for today's discussion.

And finally, a few points on this process. So to remind everyone, a transcript will be produced of our working groups discussions, and the discussions of the working group will be placed on the record for consideration of the panel assigned to the exemption requests. And the panel may request party's submissions or further information at that time.

As well, any views expressed during the working group discussions are not intended to bind the panel in its determination on whether and to what extent exemptions should be issued in response to the requests.

So for today's meeting, we have adjusted the agenda a bit to provide some open space for participants to raise whatever points they may wish to do. And also, if there are any updates following the previous discussion, those can be brought to the table at that time. And we'll do a similar approach next week.

So thank you for your feedback on the meeting agenda and we're happy to take more feedback on it.

So today we'll start first with the open discussion, then we'll turn to the provisions. As you'll recall, we are now in what staff have classified as B provisions. So these are provisions in respect of which alternatives may be feasible, according to staff's assessment. And then we'll move towards C provisions, which staff assess as potentially more difficult; however, there is the possibility of alternative strategies or a phased approach potentially that could be brought to the table to discuss.

So with that, I'll also finally remind you that I'll be speaking in English only, as we have simultaneous translation.

So are there any questions on all of that before we get started and turn to the first part of the meeting, which is comments?

Glenda Nicol : Hi, Marcia, it's Glenda. I don't see any raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay, great. Thanks, Glenda.

Okay. So we'll now turn to the open discussion and I'll start with disability rights organizations. If anyone at the table wishes to provide any general input or updates, I invite you to do so.

I don't see any raised hands. Okay.

Lui Greco : Marcia, sorry, it's Lui Greco. I can't find the raised hand button. I —

Marcia Jones : Okay.

Lui Greco : Just wondering if you're — it's Lui Greco from the CNIB. I'm sorry. Just wondering if you're open to the possibility of perhaps realigning some of the group C provisions into group B. Specifically, I'm thinking about staff training.

Marcia Jones : M'hm.

Lui Greco : I see that as a — as low-hanging fruit, given that industry is going to be ramping up and bringing people back on anyway, and training is going to be part of that, of that process. So, incorporating this accessibility training or sensitization training, I'm wondering if maybe we can discuss that as a group B provision instead.

Marcia Jones : Well, thanks for that, Lui, and we're absolutely open to reorganizing provisions. It's really just based on an initial assessment. I do think training is something that we can discuss in more detail. We have it on the agenda for the next meeting. You know, I think there are ways for training to be delivered even now. For example, potentially through an association, at least some parts of the training. So that's — that is

something that we're – we really want to hear from people on because it's a very critical provision.

So in terms of how we classify it, I mean, it's just to organize the discussion, and it's not how the panel would necessarily decide the issue.

Lui Greco : Okay, thanks.

Marcia Jones : Are there any other comments from disability rights organizations?

Glenda Nicol : I don't see any other raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Members of industry, are there any updates or feedback further to the last meeting?

Glenda Nicol : I don't see any other raised hands at this time.

Continuation of discussions regarding group B provisions

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thanks, Glenda.

Okay. Well, we'll turn then to the specifics of the agendas. And, of course, feel free to raise comments or ask any questions that you might have. We're hoping to continue the full and frank discussion that we had last week. It was very productive, and we look forward to the discussion today.

So the first provision that we have on the agenda today is – it's subsection 227(1), (2) and (3). So this part of the regulations are related to the designated relief area on the non-secure side of terminals. So just to be clear, this is non-secure side, not secure side.

And these provisions provide that a designated relief area for service dogs to relieve themselves must first be identified by tactile and Braille signage; and second, to be cleaned to and maintained on a regular basis.

The terminal must also have signage that indicates the direction to follow in order to access a designated relief area for service dogs.

Just give me a second. I'm just getting my notes here.

Okay. So it further stipulates that a terminal must have a designated relief area for service dogs to relieve themselves that's located outside of the terminal and that a person with a disability may reach from the terminal by means of a path of travel that is accessible to persons with disabilities.

So just to give a little bit of history on this provision, outdoor designated relief areas were a standard that was reflected in the Terminal Code of Practice, which was aimed at NAS airports. And the Terminal Code of Practice did not specify that terminals needed a designated relieving area given that many terminals would have ample suitable space outside already.

So in the transition from the Code to the ATPDR, the intent was that airports would have this designated relieving area outside the terminal with tactile and Braille signage.

So this particular provision was postponed until December 31st, 2021 from June, and we will further discuss the issue of secure side relief area, which is a little bit more complicated.

So this, I think, overall, is a fairly straightforward requirement in that most terminals should have an outdoor space and the investment is really for signage and an accessible pathway.

So with that information in mind, I'd like to open the floor to industry to highlight the outstanding concerns and suggestions on how to address those concerns in the interim. It would also be good to know when transportation service providers expect to be in a position to comply with this requirement.

So we have perhaps – we've got – I guess we've got three entities that requested this exemption, Canadian Airports Council, Quebec City Airport and St. John's Airport Authority, so perhaps I could turn it to Canadian Airports Council.

Wayne Harvey : Yes, hello. Can you hear me okay?

Marcia Jones : Yes, perfect.

Wayne Harvey : So it's Wayne Harvey from the CAC.

On this particular item, I think most of the airports have actually complied. There's really not many that have not had an opportunity to meet this requirement, and everybody – you know, airports certainly did recognize this was in the Code of Practice and then subsequently in the ATPDR.

What a few airports encountered here was – and the purpose of the first exemption request, which is now extended, of course, due to COVID-19, is if there were any contractor-related initiatives that were not completed, that these initiatives still have not been completed due to COVID-19 and they were looking for – those few airports that have still not implemented this, they were looking for additional time.

None of our airport members have challenged or disagreed with this requirement. Certainly everybody supports this. But really, what they're looking for is some additional time. And really, it's to do with any contractors they were bringing in to complete this work.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you for that.

Is there an estimate as to when like this could be completed?

Wayne Harvey : Well, it's really tied to the ability for the airports to bring in the contractors to complete the work, any modifications or any work that needed – needs to be done. And there's also a financial element to this as well.

I mean, budget cuts have impacted all our airport members and so anything under the infrastructure umbrella has been impacted as well. But it's a primarily a contractor issue as opposed to financial.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Would Quebec City or St. John's Airport like to add anything to that?

Glenda Nicol : Sophie Lambert with Quebec City Airport has raised her hand.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you.

Sophie Lambert : I might just need clarification on the signage aspect because we do have the designated relief area outside the terminal, but I was wondering about the signage. Is it on site only or is – we need the signage throughout the airport inside the terminal, I mean, for signage also?

Marcia Jones : So it's – the requirement is to have signage that indicates the direction to follow in order to access the designated relief area.

Sophie Lambert : Inside the terminal.

Marcia Jones : Correct.

Sophie Lambert : So it cannot be like a plan on the web site, or...?

Marcia Jones : I don't – I mean, that's something I don't think we've considered. I think it needs to be like signage on site.

Sue, do you want to add anything to that?

Susan Clarke : Can you hear me?

Marcia Jones : Yes.

Susan Clarke : Okay, great.

I think the only thing I would add is that, you know, certainly information on the web site could be quite helpful for anybody pre-planning their trip, but I think the intention is that somebody in the airport, you know, looking for that area knows where to go, so to have signage inside that will point them to the right exit, you know, to find the area, I think, would be important.

Sophie Lambert : Okay, thank you. We understood that the signage was for the inside the relief area, so we'll adjust for the outside one.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you.

Would anyone else like to comment on this particular provision?

Glenda Nicol : Both Mr. Greco – sorry. Both Mr. Greco and Janet with the Coalition have raised their hands.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Mr. Greco, please go ahead.

Lui Greco : Just to add a little bit of clarity around the signage, I think there's – the provisions don't say specifically or don't talk specifically about accessible signs. I would suggest that as terminals are starting to look at this to explore some of the more innovative solutions that are available as far as digital way-finding, so for instance, someone travelling with a guide dog, unless the signs are right at hand, literally and physically, you know, they could be a foot away and they might as well be a mile away, whereas some of the digital signs through a beacon or virtual agent assistance apps that are available might be a bit more economical as well as a bit more efficient.

As well as – as well as those types of way-finding solutions, definitely accessible information on a web site providing textual descriptions as to how to find the relief areas, whether they're post-security or behind security, again, very easy to do and very effective. Web sites definitely would facilitate pre-planning, both for departures and arrivals, regardless of the mode of travel.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you for that.

And we have Janet from the National Coalition, if I recall correctly.

Janet Hunt : Yes, it's Janet from the Coalition of Guide and Service Dog Users.

I just wanted to comment on something that was mentioned about putting information on the web site, just something I have a problem with quite often. It's a map, and it's inaccessible.

I can read text information about where something might be located, but to actually look at a map and see where the area is, is usually impossible to do.

And the other thing is, I'd like to thank someone who mentioned that the problem – most of the problem is contractor, I assume that means getting supplies, and that a small part of it was financial, so as we mentioned in a previous meeting, I'd just like to say that any money that is received from the government or that is asked from the government, let's try and get that put towards getting these regulations implemented in full, because that's what these working groups – these working meetings are all about. So, thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thank you very much.

Glenda Nicol : Corry with the Alliance for the Equality of Blind Canadians has raised his hand.

Marcia Jones : Thank you.

Corry Stuive : Echoing Janet's comments, I agree, the financial component of the situation is one that deeply concerns me, particularly looking forward. But speaking about signage, I think the importance of including the areas on maps and on print materials and things like any other feature facility in an airport will not – will help others if assistance is required by the – by the end user. So, I think it's important to just view a relieving area as any other, you know, feature, or function, or facility of an airport. I think that needs to be point number one. And then beyond that, if we go to some specific wayfinding initiatives, or something like that, like Lui mentioned, which I agree with also, then I think that – that becomes bonus.

Marcia Jones : Great. Thanks for that.

Glenda Nicol : I have no more raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you, Glenda.

So I think – I guess just to recap a bit, I think this discussion underscores, like, the importance of having the signage and making sure that the signage is accessible on site. You know, there's a suggestion to – to consider wayfinding approaches as well as kind of a more long-term solution.

What I'm hearing from the industry is that the challenge is in getting contractors in place I guess to implement the signage.

Mr. Harvey, are you able to comment at all about the – if there's any difference in terms of, I guess, the challenges you're facing around the signage versus the pathway to get to the designated area?

Wayne Harvey : The differences, how do you mean? I mean, if an airport has to contract out, whether it be the signage or the pathway, whatever they're contracting out right now, with COVID, it's really preventing them from having those contractors come in and complete the work.

