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July 11th, 2024

Deputy Bernard J. Durkan,
Dáil Éireann,
Leinster House,
Kildare Street,
Dublin 2.

Dáil Question No: 147

To ask the Minister for Transport how frequent and in-depth the disability awareness training for public-facing airport and airline staff is; and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Dear Deputy Durkan,

Thank you for your query.

In both Dublin and Cork Airports, the PRM (Person with Reduced Mobility) service provider includes specialised disability awareness training delivered by an in-house trainer to their staff during the onboarding process and ongoing training programs (refresher training every 24 months). The training course objectives are as follows:

- Develop an understanding of passengers with reduced mobility and how to provide effective assistance tailored to their specific needs.
- Learn to communicate effectively and comfortably with passengers with disabilities.
- Develop skills and qualities to be disability confident when assisting passengers with disabilities.
- Outline best practice procedures for providing direct assistance to disabled persons and those with reduced mobility. Provide an understanding of EC 1107/2006.

Additionally, daa front-line staff receive disability awareness training as part of a wider operations training schedule, provided by in-house Training Teams (Operations, Airport Search Unit Officers, Airport Police, Retail).

Recently, as part of a broader initiative to enhance accessibility and inclusion, a daa pilot program offering specialised training on Non-Visible Disabilities was conducted. This training, provided by the independent expert organisation Ability Focus, included a mix of front-line and non-front-line staff and received positive feedback from participants. The training program has commenced roll-out with new security hires and will be integrated into recurrent ASU (Airport Search Unit Officers) training starting in September.

This two-hour awareness program covers the following areas:

- Exploring the diversity within disability
- Understanding reasonable accommodations
- Learning about appropriate disability etiquette
- Focusing on key aspects of effective disability support
- Highlighting how to be disability-inclusive

A broader plan for further roll-out is being developed with other business units, prioritising frontline staff.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Rebecca Troy'.

Rebecca Troy,
daa plc

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