



**DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE
MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS
CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF TIMOR-LESTE (AACTL, I.P.)**

CIVIL AVIATION SAFETY REGULATION (CASR)

Part 14 – Rights of Disabled Persons and Persons with Reduced Mobility when travelling by air in the RDTL

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1. INTRODUCTION

Timor-Leste has ratified several core human rights treaties that encompass the promotion and protection of rights of persons with disabilities. Timor-Leste's Constitution, Sections 16 and 21, explicitly provides for non-discrimination and equal treatment for persons with mental or physical disabilities. The Penal Code classifies the mistreatment of a person with a disability by a caretaker as a crime. According to the 2022 National Population and Housing Census, there are 17,061 people with disabilities, which representing approximately 1.6 per cent of the total population in Timor-Leste.

While people with disabilities and reduced mobility, like everyone else, are increasingly given the opportunity to travel by air, there is a need to standardize the conditions for travel of such people so as to facilitate their acceptance and handling of their carriage by the airlines, airport operators, ground handling companies, etc.

Flying can present challenges for passengers with disabilities, whether physical or hidden, making the experience stressful. The 2022 ICAO General Assembly adopted a resolution on accessibility for passengers with disabilities and tasked the Council to develop a work program on accessibility for passengers with disabilities in order to reach for 2024 (ICAO Year of Facilitation) disability-inclusive air transport system with an objective to enhance air travel accessibility, ensuring safe, reliable, and dignified air travel is accessible to everyone and to enhance global collaboration on mutual standards and practices.

Provisions regarding the facilitation of the transport of passengers requiring special assistance have been consolidated into the seventeenth edition (2025) of *ICAO Annex 9, Chapter 8, F – Facilitation of the transport of persons with disabilities* which under the *standards 8.18 and 8.23* require Contracting States to ensure that, when traveling, persons with disabilities are provided with special assistance in order to ensure that they receive services customarily available for generic public that assistance must be provided in a manner that respects the dignity of the individual and require Contracting States to take the necessary steps to ensure that airport facilities and services are adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities.

Airports, Air carriers, Ground Handling Companies, and the disability community should work together to organize special assistance for persons with reduced mobility (PRMs). Coordination among all these players is the key to empowering passengers with disabilities to travel with confidence. Arrangements for the provision of special assistance to PRMs must be in accordance with the *ICAO Annex 9* and *ICAO DOC 9984 - Manual on Access to Air Transport by Persons with Disabilities* and PRMs must not be charged directly for the assistance they require. PRMs have the same rights as other citizens to freedom of movement and freedom of choice. This applies to air travel as to all other areas in life. Discrimination towards PRMs in air travel must be prohibited. PRMs must not be refused booking or carriage due to their disability. PRMs must not be charged directly for the assistance they require. Therefore, PRMs must be able to travel by

air under conditions similar to those of other citizens and must not be excluded, except for justified safety reasons prescribed by applicable laws/regulations.

2. Purpose and scope

2.1 These Regulations establishes rules for the protection of and provision of assistance to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility travelling by air, both to protect them against discrimination and to ensure that they receive assistance.

2.2 The provisions of these Regulations apply to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, using or intending to use commercial passenger air services on departure from, on transit through, or on arrival at an airport in the territory of the RDTL.

2.3 The provisions contained in this document are applicable to:

- a) All airport operators within the territory of RDTL.
- b) Timor-Leste air carrier/ operator engaged in scheduled and non-scheduled commercial passenger air transport services both domestic and international.
- c) Foreign airlines engaged in scheduled commercial passenger air transport services operating to and from the territory of RDTL.

3. Definitions and Abbreviations

3.1 For the purposes of these Regulations the following definitions shall apply:

- **Airport** means the defined area on land or water (including any buildings, installations, and equipment) intended to be used either wholly or in part for the arrival, departure, and surface movement of aircraft.
- **Airport operator** means a body which has as its objective under national legislation the administration and management of airport infrastructures, and the coordination and control of the activities of the various operators present in an airport.
- **Airport car park** means a car park, within the airport boundaries or under the direct control of the airport operator, which directly serves the passengers using that airport.

- **Airport user** means any natural or legal person responsible for the carriage of passengers by air from or to the airport in question.
- **Airport Users Committee/Airport Facilitation Committee** means a committee of representatives of airport users or organizations representing them.
- **Commercial passenger air transport services** means services operated by an air carrier through a scheduled or non-scheduled flight offered to the general public for valuable consideration, whether on its own or as part of a package.
- **Contract** is the agreement linking the consumer to the organizer and/or the retailer
- **Disabled person or person with reduced mobility (PRM)** means any person whose mobility is reduced due to physical incapacity (sensory or locomotory), an intellectual deficiency, age, illness, or any other cause of disability when using transport and whose situation needs special attention and the adaptation to a person's needs of the service made available to all passengers.
- **Air carrier** means an air transport undertaking with a valid operating license
- **Operating air carrier** means an air carrier that performs or intends to perform a flight under a contract with a passenger or on behalf of another person, legal or natural, having a contract with that passenger.
- **Passenger** means a person, who on the basis of the contract, is entitled to carriage by aircraft.
- **Reservation** means the fact that the passenger has a ticket, or other proof, which indicates that the reservation has been accepted and registered by the air carrier or tour operator.
- **Scheduled air service** means a series of flights possessing all the following characteristics:
 - a) on each flight seats and/or capacity to transport cargo and/or mail are available for individual purchase by the public either directly from the air carrier or from its authorized agents.
 - b) it is operated so as to serve traffic between the same two or more points and performed according to a published timetable, or
 - c) with flights so regular or frequent that they constitute a recognizably systematic series.