Marcia Jones : M'hm.

Wayne Harvey : So that – both – both apply to some extent.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Yeah, what I more meant was if – like, one part of the work was more advanced than the other or easier than the other?

Wayne Harvey : It really varies from airport to airport. As I mentioned, I think many of the airports have implemented this and it's not an issue. But it's just for those that have not been able to complete the work prior to COVID impacting their contracting work.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Okay. Thank you.

Any last comments before we move to the next provision?

Glenda Nicol : I see no more raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay. So the next provision is at subsection 10(2), public announcements inside a terminal for safety or security. So this provision states that if a transportation service provider makes any public announcement relating to safety or security inside a terminal, they must make that announcement in an audio and visual format.

So we've received a number of requests for exemption for this provision. So I guess just to recap a few important points. When we consulted with persons with disabilities in developing the ATPDR, they frequently expressed it can be frightening and disorienting not to have access to critical information that's provided to other passengers in airports. And so subsection 10(2) of the ATPDR is an important provision to rectify this issue.

To provide safety and security announcements throughout a terminal in both audio and visual formats. We do understand that some airports may require the ability to provide customized texts or visual paging, which requires specialized infrastructure.

And on that point, I'd like to distinguish between standard and real-time announcements. So, for standard emergency and safety announcements, signage and audio information on a repeated loop could be sufficient, in line with subsection 10(1). For real-time emergency and safety announcements, it could be challenging to provide written or visual information, like, impromptu. Audio announcements could be made in such a situation, for example.

So, I mean, this is a pretty important provision, you know, and we recognize that there's some infrastructure investment required. We would like to hear from industry on the possibility of implementing visual and audio information for standard emergency and safety announcements, similar to the approach in subsection 10(1).

And then secondly, we'd like to hear suggestions on how to meet the real-time scenarios and what the timeframe would be to get into compliance with that.

So we've received requests for exemption from this provision from CAC, Regina Airport Authority, Montreal Airport Authority, Victoria Airport Authority, Quebec City Airport, Thunder Bay Airport, and St. John's Airport Authority. And then from airlines, National Airlines Council of Canada and Air Transat.

So perhaps I'll start with the airports. Mr. Harvey, would you be able to speak to this request?

Wayne Harvey : Yeah, thank you. This – you're along the lines of the previous comments. The airports that are not implementing these changes to the visual and audio information under their infrastructure program and they're contracting it out,

then really, the view is, again, the contracting out and not being able to bring in those contractors to actually complete any upgrades to the systems that they have.

Once again, we have many airports that have implemented this, but there are still some that are looking to complete the work. So, they're asking for additional time to do that.

Marcia Jones : Do you have any comments on kind of the distinction between standard and real-time announcements?

Wayne Harvey : I don't at this time. I haven't really differentiated between the two.

Marcia Jones : M'hm.

Wayne Harvey : I mean, the standard, I think for the most part, the standard are – have been implemented. I don't know of any situation where airport has not implemented, but it's typically the other – the other infrastructure development.

Marcia Jones : For the – for the real time?

Wayne Harvey : For the real time, yeah.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Okay.

Okay. Do any of the other airports that I mentioned want to address this exemption?

Glenda Nicol : We have one raised hand from Quebec City Airport, Sophie Lambert.

Marcia Jones : Perfect. Please go ahead.

Sophie Lambert : Hi. I also have a quick question in regards to this provision. So, for us, in Quebec City, the system is the same all through the airport, so that means that the provision 10(1) and 10(2) are linked together; right? So, if we change the system, it will allow the airline to use it for the announcement. We expect that the messages, the audio messages are synchronized with the – the visual one. Can we have, like, few

seconds delay between the audio announcement and the written announcement? Is it okay? Or it needs to be, like, truly synchronized?

Marcia Jones : So, again, that's a – that's a good question. Offhand, to me, like, while I don't want to interpret every element of the regulation on my own, I – like, I – I think the provisions requiring you to make the announcements in both formats, I mean, a few seconds delay, to me, seems like, you know, could – could potentially be acceptable in implementing this.

Sue or Glenda, do you have anything to add to what I'm saying?

Susan Clarke : Hi, it's Susan. I don't have much to add. I tend to agree with what you're saying. You know, it's not necessarily for us to interpret.

You know, of course the intention is that people are receiving information at the same time. Now, if we're talking about a matter of seconds, that probably could be considered the same time. It might be interested to hear from, you know, others to see if that's an issue from their perspective. But it's really just to ensure people get the information they need in a fairly timely manner.

Sophie Lambert : For us, I don't know if all the airports are using the same system, but for us, it's really a matter why we ask for delays. We – we are not sure yet because we are working hard to find the solution to do that; right?

We work with businesses and we try to put all the systems together to make it happen, but we are not fully confident that even though we have the money to do it that it will work. So it's why we are – we need more time to make sure that the system that we are changing or putting in place is the right one and it's working well.

We test different solutions, and as of right now it's not a – it's not – it's not conclusive. So we try to – we continue to search for a better solution. So – I don't know –

Marcia Jones : Okay.

Sophie Lambert : – if other airports have the same issue, but for us it's really a technological problem.

Marcia Jones : Okay. That's helpful, thank you.

Glenda Nicol : Mr. Greco with CNIB has raised his hand.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Please go ahead.

Lui Greco : Thanks, Glenda. Every time you call me "Mister" Greco I – I'm not sure if it's me you're talking to.

So this – this is indicative of I guess why – the last comment from the lady from the Québec Airport. I'm sorry, ma'am, I forgot the name already. But this is indicative of why we get – why we go down the road of solutions being implemented and then when – when they're encountered by people with disabilities the – the inadequacies are found, and unfortunately for emergency announcements that's – that's a little too late.

One of the suggestions that's been brought forward by many of – many of us from community over the years is some type of consultative process. I know that industry is extremely reluctant to have government oversight and approval of any type of plans. I sort of get that and I – and I sort of don't. But I think if airports are looking at solutions in a vacuum, the chances of you coming up with an appropriate and effective solution is very much going to be hit and miss.

We are at the table for a reason, at this table for a reason, and I would suggest that when you're exploring the viability of possible solutions to deal with this or any other issue you may want to reach out and run it past those of us who – who will be looking to those services to get some kind of feedback. I'm not saying an approval process or a sign-off, but simply to get some input I think you'd find that it would be a lot more effective than relying exclusively on vendors or contracts that provide you with the recommendations.

So part of the ACA and – *Accessible Canada Act* and the feedback mechanisms that perhaps are outside of the scope of this discussion, that might be a way to start meeting those expectations and dealing with these types of questions in a more effective way.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you for that. I think this touches on a bit some of what we heard at the last meeting where I think we heard from industry that they're, you know, taking steps on doing their best to come into compliance, and that it's in

everyone's interest that some things be run by the disability community to get input. The onboard entertainment was one area where we heard that, and this – it sounds like sort of a general comment that you're offering.

I see there's some more hands up, and I'd like to say too during this discussion, I'd like to know if this is like a common issue the synchronicity of messages, and if there's anyone at the table that might have solutions to offer to Québec City Airport or others.

Glenda Nicol : Donna Jodhan with Barrier-Free Canada has raised her hand, followed by Joanna Zyma with Hamilton Airport.

Marcia Jones : Okay, Ms. Jodhan please go ahead. Thank you.

Donna Jodhan : Thank you very much. How much time is industry asking for? I think it's really vital that – that an airport – that that type of facility be implemented as soon as possible because there's so many things that could go wrong when one is on a flight. And as for me, as a regular traveller, whenever COVID is over I'd like to know and I'd like to, you know, be reassured that if I'm sitting in an airport that there are the audio ability to hear things that are going on that we need to know about.

So what is the timeframe for wanting to implement this?

And the other thing, I have to agree with Lui. I won't call you Mr. Greco, sorry. I think it would help if there could be input from the disability community. Once again, we are here to help you. You know, like don't be afraid to reach out to us because we are the major stakeholders in this, we are the recipients of your hard work, so we want to be part of it. Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thank you. I'll let industry answer the question about timelines, but first I think Hamilton Airport Authority?

Joanna Zyma : Hi, thank you. I'd like to just offer a suggestion for Québec City. So we were able to become compliant with this one. We had to do a little bit of research. Initially, we were getting costs upwards of 100,000 to 150,000. We were able to integrate with our flight display system, if that's of any – if that's an option for you in Québec City or other airports in the country, and we were able to integrate quite easily at a considerably less cost.

Marcia Jones : Thank you for that.

Glenda Nicol : Québec City Airport has their hand up.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you. Please go ahead.

Sophie Lambert : Thank you. Joanna, from Hamilton. So it's – what we are trying to do this week, we are conducting some tests to integrate with the flight system information. It's not the audio part; right? The audio part is quite easy, it's already in place. It's to synchronize the audio with the visual information. So – and we – at the beginning, we tried to kind of use the speech-to text on the screen, but it was not working well, so we are – it's why we are trying to find another solution.

But another lady asked for a timeline. For us, I mean, as soon as we have the solution that is working well we'll put it in place. So hopefully in the next, I would say few weeks or months we'll be able to put it in place, but we are conducting tests this week. So hopefully we'll be able to comply really soon on that specific provision.

Marcia Jones : Thank you. Thank you, that's helpful.

Glenda Nicol : Kelly Knutson with Air Transat has raised her hand.

Marcia Jones : Thank you. Please go ahead.

Kelly Knutson : Hello. In terms of carrier responsibility in respect to 10(2), we are seeking a bit more clarity in terms of where we're expected to publish the information or provide the information. Are we talking about the boarding gate and the general area of the boarding gate, or throughout the terminal? It sounds to me like this is more on the terminal side, but in terms of carrier what is our responsibility?

Marcia Jones : Okay. Yeah, that's a great question. So this provision applies to transportation service providers, so that would include airlines. So it applies, however, only if the airline makes a public announcement relating to safety or security inside a terminal. So are you able to kind of elaborate on when Air Transat would make such a public safety announcement in a terminal?

Kelly Knutson : I would say that, generally, we were discussing more standard messages such as carry-on safety and that sort of thing, which could be resolved with safety. In terms of real time, I would expect that those are things that are more in line with the terminal's responsibility, if there's some reason to evacuate or that sort of thing. And I was hoping to hear clarification on what types of messages fit into the real time. But I think, in general, our safety message would be in the standard category, so we could work with signage in the boarding area. But if we're talking about reaching passengers who are spread out through the terminal, that's more difficult.

