

Published name

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Short comment

Hello - I have a brother who is a paraplegic and who lives in regional Australia, so I understand these issues quite well. However, the people you should actually be seeking input from are the disabled and their communities themselves. Have you done this? If not, I suggest that any feedback that either I or other non-disabled ppl provide is essentially meaningless.

However, a few general points from his experiences:

1. transport of the wheelchair (or other mobility aids) is essential.
2. how are they to use the toilet on board? This basically rules out anything but short flights. But add a flight delay, and you have problems. A disabled person may need to be carried to the toilet.
3. disabled ppl often need to travel with a travel companion, to push the wheelchair, help with luggage etc (I have done this myself). Consider a discounted fare for the companion.
4. if the disabled person cannot walk unaided at all, its likely that they will need to be seated in Row 1 (with their travel companion). So these seats should be given preference for disabled passengers, as is done on buses, trams, trains etc.
5. I cant comment on other forms of disability eg blindness, deafness, as I dont have personal experience with them, but I have seen Braille in overseas airports, but cant recall any in Australia. For deaf people, you need to be aware they cant hear the PA system, their names being called out etc.

I sincerely hope you can make air travel easier for the disabled, as you do for the elderly.