

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IAPA fulfills passenger advocacy role on DOT Task Force: Relief for stranded passengers closer to reality

The International Airline Passengers Association (IAPA) has completed its representation on the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) Tarmac Delays Task Force, an effort designed to outline standards and processes for easing passenger inconvenience and discomfort during lengthy ground delays. The task force initiative, which included representatives from airports, airlines, consumer groups and government agencies, convened to identify and recommend specific passenger needs and customer service policy standards. The resulting document, to be submitted to Transportation Secretary Mary Peters for consideration, creates a comprehensive set of communication standards and passenger needs that each vested party can use to effectively recognize passenger concerns and service needs during lengthy airport and tarmac delays. Among the key service improvements recommended by the task force are:

- Greater integration of situational awareness information and services between airports, airlines, agencies and other service providers during delay events
- Access to food and facilities for passengers on-board aircraft or in the terminal
- Regular updates regarding delay status and passenger options
- Increased availability of airport and government agency services to properly accommodate passengers on diverted flights
- Ensuring that airport concessionaires and operations personnel remain accessible during lengthy ground delays

IAPA was selected to participate on the task force last April. David Stamey, IAPA's representative for Consumer and Travel Industry Affairs, explained the importance of the work groups that featured more than 70 aviation officials. "IAPA is very encouraged that a passenger-comes-first initiative was undertaken by a cabinet-level agency, drawing greater focus on passenger service. We're pleased that a model foundation has been laid for concrete policies and standards that airports, airlines and government agencies can follow in order to ease a passenger's distress during long delays," Stamey said. "It's an important and necessary first step, and we expect that our collective work will serve as the model for action by all responsible parties" he added.

IAPA has been privileged to represent airline passenger advocacy needs on behalf of its 400,000 members and has actively participated on several intervening working groups to formulate specific passenger needs recommendations for consideration by the full Task Force at its regularly scheduled monthly meetings.

IAPA applauds the leadership exhibited by DOT in mandating this important air service initiative specifically intended to bring attention to, and relief for, air passengers involved in lengthy on-board and ground delays.

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Notes to the Editor:

About IAPA

IAPA (The International Airline Passenger Association) has been at the forefront of travel issues for over 40 years. IAPA was set up to represent the interests of frequent air travelers by protecting and promoting their rights as airline passengers, as well as providing them with special group discounts on items such as hotel accommodation, car rental and insurance.

Since its inception IAPA has been campaigning on behalf of frequent travelers - on safety and security, improving passenger comfort and getting better value for money. We pride ourselves in informing our members about the wider travel community issues that affect them, and represent airline passenger interests to industry and government bodies.

We strive to meet the needs of the frequent flyer and continue to stand up for the rights of the individual passenger at all opportunities.

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