Marcia Jones : Right. Understood. The way the provision is framed, I guess, and I don't know if this is helpful, it's really, you know, this contingency of if. So, in general, this obligation would fall on terminals, simply because in most cases, it's terminals that make real-time public safety announcements. In the event that an airline does make the public announcement, I mean, it's a good question about whether it would be, like, throughout the terminal. I mean, the expectation is that the passengers would have access to it. So, it sounds like this is, like, a scope kind of question. But I think it's a scope question that's sort of more on the remote area – like, not remote, physically remote area, but a more, like, a theoretical kind of remote question in the sense that I think most cases, from what we understand, would involve terminals.

Kelly Knutson : Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Now one thing I think it would be interesting to hear, you know, in foreign airports, do airlines rely on the airports to make those announcements, or do they make – or do you make them yourself? That's another question we'd like to better understand.

Kelly Knutson : In terms of our operations, it would – I don't really see a difference in terms of foreign airports versus Canadian airports in terms of a real-time safety announcement.

Marcia Jones : M'hm. Okay.

Glenda Nicol : Kerianne Wilson with Air Canada has also raised her hand.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thanks. Please go ahead.

Kerianne Wilson : Hi, Marcia. What I would say is similar to what Kelly said, there isn't a big difference, but I think the basic point to make here is that carriers are really not the ones making these safety and security announcements.

Marcia Jones : M'hm.

Kerianne Wilson : Maybe there's an instance where that would happen, but I can't even conceive of one —

Marcia Jones : Right.

Kerianne Wilson : So it's really hard to think about all of the theoreticals, like, maybe in five years something will happen once.

Marcia Jones : M'hm.

Kerianne Wilson : But yeah. I mean, the only thing I would add perhaps to what Kelly said is that certainly out of Canada, we have even less control over what happens in airports.

Marcia Jones : Right.

Kerianne Wilson : We're small players.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Okay. Okay. This is helpful in, I guess, just drilling down kind of what different people do with respect to these announcements and highlighting as well how critical it is for the disability community to have these in place. Are there any other comments on this provision?

Glenda Nicol : Jared with WestJet has raised his hand.

Marcia Jones : Thanks. Please go ahead.

Jared Mikoch-Gerke : Thanks, Marcia.

The one point I would just like to raise on this is how broad are we looking from a safety or security perspective? From a security perspective, I like to think, like, we have some standard obligations that we're required to make, or some standard announcements that pertain specific to a flight. So, for example, that individuals have to have their ID out and ready to be able to present during boarding.

So this is a safety or security announcement. It doesn't follow the same – you know, it's – this isn't to a departure or a gate or a track assignment like is covered under 10(1).

Marcia Jones : Yeah.

Jared Mikoch-Gerke : But it's very applicable only to the flight that we are operating. So I just want to clarify, to make sure that the application of this would follow the same as 10(1) in that our duty is at the boarding gate only and not throughout the terminal for those types of messages, because these are safety security messages, but they're not public announcements that are terminal wide. They're very specific to an individual flight.

Marcia Jones : Okay. So I think – I wouldn't be able to, like, weigh in specifically on whether it's at the boarding gate only. I think that's something that we have to take back. So I think what we know – like, we talked about 10(1) last time and what that involves. And so today, 10(2) is the, yeah, the public announcements on safety or security. I think, generally, you know, we're hearing, and this is what we suspected, these are largely made by terminals. But there is an obligation if the airline does make such an announcement to make it accessible. And so I think drilling farther down the question is, like, how – like, what's the scope of that obligation I think is the --

Jared Mikoch-Gerke : Right.

Marcia Jones : -- is the concern from industry.

Jared Mikoch-Gerke : Yeah. Yeah, and I think it's easy for us to be able to facilitate, so long as the scope is the same as 10(1) when we talked about that last week, which is --

Marcia Jones : M'hm.

Jared Mikoch-Gerke : — in the specific boarding area.

Marcia Jones : Yeah.

Jared Mikoch-Gerke : And I think that's — so long as that's where we're standing, and that's generally what we're — what we're saying, is that it's related very specifically to an individual flight. So as long as the scope is there, then I think it's easy for us to facilitate.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Okay.

Glenda Nicol : Jackie McIver with Thunder Bay Airport has raised her hand.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thanks.

Please go ahead.

Jackie McIver : Hi, Marcia. So in terms of why we wrote in to the exemption request, so we've implemented visual paging before the December 31 cut-off. We also are okay with our real-time pages. But where we're getting — like, why we wrote in is because our standard real-time pages, we're having difficulty with the sound and getting that sound to be kind of even across the board.

So we had renovations done in 2018, late 2019, and our electrical contractor tied in to the wrong thing, which is causing confusion on our end, and we've been trying to — to deal and work with this error and try to fix it. And for whatever reason, we can hear them very, very loudly outside of our terminal; however, in the terminal, you can barely hear them.

So we — it's kind of been a work in progress, and that's kind of — from our side, why we wrote in for that exemption. But we're continuing to work on it and we're trying to get it fixed, but that's just from our point of view.

Marcia Jones : Okay. That's helpful. Thank you.

So we certainly are — you know, are happy to hear about the steps that are being taken to come into compliance and also to understand the scope of what's expected and to

relay to us some of the, you know, practical challenges with different parties in the supply chain. And so we're trying to, you know, again, work through all of this, so that these important accessibility features can be delivered in a timely way. So all of this information is very helpful.

Glenda Nicol : I see no other raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Let's see here. We're a bit ahead of schedule, so we're going to have a break at 2 :25, so I think I'll go ahead with the next item then. We're moving quickly through the provisions, which is great. So, we'll do this provision and then have a break.

So this provision is section 216, curbside assistance. And this provision states that a terminal operator must, on the request of a person with a disability, without delay, assist the person with their baggage and with a wheelchair, and provide the following services to the person : providing the person with a wheelchair if needed; assisting the person to proceed between the general public area and the curbside zone, including by guiding; and assisting the person to proceed between the curbside zone and the check-in area, or if there is no check-in area, between the curbside zone and a representative of a carrier, including by guiding.

So there is an exception, if a terminal operator – a terminal operator is not required to provide a person with any assistance referred to above if a carrier is already providing that person with that assistance.

To recap a little bit of history on this provision, it is intended to address long-standing concerns of the disability community that they do not receive adequate assistance navigating through an airport or terminal. And in developing the ATPDR, we heard of particular challenges, lack of assistance in navigating between curbside and check-in.

And so we would like to open the door to industry to discuss any proposed alternatives to providing this service, or meeting this requirement, along with the timeframes you propose for when you'd be in a position to be fully compliant with this section.

We've heard about the need for investments in upgrading curb areas and installing intercoms, telephones, and signage. But, like, note that there could be interim measures to provide curbside assistance, especially given low passenger volumes right now. So,

for example, a phone number passengers could have to call for assistance if they need it from curb to check-in. That could be something to look at, as long as the number's maintained at all times.

So I'll open the floor here, and in terms of who's requested this exemption; the CAC, along with Calgary Airport Authority, Victoria Airport Authority, Quebec City Airport Authority, Thunder Bay Airport Authority, St. John's and Prince George Airport Authority.

So perhaps, Mr. Harvey, can I turn it over to you?

Wayne Harvey : Yeah, thank you, Marcia.

I mean, there's several different – and, again, you know, the CAC is speaking on behalf of its airport; there are four different concerns or issues that happen at different airports. You've listed pretty well every airport, I think, on the call here, in terms of having a concern with this particular one.

First and foremost, I think, you know, this was tied to COVID-19 and the safety issues, safety aspect; I mean, that's the issue here. That's why we had asked for an extension to get this done, a difficult time for everyone.

But, also, we have, wherever there were infrastructure modifications required at airports, then we are again talking about contractors, the safety of those contractors, and the ability to bring those contractors in to do the work; and, to a lesser degree, resources. A lot of airports had significant layoffs, and so of course, you know, the resources and the people that they had available previous to COVID-19 cases are no longer there.

But the main issue is really the safety issue, and that's why when we asked for an extension, we did ask for a one-year extension but that was really based on the fact that we really didn't know how long the pandemic would last. So, obviously, if we can, you know, resolve this situation from a safety perspective, then that would reduce the amount of time required to implement.

Marcia Jones : Thank you for that. And what about the interim option of providing a phone number for passengers to call as a sort of alternative to the full infrastructure upgrades? I don't know if you or anyone else might have a comment on that idea.

Wayne Harvey : I think in many cases, or some cases, certainly, the airports have provided a phone number. Where they haven't, I'm sure that that could be discussed and implemented at those airports that have not yet done that.

Glenda Nicol : Joanna from Hamilton airport has raised her hand, followed by Peter Humele with GTAA.

Marcia Jones : Thanks.

Please go ahead, Joanna.

Joanna Zyma : Thank you.

Just a clarification, please. The comment you made about the exception is if the carrier is already providing the service; do you mean providing the service from curbside to check-in and then from – obviously, from arrivals area to curbside? That's my first question.

Marcia Jones : Okay. So, generally, it establishes the obligation of the terminal operator to assist from curbside to check-in. But it recognizes there may be cases where there's contractual, like, business arrangements for the carrier to provide that service in some airports. So as long as the service is being delivered is the bottom line.

Joanna Zyma : Okay. So for our airport the carrier does it from check-in to aircraft.

My second question around this one is so we're a very small regional airport. The distance from the curbside to check-in is – it's not very far. So – and then is the transfer of the individual, like, if you have to transfer from our wheelchair to the airline's wheelchair, and the notification period. So we've already established our signage and we have a phone number where they can call to get the assistance. But how – what's the waiting period, I guess, is my question.

And then is there any consideration for smaller airports? Can the regulation be different for different-sized airports? So I guess what I'm trying to say is curbside assistance in

Hamilton, is it really needed because it's such a short distance? You literally walk two feet and you're at check-in. So for that two feet where the air carrier is then responsible for the passenger, is it really needed?

So has any thought been put in a larger airport versus smaller airports? And then also that notification period. So we wanted to perhaps put something on our – similar to the airline, they have to give 48-hour notice for assistance, could the same thing be imposed for, like, a smaller regional airport where we don't have contactors on the curb that can provide immediate assistance, can there be some sort of notification period?

Marcia Jones : Okay. So this provision applies, you know, kind of as-is to any airport that's captured by the regulations. So there are a number of much smaller airports that are not covered.

I guess in terms of your point that, you know, it's a smaller airport and there's not much distance, the requirement is triggered on the request of the person with a disability. So if the person with the disability does need that assistance, and requests it, in that case there's the obligation to provide it.

The obligation is without delay and so, I mean, that's intended to signal, you know, that it needs to be done promptly. Of course, without delay, you know, would depend on the particular circumstances. But the idea is that, you know, people shouldn't be left waiting for any long period of time for curbside assistance.

So that's really the requirement in a nutshell. We haven't considered any variations on that based on the size of an airport. The regulation was designed to cover a broad range of airports, but I would think that the number of requests you get in a smaller airport might be less.

Joanna Zyma : So would there be some flexibility around the program that we develop around that, so in terms – so if it's only the two feet that we're responsible for, in our program could we be then working with our airline partners to say when we get those requests we're going to communicate that to you and then – because there's already been a request made at the airline – to the airline anyway, so – and do we – yeah, is there flexibility around how we develop a plan?

Marcia Jones : So I guess, like, how you choose to work with your business partners to implement the program is sort of up to you, I guess. You know, like the main point here is that the curbside assistance needs to be provided. So if you had an agreement with the airline to provide that curbside assistance, that would discharge the obligation. What we don't want is airlines and airports kind of like, you know, "this isn't our responsibility and this isn't our responsibility". Like, that's why the Reg kind of delineates like who – you know, airports are responsible from curbside to check-in; airlines check-in to the gate. And you know, if you can make an alternative arrangement but it has – it has to be delivered.

Joanna Zyma : Thank you.

Glenda Nicol : Peter with GTAA is up next, followed by Donna Jodhan.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you.

Peter Humele : Hi, good afternoon. Thanks. It's Peter Humele.

I think part of my comment or question has been partly answered, but also, Marcia, I wanted just to go back because – and I think at last week's meeting you had indicated that the "without delay" wording is really contextual and it depends on the circumstance or the context, and I think you've confirmed that. You mentioned that in the context of actually a different provision in the ATPDR but I guess that same contextual analysis comes to this provision, right?

Marcia Jones : Correct.

Peter Humele : So just – my other comment really is about – and to your comment about, you know, airline saying this and airport saying that and a bit of finger pointing. At Pearson, Toronto Pearson right now, I mean, obviously the regulation was developed well before COVID, so what has happened at Pearson is part of the public area of the terminals at Pearson have now been taken over for COVID testing for international arriving passengers, so some of that area is now screened off and – with the work – we work with Public Health Canada and other agencies to set up part of the public area as health screening.

So you know, looking at this provision where, for example, you have an arriving passenger, an international arriving passenger, they have to go through this public screen – or the COVID testing and, really, where does the public area start?

Maybe some clarity from the CTA so we can understand what is the airport's responsibility and what's the airline's responsibility because in this context, you know, where what used to be part of our terminal building as public area and now is being used for COVID testing, we would like to think that this responsibility, if it's on the – the terminal operator, that the public area, really, is only the place once the passenger has completed all their COVID testing and they're released by the health authorities and then they're out into the true – the new public area. And up until that point, it's really the airline's responsibility or maybe it's Public Health's responsibility.

So it's really clarifying some of that jurisdiction or responsibility given how fluid things are with COVID and how, you know, the situation in the terminal buildings has changed.

Marcia Jones : Okay. That's – I mean, that's an important note that you've raised about the terminal building and the presence of Public Health officials.

So I mean, I don't have an answer to that right now. I think it's an interesting point that you've raised.

We'll have to take a look at that, but you know, thank you for raising that because, I mean, certainly we'd want that experience to be seamless as well. But I appreciate you may have some limited abilities to be involved in the Public Health screening part of that passenger's trip.

Peter Humele : Right, exactly. So where does the terminal operator's responsibility start in that scenario and where does the airline's responsibility end or – to do the handoff?

Marcia Jones : Right. Okay. Thank you for raising that.

Peter Humele : Thanks.

Marcia Jones : Okay, Ms. Jodhan. I think you were next.

Donna Jodhan : Thank you very much.

You know, sitting here just listening to all these different comments, it makes me so, so, so nervous because this is one of the things that I've always been saying that is a big challenge for everybody, not just the person with a disability, but, you know, airport operators, airlines and everybody else.

And I will tell you that from – you know, I fly out of the Toronto airport – it's the largest Canadian airport. I do want to give some kudos to the GTAA because, you know, I've had my challenges with them, them with me, trying to figure out where is the responsibility.

And before COVID, you know, caught us, at Terminal 3 I was able to establish a really nice system where I called a common number and the people were very, very helpful. Curbside assistance was always delivered, especially during the last year or two. But I would say that, still, there needed to be some adjustments made or some updates made to the fact that they needed to understand that a blind person does not need a wheelchair. But besides that, I thought that the GTAA had done a really good job of trying to understand what it was like to, you know, require curbside assistance and what was needed, so kudos to you.

At Terminal 1 it was a little bit different in that we were told it was Air Canada that had to deliver these services, and I had a really traumatic experience going there one time.

And I always go with a friend who tells me – you know, shows me where the post is or waits with me while the agent gets there, whatever. But it was not adequately done, and so there was no way for me to know which Braille – which button to press because the Braille was not well labelled, so I ended up calling emergency by mistake and I got raked over the coals by them telling me, "You're calling the police". And I'm saying, "Well, nobody's here".

So I think going forward with – with – you know, after the COVID thing is over, could there be a way to develop some sort of a program whereby it is clearly understood who is responsible for what because I don't think it's good to assume that the GTAA is responsible for everything, as Mr. Humele just said.

We have to determine who's responsible for which area. And as far as delaying this work on this, I really encourage all stakeholders to try their best to get this done

because, for me personally – and I hope to be travelling again business-wise and pleasure-wise. If I can't get my curbside assistance satisfactorily set out before I leave, I'm not going anywhere because one of the worst things is to get to a terminal and there's no one there or no one knows who is responsible.

So I can only urge the CTA and all stakeholders and ask for our input as a community. How can we help to find a reasonably good solution to this so that everybody's satisfied?

Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thank you for sharing those experiences.

Are there any other comments on this provision?

Glenda Nicol : We don't have any other raised hands at this time.

Wait, we do. Kerianne Wilson with Air Canada has raised her hand.

Kerianne Wilson : My apologies. I raised it as you were speaking to Ms. Jones.

Marcia, I understand that you're going to be taking away Peter's comment about the COVID testing and the – everything in the airport. It's a much bigger question than just a one-off. It's a huge concern for airlines, so I just wanted to put that on the record. Perhaps it's a separate discussion that needs to happen.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you.

Glenda Nicol : And Lui with CNIB has raised his hand.

Lui Greco : Thanks, Glenda.

So I think the airports are complicating the issue way, way too much here. Let me ask you this.

Do you not have people at the curbs handing out tickets for parking violations and making sure that people move along quickly?

Perhaps some of the smaller airports, it's not an issue, but, you know, Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, Ottawa, I'm sure that there's – I'm sure that there's folks there watching the flow of vehicles.

If that is the case, then your answer's right there. You've got – you've got people on the ground. This is where training – and this is why CNIB puts our recommendations in around training. We insist that – or we suggest, I'm sorry, that everyone receives sensitivity training irregardless (sic) of their role within the organization.

So if you've got people on the curb doing other tasks, for them to reach out to someone getting out of a car with a guide dog or a cane or a wheelchair or who's – who's got, perhaps, you know, other challenges and to simply say, "Can I assist you?", would – would completely eliminate the fear that Donna expressed about arriving at a terminal. And let's just assume, worst-case scenario, that it's a terminal that you're not familiar with or, as seems to be the case in airports and hospitals and all public institutions, has undergone construction. I mean, it just seems to be an ongoing thing.

As soon as you've got that human contact saying, "How can I help you?" or "Do you need assistance?", the stress – the stress meter goes down dramatically.

As to who has jurisdiction or responsibility over what, again, I think – I think the airports are over-complicating it. And until the person makes contact with the carrier or the service provider, be it – well, ferry terminal or bus terminals are a little bit different. But until there's that touchpoint with the service provider, I think it's quite clear to me, as a layperson, that this is a terminal responsibility, end of paragraph.

Some airports, Calgary in particular has an army of, last I hear, pre-COVID, of course, they had an army of about 450 volunteers that they branded as white hatters. And having travelled to that airport numerous times, you couldn't get rid of those guys and gals if you wanted to. They're always there.

So innovative type of solutions like ensuring that your flag people on the street that are preventing parking violations and other types of issues, that they're aware of reaching out to someone who may appear to be struggling, and simply asking if they need assistance, looking at programs like Calgary's white hatter program, and simply just taking a common sense approach about until the person is at the counter, they're – and

they require assistance or they're asked, you know, if they need assistance, it's up to the terminal.

A phone number, a text number, an email address, all of those solutions would be universally accessible for people who are blind, the phone number or email or a text. For people who are deaf, email or text would work. For people with cognitive challenges, probably any one of those three medium would work.

And the suggestion that was put forward by one of the industry folks about having that 48-hour requirement, we do that – as people with disabilities, we do that all the time. If you want assistance, if you want to be accommodated, here are the expectations. This is yet another one. If you want curbside assistance, 48 hours before you go, under normal circumstances, call ahead. Let them know I'll be arriving between 10 :30 and 11. I have a one o'clock flight, something to that affect. I'm travelling on Air Canada, or WestJet, or Porter, whatever. And then resource it accordingly.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you for those comments.

Does anyone have any comments in response to the idea of using existing personnel to fulfil this requirement, or comments around this white hatter program?

Glenda Nicol : Joanna with Hamilton Airport has raised her hand.

Joanna Zyma : Thank you for those comments. Again, as a smaller regional airport, we definitely are going to be using every resource we can from – we don't – obviously don't have anyone on the curb, but we do have a volunteer program, again, currently suspended, but once the volunteers are back, we fully intend to ensure they get some training. We have some aviation security folks, but that call – that comment you made about calling ahead, that's all that we really would need as a smaller airport. If we had, you know, 48 hours, even 24 hours' notice, we could definitely have a resource on the curb. The only piece we're nervous about is the one who doesn't provide the call ahead notice and the without delay. We're just a little bit nervous about that. We'll manage. But, again, thank you for those comments.

Glenda Nicol : We have no other raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Are there any other comments on this particular provision?

Okay. Thanks, everybody. So I think we could take a 10-minute break. So there's been some good discussion on these provisions and better understanding, different perspectives of people at the table.

So we will just pause for 10 minutes. So right now it's 2:23, so we'll see you back here at 2:33. Thank you.

Upon recessing at 2:24 p.m.

Upon resuming at 2:32 p.m.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Welcome back, everyone. I hope you had a chance to get coffee or tea. If we were in person, we would offer all of you something from Tim Horton's, but hopefully you're able to get something for yourselves during our break.

Just a couple of points to follow up on from before we broke. So, first of all, I saw some questions in the chat box around a recording. So the meeting isn't being recorded; however, a transcript is being produced of the meeting and will be provided to working group participants.

I also wanted to clarify one point on the curbside assistance around advanced notice. In terms of curbside assistance, a terminal can request that advance notice be provided as a good practice, for example, and to deliver service more seamlessly. But it is expected under the regulations that if a person requests the curbside assistance, that it be provided without delay. So, the service still has to be provided, just to be clear about that.

So the next provision for our discussion today is section 58, written confirmation of services. So, this provision states if a carrier is required to provide a service to a person with a disability, the carrier must, without delay, indicate in the record of a person's travel reservation the services that the carrier will provide to the person, and include a written confirmation of the services in the itinerary that is issued to the person. And if a service is confirmed only after the itinerary is issued, the carrier must, without delay, provide a written confirmation of the service.

So I'll note, to start with, that subsection 152(b) of part 7 of the *Air Transportation Regulations*, which applies to Canadian air carriers with 30 or more passenger seats, does require written confirmation of services to be provided. So, it's a long-standing

obligation in terms of written confirmation. We do understand from some submissions that carriers may require a complex IT development to automate their systems to reflect the new ATPDR sections or services, as well, that there may be some IT work required with providing the written confirmation of services in a passenger's itinerary.

We'd like to note that there could be alternative options available as a temporary means until an automated system is available for the purpose of meeting the requirements. So for instance, upon request, confirmation of services could be sent manually on an individual basis so that the traveller does have the confirmation in hand.

So we'd like to open the floor to industry to discuss this suggestion as a possible alternative, along with any other suggestions you may have to provide this service, as well as any timeframes for when you'll be in a position to be fully compliant.

We did receive requests for an exemption from this provision from Airlines for America, IATA, NACC, and Air Canada, and Jazz.

So I'll start with Airlines for America.

Graham Keithley : This is Greg Keithley with Airlines for America. Thank you again for the opportunity to participate and to get everybody from the working group, we really appreciate the collaboration with CTA as well as the disability community in trying to get these exemptions addressed.

I'd like to start first of all to stress that the written confirmation of services has no bearing as to the fact that our carriers continue to provide the actual services that are requested. That is, we are fulfilling our – all of our obligations as to providing a disability service. This is a request relating to the written – merely the written confirmation of requests.

So we want to highlight the fact that we are complying with the requests in providing those services that are being requested.

Understand, we also, though, appreciate that possibly not having a written confirmation may put a cost or a burden upon a passenger listed with a disability that may have to reach out to the carrier in various ways to get a confirmation, but we want to stress that, you know, the costs of airlines to update their systems is particularly difficult at this time with the lack of resources.

And I want to stress that airline systems, if you've seen an airline system you've seen one airline's – one portion of the airline's IT systems for that particular airline. It is a vast network of computer systems and software within each airline, and then across the industry every airline has vastly different systems, vastly different processes.

I'd like to kind of update CTA and the community as to where most of my carriers are. We have a broad spectrum of where they are on compliance with this requirement for written confirmation. Some carriers are able to provide confirmations, whether it be through email, whether it be through the itinerary, whether it's through a push of email is, you know, at 72 hours or 24 hours before travel, but it may not be for all – through all systems and through all avenues of requests.

There's a number of ways obviously that passengers with disabilities can make requests for services, that's whether at time of booking, through a call centre, whether through a travel agent. And it – because there are so many avenues there is I would say an infinite number of systems that have to be updated across the industry to come into full compliance this is why – which why we are requesting the exemption.

It just takes an extraordinary amount of time, capital, resources, to update all of those systems to ensure total compliance for this particular provision. You know, and while we would like to be able to throw additional resources at it, you know, the U.S. carriers are losing \$150 million a day and have capital expenditures frozen at this time and are developing longer and longer lists among disability requirements throughout the world that we're trying to prioritise, and we thought that this one could be ripe for an exemption as we appropriately phase in changes and make the changes we need to come into full compliance, but it's going to take time as we develop those systems and fully incorporate.

I'd like to turn it over, obviously, to my colleagues at IATA or NACC to further elaborate.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you for that. If I may ask one clarification. Do I understand correctly it's – it's not really an issue about providing manual confirmation of services versus including it in an itinerary, it's sort of a more general concern with the provision?

Graham Keithley : I can't say. The problem is that we have such different positions from so many different carriers. Like all four of my carriers have different positions. So

some – you know, I can't say that one particular tone of solutions is going to be a solution that works for all the other carriers because while some might have the resources, the personnel resources to implement a manual solution and send individual emails, other carriers have – you know, they have to find solutions through IT because they don't have other resources. So it's not really a one size alternative fits all for a carrier. It may be able to work for one carrier but it's not going to work for another.

Marcia Jones : Okay. And do I understand correctly, like in the United States, unlike in Canada, there has not been a longstanding requirement to provide written confirmation of services?

Graham Keithley : That is correct.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Okay, thank you.

Glenda Nicol : Suzanne with NACC has raised her hand, followed by Linda with IATA.

Marcia Jones : Okay, perfect. Please go ahead, Suzanne.

Suzanne Acton-Gervais : Good afternoon, Marcia, and good afternoon all.

Yes, on these provisions, we're very much in the same boat as A For A. NACC carriers are very much, as prior submission, working towards in many of the provisions near compliance but just not quite there yet. We were working towards it and then we lost people and we lost funding.

This is not a simple, you know, provision to implement. You did note as well, but in the U.S. it is a recommended practice and not a regulation. So this is definitely something that is, you know, a little bit more requirements in the Canadian context.

And we're – it's a little bit of chasing our tail with this comment because the – the reality is in terms of resources we just do not have people left. And I can't tell you how difficult that is for me to raise, as we are a very proud and polished industry of the aviation industry, and this is a very different mantra and narrative for us to have to express.

And I understand the need in wanting to seek alternate compliance. The reality is operating at skeletal, you know, within the carriers, and so the idea of an email, for

example, might work, to A for A's point, for some carrier, it might not work for all again, but just become an individual administrative task. And this was the whole reason why us wanting to seek an IT solution in the first place, and now we're in that situation where we don't have the funds, we don't have people. So it's an extremely difficult situation to be in and to have to provide response to.

So I leave that for NACC's comment. I regret that there are not a little bit more solution – you know, providing solution, but we – we've definitely given it some thought. I – I reassure you that we have not put the brakes on these provisions or any provisions, it's just a very, very difficult time with what we're faced with right now.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you. And – so just to confirm my understanding, the possibility of providing a manual confirmation wouldn't necessarily be easier to implement, it would just depend on the carrier.

Suzanne Acton-Gervais : Yeah, absolutely. There's certain carriers that – well, I would be – I know in the Canadian context and – and I know we just haven't had the same – and I know there's been discussions and mention of (inaudible) on this call. This is the reality in Canada.

And so we are very much spending at skeletal levels within the Canadian carriers within these functions. So that would be operator specific to be able to assess this, but I have to say it just seems like a very...

And we understand, you know, the reason why for these provisions these provisions, it just – the reality is we just do not have the people, and nor the resources for the IT solution, so it's very much a feeling of chasing our tail on this one.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you.

Just a couple things. One is, on the – the comments around resources, so this has been something that's mentioned during the call and I just want to, you know, assure people that we're taking note of it.

We're – at the CTA, you know, we're not responsible for providing funding to industry. That's led by Finance Canada. But of course, you know, we are relaying the input that we're receiving during this working group.

The second thing is, Suzanne, I just want to probe a little bit because there is this long-standing requirement in the ATR to provide sort of a confirmation, I guess, on request. And so you know, I appreciate that there's some new services in the ATR and so I'd just like to, I guess, understand a bit more and maybe others in the industry can answer that, why like written confirmation of services would be difficult to provide, I guess, in light of that long-standing obligation.

Like is it because of the new services? Is it because like people are just trying to make it smoother, more automated? I'm just trying to understand since it is a bit of an older provision.

Suzanne Acton-Gervais : Thank you, Marcia.

What I would have to do with this is take it under advisement and consult with our members. I regret that I'm not able to answer unless they're able to provide the answers today.

I would also like to speak to this—and again, I do understand the purpose of these meetings and the cadence of these meetings. Just to give you insight on where we're at, even for us to consult and to adjust within the carriers and to be able to come here informed and prepared to be able to provide for this, these are our high priority files, they're important files, and everything right now is a high priority file when we're looking at, you know, the ongoing operations in these situations.

So I will have to take it under advisement unless the carriers are able to provide you with their inputs directly today and come back to you with more details. We are—just are trying to do our best here.

Marcia Jones : I fully understand that and I know it's a very difficult time for everybody at the table today and even taking the time for these working groups, I know, is a tap on your limited resources, so I just—I want to acknowledge, you know, that we do understand that.

The purpose of the meeting is really just to kind of drill down on what the particular challenges are so that we better understand them and make sure that we hear everyone's perspective.

I see that there's a number of hands up, but Glenda, I can't recall who is next.

Glenda Nicol : Not a problem. Linda with IATA is up next, followed by Kerianne Wilson with Air Canada, and Mr. Graham Keithley with A4A.

Marcia Jones : Okay, perfect.

Linda Ristagno : Thank you. Thank you, Marcia, and good morning to—good morning, good day to everyone.

I will be very quick, and I just wanted to complement what my colleagues already said in regards of the difficulties, actually, to change this—to change this process because here is about, really, the process. So you have to consider, Marcia, that when we—when we make modifications to the booking systems, this includes a series of changes with database, with also the communication systems—system that we have with the agents, the communication system that we have as well with other airlines. And some of these systems have also been outsourced to global distribution systems providers, so it's really a technical issue that takes time and resources and, really, lots of money.

And IATA, we have run a very detailed investigation on how much it would cost to make changes—to make the technical changes, and without considering, for example, the trainings, we are—only for those small technical changes we are on about 400,000 and even, even more for this.

It's really—it's a matter of money, it's a matter of resources, but it's a matter of changing as well the way how we communicate.

The fact that we are not able, for the moment, or at least not all the carriers are able for the moment to make these changes doesn't mean that we will not provide the service to the passengers because, at the end of the day, is to confirm and to make sure that they receive the service that they are entitled to and they—and we will make sure that they will get that service.

In regards of the manual confirmation, I would say that we have to really be careful what we are aiming for here because I see different manual and paper confirmation ongoing, and it's not making life of the passenger or the air carrier any way easier, especially when there would be more passengers awfully soon on board of the aircrafts.

In this case, for what concerns these technical changes, we really, really need to be some more understanding because it's not something that we don't want to do. It's that, for the moment, we need—we need to work and to look at how best to serve the passengers and how we can accommodate those changes in the long—in the long run.

And I mean, I'm not going to the technical things here despite we have gone to technical staff because we wanted to understand what really would mean to make those changes, and we have consulted with different air carriers. And it's really, really lot of—of changes in—small changes in systems that cost a lot of money even, for example, exchanging the messages. It's a lot, lot of money for the airlines.

And I conclude here. Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you.

And is there a sense—because, I mean, you're kind of covering, I guess, international flights, and so I—you know, I know that that covers a number of airlines.

Is there any sense on kind of timelines to be able to come into compliance with this obligation?

Linda Ristagno : What we—when we submitted our paper, what we asked in regards of the compliance, we asked that we will be able to do this until the COVID crisis is over to give the time to the airlines, first of all, to gain, again, the resources that they have lost, and also to see as well how we could—we could engage again with GPS and other providers because, at the end of the day, what we want is a long-term solution.

And paper would be a short-term solution, and I'm not sure it's going to be the better solution in this moment. But we are getting there.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you for that.

And I do appreciate the distinction between the confirmation of service and actually providing the service, so I know that that was raised earlier and I just want to underscore we do appreciate that.

Was Kerianne Wilson next on the list?

Kerianne Wilson : I'm happy to go next unless Glenda tells me otherwise.

So I appreciate what you're saying about it having already been in the ATRs. It's not exactly the same, as I'm sure the entire CTA is aware.

And if I may speak frankly because I think it's the time for it, any manual solution, which is what we were using before and what you are proposing now, is, unfortunately, more open to error. Human error. And the CTA now has significant powers to enforce and fine and award damages, so the stakes are just much higher for something like that.

And I mean, I think it's a universally-recognized truth that if it's a manual solution, it's just not going to be as good as an automated solution. And that's in no way taking away from the other arguments that have been made about, you know, short-staffed. I mean, like, we're—this is at the point where we're skeletal. Like, to add in more work, I truly don't know how people will manage it.

But on top of that, if—this is something that Air Canada has requested many times, if there were some kind of recognition of the dire straits we're in and enforcement leniency, that's another option. But certainly, it's alarming to think, okay, we'll, you know, meet everyone halfway, take on a manual solution, knowing it's imperfect, and then—and then what happens? It really is just—it's a very scary situation for an airline.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you for those clarifications.

Okay. Airlines for America was next.

Graham Keithley : Yeah, this is Graham Keithley again with Airlines for America.

Thank you again, Marcia, on that comments on hopefully getting some support—industry support from Finance Canada, and as our associate member, we fully support that, so we can get some assistance, particularly to Air Canada, our associate member. But oftentimes COVID—financial COVID relief does not extend to foreign entities, and I would caution that we would expect the Canadian Government to fund foreign airlines, as I know that governments are strapped for cash too. But just a consideration when we look to the financial support option.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you for that.

Are there any other comments on this provision? We haven't heard from anyone in the disability community yet, so I'd like to open the floor to discussion.

Glenda Nicol : Lui with CNIB has raised his hand.

Marcia Jones : Thank you. Please go ahead.

LUI GRECO : Thank you. This is really hard, because I completely empathize with what industry is saying, and that is that their resources have been devastated over the past 12 or 13 months, and now the regulations are introducing—or this particular regulation is introducing what I'm hearing industry say is a resource-intensive, onerous responsibility that they just don't know where, how they're going to meet.

So what's—I haven't heard anything saying about—I haven't heard anything from industry saying we can't do it now, but we can do it dot, dot, dot. Nothing like that.

Whether you can believe what we hear on the media, it sounds like our friends south of the border, for better or for worse, are in some kind of a rebound mode. It sounds like passenger counts are—have crossed the one million passengers per day threshold, which is probably still significantly below what industry would consider to be profitable. And I'm not—you know, I'm not an expert on the financial viability of the airline industry, and surprise, surprise.

So here's what I'm going to propose. Let's let industry establish a threshold that when passenger counts surpass X, that from that day forward, six months or a year, I mean, let industry tell us how long it's going to take, that they'll come into compliance with these thresholds. The rationale for this is that when X is reached, the resourcing issue will be somewhat mitigated. It isn't going to be zero. There's going to be—you know, the recovery, I've heard stories and I've read stuff saying that recovery for industry is probably three or four years out.

As a stakeholder from the disability community, I'm not prepared to wait three or four years, given that these expectations have been clearly articulated through codes of practice going back as far as 20 years.

So what I would suggest, and for the record, I'm going to ask that the Agency put forward to the panel that we task industry, through their various associations, of

defining the thresholds at which—at which their resource capacity becomes viable enough to start implementing these regulations, and then have industry tell government this is how long it's going to take us to do it, with the expectation that it not be extended indefinitely. Because what I'm afraid of, and having played at this game for a lifetime, there's never a good time. It's either economically challenging, which is politely saying for what's going on right now, it's economically devastating, or we're too busy, or there's too many other priorities.

So I think we need to draw the line in the sand, and I would encourage government to draw that line in the sand within reasonable parameters that accommodate for the devastation that industry, all industries are going to be living with for the next two or three years until we come back.

The compromise from the disability community is that we forego our rights as defined in the regulations, given the pandemic, given the economic devastation that's happening, but we forego them for or until, you know, until that line in the sand is reached, with the expectation that once we return to that—to some degree of normalcy, that within a predefined period of time subsequent to that level being reached, that we can start to expect these accommodations.

I believe that that's a reasonable accommodation. It allows industry—it takes the pressure off of industry to do the impossible right now, which is to find resources that they just don't have. But at the same time, it provides a community of people with disabilities, it provides us with a tangible expectation that we know will be realized and it's not ambiguous as to when.

Thanks.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thanks for that. And all of this is being relayed to the panel, so your comments about, you know, a tangible deadline to get this done will be relayed.

Glenda, who is next?

Glenda Nicol : Jérôme Plante with COPHAN is next, followed by Donna Jodhan with Barrier-Free Canada.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Please go ahead. Thank you.

COPHAN can go ahead.

Jérôme Plante : Yeah, my mic. Okay. Perfect, my mic was not activated.

French is my mother tongue, so I will speak in French. It will be easier for me.

In fact, written confirmation is very, very important to us and if we want this to be implemented quickly, it is important that government funding for air transportation, if there is any - there are apparently still negotiations on this - be conditional on achieving this kind of regulations. We need to be able to get that quickly. The CTA solution could have been simple, giving these confirmations manually, but it seems complicated, from what we understand from the airlines.

So if it's essentially a financial and technological problem that costs a relatively large amount of money, especially in this time of crisis when we're trying to reduce investments as much as possible, I think we need to go even further than what my... Mr. Greco just said and not even wait for X number of passengers to come back.

We need to make part of the assistance to the air industry that could eventually come from the federal government conditional on the achievement of this type of regulations, not just this section, but certainly it could cover the achievement of this section within a very specific timeframe to allow companies to obtain... to finish obtaining the appropriate technologies and to install them with, obviously, an accountability to follow the progress of this work, the time that would be required to do it, the amounts invested, and so on. We must be able to obtain... and given the importance of this information for many persons with disabilities who have difficulty accessing information otherwise, we really must be able to obtain written confirmation as quickly as possible. We need this provision to be in effect everywhere as soon as possible.

Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thank you, Mr. Plante.

We understand that this is a very important provision for you.

I think the next person was Ms. Jodhan?

Donna Jodhan : Yes, thank you very much. I think this is not a request that is a new request, and this has been going on for many, many years. And I think for the disabled community of persons with disabilities, it becomes really frustrating when you have organizations or industry saying, you know, “It’s economically challenging for us right now. We’ve lost billions and billions of dollars. We have other priorities. We’re too busy.” And believe me when I say I understand that the pandemic has done you guys a real big disservice. But looking at it from the point of view of persons with disabilities, we need to have something more than just being told we can’t do it. I’ve not heard you tell me anything apart from you can’t do it.

We have to find a way to make this happen, and whether—I mean, how we do it I think is by, again, teamwork between the community, between industry and government and the CTA.

We—I am not prepared personally to live with something that says, well, maybe in the next three or four years. I could be gone by then. So there needs to be some sort of a stake in the ground, a line in the sand that says, okay, things are hard right now, but we could plan for better time and better times will come. So what are you going to say when better times are coming? Are you going to tell me then that you’re too busy? It’s just not a good excuse or a good reason.

I think that we need to come up with some ideas as to how this could be accomplished and some sort of a roadmap as to when it could be done when things do improve. Because system is I don’t have the resources, we know that. We’ve heard it. We hear it every day. We want to hear what can we all do together, and not just expect industry to, you know, shoulder the burden. We are here, and we want to help, and we think that our rights need to be preserved here, and I do think that this should be taken to the panel. Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you for that.

Are there any other comments on this provision?

Glenda Nicol : We have Mr. Graham Keithley with a raised hand.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you. Thank you. Please go ahead, Mr. Keithley.

Graham Keithley : Hi, this is Graham Keithley with A4A. Very much appreciate all the comments from the most recent commenters from the disability community.

I do want to stress that we're seeking temporary exemption as a result of COVID. We are not seeking a forever exemption. I would say all of the A4A carriers are working towards compliance. It's just a matter of reaching compliance. It is not a—we are not trying to—you know, we certainly agree that there are wonderful benefits for this and that the—that passengers with disabilities will certainly benefit from this regulation, and the information that we will provide to written confirmations is a matter of time, and we just need—we're looking for a temporary exemption. Just wanted to put that—stress that.

Marcia Jones : Thank you.

I believe Linda from IATA, you've got your hand up?

Linda Ristagno : Yes, thank you. Thank you. Yes, I wanted really to support what Graham was saying. It's not that we would be starting from scratch. Before this pandemic was coming, we had already started to implement some of the provisions and to look at the communication protocols between the different [actors in the chain]. You have to understand that aviation is really operations—what you—there is much more of what you see because the result of the written confirmation means that, really, we need to do changes in the systems, and changes in the systems means as well changing the communication protocol between the different actors in the chain.

There are many more actors than what you think because the confirmation of the service has also to be passed to—along the chain to, for example, airports, to travel agents, and so on. So it's not that we didn't start and it's not that we are asking this—that this provision is—I mean, that we don't want to abide by this provision. We want to, of course, and we are really doing our best to provide the best service we can, because you are our valued customers. We want you on board of the aircraft and we want that you travel with dignity and respect. We just need some support until the COVID situation is over, because believe me.

And I think that you all read newspapers on how many people have lost their job. We have no manpower. We have no money at the moment. But this doesn't mean that we

don't want to comply. We want. Just give us some time to make sure that we comply the best we can. You will see—receive the service and you will receive as well this written confirmation because this is what is requested. This is what we want to do as well.

I just wanted to clarify this is—it's not that we don't want. We want. It's not the right moment, but you still receive the service that you are entitled to. Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thank you for that. And I think—you know, overall, I think just distilling everything that's been said so far, I mean, I think we all agree how critical this provision is with the certainty it gives passengers as to what services they're going to get, and kind of concerns around indefinitely prolonging this and the importance of, you know, getting this done and involving the community and making it happen. We appreciate the commitment from industry towards making it happen. You know, this discussion is useful in understanding some of the complexities in implementation, which is where we're trying to, you know, drill down and understand the provisions.

So I think it's been, you know, a good discussion to surface, you know, these issues. And, you know, I think it is—you know, this is a tough situation just generally, and I said that at the outset of the first meeting, you know, where I think everyone is suffering from the COVID pandemic and there are a lot of challenges, and so, you know, with the common goal of accessibility trying to work towards that. So, you know, really appreciate all these comments.

I don't know if anyone has any other comments on this particular provision.

Glenda Nicol : Donna Jodhan with Barrier-Free Canada has raised her hand.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you.

Please go ahead.

Donna Jodhan : So thank you very much. I'll just be very, very quick.

I understand, truly I understand where industry is coming from, but I think one way to probably bring more favour to this in that if we could find or start to do something in response to this; you are saying, "Give us more time. Give us more time." How much

more time do you really need, or do you—are you in a position to tell us how much more time? Truly, all my life I’ve heard, “Give us more time; give us more time” from any industry and it is a drawback. So could we somehow form some sort of working group where we would decide what do you need in order to fulfil that? How are you going to do it? Who are you going to ask? Where is it going to come from? I don’t think that telling us, “Give us more time”—it just doesn’t sit right anymore.

Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thank you for that. And while this is going to a Panel and I don’t think there’s any option on the table of this being prolonged indefinitely, and I don’t think that’s what industry is asking for, were the Panel to grant any delays, it would be a defined period of time. And industry has made requests of differing lengths but we certainly hear the message about this can’t be delayed indefinitely, and the frustration of, you know, people saying potentially that things will be implemented but just at an uncertain time.

So, again, all of this is going to be relayed to the Panel, so thank you for raising those points.

Glenda Nicol : I see no other raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you.

Are there any other comments on written confirmation of services?

Short pause

Marcia Jones : Okay. So we’ll move to the next provision, which is section 59 of the ATPDR, Retention of Electronic Copies.

So this provision states if, on the request of a carrier, a person with a disability provides the carrier with information, including personal health information, in relation to a request for a service referred to in this part, the carrier must offer to retain an electronic copy of that information for a period of at least three years for the purpose of permitting the carrier to use that information if the person makes another request for a service.

So section 59 requires carriers to retain electronic copies, on request, of information submitted by persons with disabilities for a period of three years in order to facilitate any future service requests by a person. The intent of this provision was to require carriers to change their practices such that persons with disabilities do not have to repeatedly resubmit the same information regarding their need for accommodation when they would prefer that the carrier retain this information.

We recognize, first, how important this provision is for persons with disabilities which is why it's featured in the ATPDR, and some of the frustrations of being asked to provide documentation repeatedly. And we've also heard concerns from the industry that there are practical complexities and security considerations around safely keeping personal and sensitive medical information or other information, and that this may be particularly challenging in the current circumstances.

So I guess a few, kind of, thoughts to kick off the discussion. So we understand, you know, many large Canadian carriers would already have infrastructure in place to address the need to retain medical documentation safely and securely as a result of the 1P1F obligation. It would be interesting to hear any outstanding concerns and any suggested interim alternatives.

Another question we'd like to hear input on is whether an alternative might simply be retaining that an approval has been provided which would seem to be a good solution to this, that maybe if there's concerns about, you know, safety storing medical information for a long period of time, simply that—a record that the carrier has approved the person's need for accommodation, so there wouldn't be a need to ask for this documentation anyway.

So this is an exemption in respect of which we've received a few requests for exemption from Airlines for America; IATA; NACC, that's National Airlines Council of Canada; Air Canada; and Jazz, for periods ranging from about 12 months to six months are the timelines.

So I will open the floor to discussion on this provision.

Airlines for America.

Graham Keithley : Thank you, Marcia. Again, this is Graham Keithley of Airlines for America.

I don't want to rehash out the—the only complexity that we layer onto the previous conversation about IT and resources is that there's 162 privacy regimes around the world that airlines have to consider, which just adds another layer of complexity.

So that lift, copy and paste previous discussion insert on section 59, and then just add a consideration, it's additional complexity with the privacy, just to make sure that passengers' privacy is being protected accordingly throughout the world, just another layer of complexity.

So I will defer to my Canadian and other—and my other colleagues on other issues.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you.

And I think Linda Ristagno, you had your hand up next?

Linda Ristagno : Yes, thank you.

Actually, also on this we had already started the discussion on how we could accommodate the retention of personal information in the system. And we have discussed with some airlines who had started this process voluntarily in other jurisdictions. What we realized is that the complexity is related, for example, not only of course the GDPR, the *European General Data Protection Regulations*, it's just one of the different complexities. But in the specific, to support the storage of passengers' accommodation requests, we need to—in this case, we need to change the passenger and non-passenger systems and platforms, including, for example, how we change the systems for other airlines. For example, for co-share partners and so on, those—the retention of this information means as well in this case that we have to communicate in the right way with the different actors in the chain. And, in particular, it requests as well that there is also—there has to be, from the passenger, also the willingness to change the accommodation request when and if it needs to be. So that's why the complexity of the changes.

Again, I don't want to be too technical here, but, believe me, we have already started mapping all the different changes that we need to be, and it's not as easy as it looks like.

Also, for this and also for the previous provisions we ask the deferral but not the deferral forever. I think that in our first submission we asked something like 12 to 18 months to give us—after the COVID crisis is over to give us the time to look at how we can accommodate certain information, and especially to go to around certain provisions when it comes to that personal data, data protection.

But we already—we are working, we are looking at that. It's just, as I said before, it's not the right time for many reasons, and just financial issue is just one of many others.

Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you. And if I understand correctly, it sounds like there's particular considerations around international travel with different privacy regimes and then codeshares, like, transmitting information from one partner to another on the need for accommodations, while respecting privacy.

Linda Ristagno : Yes, it's exact, because the request for accommodation and especially the request for service, it's just not saving the information in the system. It's how then the information is used to make sure that the same level of service is provided to the customer in all the different—if, for example, the customer travels internationally, they have to receive—they are entitled, they have to receive the same service in, for example, in Montreal that they would receive in London, then they would receive in Geneva, for example. And this means that certain information had to be transmitted, and we have also to make sure that the information that we keep in the system is updated. And when we transmit this information, we don't breach any of the—of those privacy regulation.

Marcia Jones : Okay. I'd like to hear from Canadian carriers, if possible, and whether there's a distinction between, like, domestic and international travel with regard to this provision.

Glenda Nicol : On that note, Kerianne with Air Canada has a hand up.

Marcia Jones : Great, thank you. Please go ahead.

Kerianne Wilson : So, Marcia, at least on our side, we have—you are correct that we have held on to certain documents in the past, but it was a much more limited scope. And I wanted to speak to your suggestion that carriers could potentially just keep the approval. That just wouldn't work because we need the ability to validate that the information provided is still current, and that no other information is needed to make the assessment.

So, certainly, we have expanded our system to hold a much greater amount of the information than we had before. I mean, the difference in scope, it just—it could be every single customer who travels, who requires accommodation, right, as opposed to a quite small subset that we used to keep on file.

So, sorry, I was making two different points. My goodness. So, it was the scope of how much information we're holding onto.

In terms of privacy, we are reasonably comfortable because we—it's a legal obligation to offer this and hold onto it. But as a Canadian carrier, we—our primary focus has been with Canadian legislation. I wouldn't—I couldn't possibly speak to all of the privacy legislation around the world. We don't operate to 162 different countries. So I just can't speak to that.

That's all I have for now. Sorry.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you. So I'm hearing about some of the complexity around this. And, again, I want to emphasize from the CTA's perspective how critical this provision is and that's why it's in the ATPDR.

I would like to open the floor just generally to see if there are any other comments on this particular provision.

Glenda Nicol : Corry with AEBC has his hand up.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you. Please go ahead.

Corry Stuive : Just a general comment. When I hear terms like, you know, 12 to 18 months when COVID is over, that spooks me. When will that day be, if it ever is to come? So, I mean, that's just sort of a generic open-ended comment that I've heard

once or twice during this discussion today, and I think that's why some of us are really eager to try to put some definite timelines or limitations to some of these requests and concerns.

I think, as we move forward, and things such as vaccine passports are being considered, maybe this is a good time to be talking about this and maybe this is a good time for industry to be exploring this because the rules may sort of change for everyone. And some of these personal health considerations, that's—it's going to be a new world out there and they may be applicable to the general travelling public moving forward as opposed to just persons with disabilities. I'll leave it at that.

Marcia Jones : Thank you for that.

I think Lui Greco from CNIB, you've got your hand up?

Lui Greco : I do, I do. So the ability to keep information about passengers on file, irregardless (sic) of whether or not they have accommodation requests, it seems to me as though industry's already been doing that. The plethora of frequent flyer reward programs I think is probably the one thing that the CNIB has pointed to in our interventions over the past four years around this issue.

Now granted, those systems may not be integral to a service provider's in-house databases and systems and they may not necessarily even need to share that information with partners, but they're capturing it. And I think—to me, that says that's the first obstacle to overcome, and in a layperson's view, they're already done that.

So this isn't—or this doesn't sound to be as onerous as what I'm hearing some of the service providers say. And, again, with all due respect, I don't walk in your shoes. I don't know your realities, but I look at it from the outside with a little bit of knowledge in how IT systems work, which makes me dangerous, I guess. But I think—I think, again, as Graham said from Airlines for America, just copy and paste our comments from the other issue onto this and CNIB would be happy if that were to go to the panel.

Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you. So I think some of this is around sort of the medical side of it, or the, you know, personal—having personal information and

transmitting it through things like codeshare, so that's I believe some of the commentary.

One of the things I do want to note too is, you know, this working group is focusing obviously on the handful of provisions that are a challenge. So, you know, these discussions can be kind of difficult now. Most of the provisions are in force and are being applied and implemented. So I want to make sure we don't all lose sight of that. And, again, the panel will get all this information about, you know, some of the practical difficulties, you know, coupled with concerns about, you know how important this is, the need for defined timelines and perhaps not making it more complicated than it needs to be, you know, recognizing that industry is able to come up with innovative solutions.

Are there any other comments on this issue?

Glenda Nicol : Louise Gillis with CCB has raised her hand.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thank you. Please go ahead.

Louise Gillis : Yes, it's ditto many of the comments from before, but I think it's very important that we do realize, as timelines are always in our eyesight, even though we don't have very good eyesight, it's there, and we have to realize too that everybody has timelines. So not only the industry, but we as persons with disabilities do. So I think it's very, very important that we do, as somebody mentioned, draw the line in the sand on many of these dates and find out when these items that we've discussed in all of the above, basically, that they be given a reasonable timeline and not an extreme timeline, like, three, four years. That we are able to be at the table and discuss this if, you know, once this goes to committee that if they have any questions come back to the organizations that are here today and in this group to give information and assistance in however way we can do so to come to a good conclusion and a good ending to all of these discussions so that both industry and persons with disabilities do come out in a good point in the end. Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thank you for those comments.

Glenda Nicol : I have no other raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Thanks everybody.

I will move on then to the last provision for discussion today, which is automated self-service kiosks. And these provisions are not yet enforced. They come into force on June 25th, 2022.

So they require that if a transportation service provider owns, operates, or controls the hardware components of an automated self-service kiosk that is available for public use in a terminal, or owns or operates or controls the software components of such a kiosk, the transportation service provider must ensure that the hardware components or the software components, as the case may be, meet requirements set out in certain clauses of annexes to the regulations of the *National Standard of Canada, CAN/CSA B651.02-07 (R2017)*, entitled Accessible Design For Self-Service Interactive Devices, which was published in January 2007 by the Canadian Standards Association.

And if the transportation service provider owns, operates, or controls the hardware components of an automated self-service kiosk, that's referred to above, the transportation service provider must ensure that the kiosk is visually and tactilely discernible by an international symbol of access that is affixed to the front of it.

So the intent of this provision is fairly straightforward. It's to ensure that self-service kiosks are accessible. We have received requests for delay to the coming into force of this provision from the CAC, GTAA, Montreal Airport, and Québec City, generally as part of the normal asset replacements cycle. So the idea would be to upgrade the kiosks or replace them as part of the normal asset replacement cycle, given the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

So it would be useful to know from transportation service providers to—like what the normal replacement cycle is, and following that, type of a timeframe how long it would take for all kiosks to meet these requirements.

We've also heard from industry that alternative technologies to what we're used to with kiosks are being contemplated anyway, just given the impacts of COVID, for example, biometric kiosks. And so we'd like a better understanding on what's happening there and how accessibility is being considered in those kiosks.

Glenda Nicol : Peter with the GTAA has raised his hand.

Marcia Jones : Okay, perfect. Thank you. Please go ahead.

Peter Humele : Yeah. Hi, Marcia. Thanks for that. I don't know if my colleague is on this call. He was on earlier, but he may have had to leave.

But what I would just say about this piece is there's a few aspects. First of all, that at Toronto, many of our self-service kiosks are actually accessible now. Under 50 percent, but more than the 25 percent in the CTA's Codes of Practice. So they are accessible.

And—but because of COVID, we are working closely with agencies, such as CBSA, USCBP, airlines, looking for ways to reduce the [touch points], and that's—I think you mentioned, biometrics or touchless types of service kiosk technology. The whole idea of trying to be—that we're trying to improve the health and safety.

And we have in mind, we have a real focus at Pearson about—in putting in place initiatives that are to—really focussed on health and safety and instilling confidence with the travelling public and that. So we're trying to move away from the touch type of technology.

So we've been working with, as I said, with various organisations on that, but that's taking—going to take some time to develop, but it's things we're working on.

And what we're concerned about is this deadline that you mentioned next year of having to complete the accessibility of our remaining kiosks only to meet that deadline. And this—I know we've—this has come up on many of the other topics, but this is a very large expense. This is millions of dollars to complete the accessibility of these kiosks at a time when obviously we all know the impacts of COVID on our revenues. The GTAA has had massive cuts to its revenue and to its capital expenditure budgets.

And so—but more—even more importantly—and so I say. So I don't want to minimize the fact that this costs—this will cost many millions of dollars to do, but I want—don't want to minimize the fact that if we have to spend all that money only to meet the deadline and then rip it all out because we're—we've now got better solutions that are healthier solutions that are no touch-type of technology solutions.

So you know, we really don't want to be throwing away in a sense to complete and get us up to 100 percent compliance just to meet that date when we may have better technologies right around the corner.

We are thinking of—you know, we've—there have been many discussions about how long would—should some of these things be delayed. We are thinking by no later than June of 2025 to have this further extended to so we can complete the remaining number of our kiosks.

And as I said, we're close to 50 percent of our current kiosks are accessible, so it's not by any means that people with disabilities don't have the ability—have those available now, they do. We're just looking for a delay maybe until—out to as far as June of 2025 to complete the rest, which gives us time to look at all these other no touch technologies. Thanks.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you. And just a question for clarification : For the other technologies that you're looking at, would those be implemented by 2025? Would that include accessible features? Or can—like I'm not clear on the new technology.

Peter Humele : Yeah, I think we would be—I—I can get you some more clarity on that, but my expectation is that the new technology we are looking at would be accessible and implemented around the 2025 timeframe. Because right now, my understanding is that it might take two or three years to develop and implement this new type of touchless biometrics, whatever, whatever type of technology.

Marcia Jones : Okay, thank you for the clarification. Does any other airport want to speak to this exemption request?

Glenda Nicol : I see no other raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay. Does anyone else have any comments on this request?

Glenda Nicol : One raised hand from Lui Greco with CNIB.

Marcia Jones : Thank you. Please go ahead.

Lui Greco : Okay. Peter, you talk about biometrics, and if biometrics in self-serve kiosks looks anything like the retina scans that I encountered when I travelled through Heathrow a few years ago, we'll have set the clock back. Because for people who—let's pretend that these kiosks are going to do some kind of a retinal scan. People like me, who have no control over my eyes, would—I wouldn't consider that accessible; I couldn't use it. Period. You might as well have a touchscreen with no accessibility devices.

So being cognisant of time, let me just repeat what we've said—what I have said earlier and what some of my colleagues from the disability community have also said, and that is before you go out and spend a pile of money on a new system, I would strongly encourage you, and all of your airport colleagues around the table, make sure you do your due diligence first with the community. Don't assume that just because a vendor tells you it's accessible that it is.

A case in point. The kiosks that I have seen, both in Calgary and in Toronto, do not comply with the CSA.

The IATA and apology, Linda, but IATA has developed their own standard in consultation with some groups, but it's not CSA compliant. If industry decides to go with biometrics, you might want to look at augmenting that with some type of near field communication protocol, so that if you have a Smart device, there's a strategy or a protocol in place that you can either use biometrics for authentication, or NFC, or Bluetooth, or some kind of WiFi connectivity. And that's all I'll say on that.

Peter Humele : Yeah, hi, Lui, thanks. It's Peter. Yeah, thanks for those comments. And if my colleague was here, he'd be able to speak maybe a little bit more about what we're looking at. But we take your point that—and it might not just be biometrics. It could be some of these other types of—and I think Smart device over-the-phone is one type of technology we're looking at. So, we do recognize that, you know, people have different disabilities and whatever these new technologies would have to work with a variety of people. And, certainly, we will be reaching out and talking to members of the community and exploring these initiatives. So, thanks for your comment.

Glenda Nicol : We have one raised hand from Donna Jodhan.

Donna Jodhan : Thank you very much.

Mr. Humele, I'd just like to echo Lui's comments here. It is disappointing and concerning to me that so often, not just the transportation industry, but industries as a whole, they go out there and they really think that, my goodness, you know, I found a vendor who tells me they know what they're doing. I found a contractor who is an expert. Well, in essence, too many of them are not experts. And I can only plead with you guys, when you're doing your due diligence, please, reach out to our community, because we know best what we need and what we can and cannot do.

Up until a few years ago, I had control over my eyes. Now I don't. So retinal recognition is not going to help, but I am very sure that you'll be telling us of some, you know, other type of technology that you could or would be using.

So, again, I urge you, please, do not just listen to contractors who say I know what I'm doing, and you end up spending millions of dollars; right? And you spend those millions of dollars and, at the end of the day, it doesn't work.

Those are my comments. Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thanks again, and I think we're, you know, hearing a—like, a common theme about it's so important to consult with the community in developing new technologies like this. I mean, obviously, COVID has caused some changes in operating practices. And it may provide some opportunities actually to improve technologies or practices, and I think Corry touched on that earlier. This may be one of them with the new kiosks, but it's important to hear these comments about consulting with the community along the way.

Are there any other comments on this particular item?

Glenda Nicol : One raised hand from Louise Gillis with CCB.

Marcia Jones : Thank you. Please go ahead.

Louise Gillis : Just one further comment on the retinal display. Somebody who has no eyes and has glass eyes would not be able to go through this, so it's just a little comment to take that into consideration as well. Thank you.

Marcia Jones : Thank you for that.

Is there anything else on this exemption request?

Glenda Nicol : I see no other raised hands at this time.

Marcia Jones : Okay. So that concludes our discussions on the provisions for today. And before I wrap up, I just want to make sure there's not any other general comments that anyone wants to raise.

Okay. So, thanks again, everybody, for taking three hours of your busy schedules to comment on these provisions and share your perspectives. As many of you have observed today, you know, these are tough issues, and we really appreciate having all of this input on the provisions in question. And so all of this information, again, will be relayed to the panel considering the issue.

Next week we have a few more provisions to discuss, and those are listed on your agenda, and we'll keep the agenda as is, with some time set aside for general commentary.

I'll also remind everyone that there will be a survey at the end of this meeting on the logistics, just to make sure that we're meeting everyone's needs in terms of being able to follow the discussion.

And we look forward to our next meeting on March 23rd. So, thanks again, everybody. It was a very useful discussion.

Lui Greco : Thank you, Marcia.

The meeting concluded at 3:53 p.m.

Certification

I, Mathieu Bastien-Marcil, a certified court reporter, hereby certify the foregoing pages to be an accurate transcription of my notes/records to the best of my skill and ability, and I so swear.



Mathieu Bastien-Marcil

March 16, 2021