- **Ticket** means a valid document giving a passenger entitlement to transport, in paper or electronic form, issued or authorized by the air carrier or its authorized agent.
- **Tour operator** means, with the exception of an air carrier, an organizer or retailer

3.2 The following acronyms are used in these regulations:

AACTL – Civil Aviation Authority of Timor-Leste

AOC – Air Operator Certificate

ICAO – International Civil Aviation Organization

PRM – Person with reduced Mobility (disabled person)

RDTL – Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste

4. Prevention of refusal of carriage

4.1 An air carrier or its agent or a tour operator shall not refuse, on the grounds of disability or of reduced mobility:

- a) to accept a reservation for a flight departing from or arriving at an airport to which these Regulations apply.
- b) to embark a disabled person or a person with reduced mobility at such an airport, provided that the person concerned has a valid ticket and reservation.

5. Derogation, special conditions and information

5.1 Notwithstanding the provisions of *Section 4*, an air carrier or its agent or a tour operator may refuse, on the grounds of disability or of reduced mobility, to accept a reservation from or to embark a disabled person or a person with reduced mobility:

- a) in order to meet applicable safety requirements established by the international civil aviation organization (ICAO), or national laws/regulations in order to meet safety requirements established by the authority that issued the air operator's certificate (AOC) to the air carrier concerned.
- b) if the size of the aircraft or its doors makes the embarkation or carriage of that disabled person or person with reduced mobility physically impossible.

5.2 Under the same conditions referred to in *subsection 5.1, paragraph (a)*, an air carrier or its agent or a tour operator may require that a disabled person or person with reduced mobility be accompanied by another person who is capable of providing the assistance required by that person.

5.3 An air carrier or its agent shall make publicly available, in accessible formats and in at least the same languages as the information made available to other passengers, the safety rules that it applies to the carriage of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, as well as any restrictions on their carriage or on that of mobility equipment due to the size of aircraft. A tour operator shall make such safety rules and restrictions available for flights included in package travel, package holidays and package tours which it organizes, sells or offers for sale.

5.4 When an air carrier or its agent or a tour operator exercises a derogation under *subsections 5.1 or 5.2*, it shall immediately inform the disabled person or person with reduced mobility of the reasons therefor. On request, an air carrier, its agent or a tour operator shall communicate these reasons in writing to the disabled person or person with reduced mobility, within five working days of the request.

6. Designation of points of arrival and departure

6.1 In cooperation with airport users, through the Airport Users Committee/Airport Facilitation Committee, if exists, and relevant organizations representing disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility, the airport operators should , taking account of local conditions, designate points of arrival and departure within the airport boundary or at a point under the direct control of the airport operator , both inside and outside terminal buildings, at which disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility can, with ease, announce their arrival at the airport and request assistance.

6.2 The points of arrival and departure referred to in *subsection 6.1* shall be clearly signed and shall offer basic information about the airport, in accessible formats.

7. Transmission of information

7.1 Air carriers, their agents and tour operators shall take all measures necessary for the receipt, at all their points of sale in the territory of the RDTL, including sale by telephone and via the

internet, of notifications of the need for assistance made by disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility.

7.2 When an air carrier or its agent or a tour operator receives a notification of the need for assistance at least 48 hours before the published departure time for the flight, it shall transmit the information concerned at least 36 hours before the published departure time for the flight:

- a) to the airport operator of the airports of departure, arrival and transit, and
- b) to the operating air carrier, if a reservation was not made with that carrier, unless the identity of the operating air carrier is not known at the time of notification, in which case the information shall be transmitted as soon as practicable.

7.3 In all cases other than those mentioned in *subsection 7.2*, the air carrier or its agent or tour operator shall transmit the information as soon as possible.

8. Right for assistance at airports

8.1 When a disabled person or person with reduced mobility arrives at an airport for travel by air, the airport operator of that airport shall be responsible for ensuring the provision of the assistance specified in **Annex I** in such a way that the person is able to take the flight for which he or she holds a reservation, provided that the notification of the person's particular needs for such assistance has been made to the air carrier or its agent or the tour operator concerned at least 48 hours before the published time of departure of the flight. This notification shall also cover a return flight, if the outward flight and the return flight have been contracted with the same air carrier.

8.2 If no notification is made in accordance with *subsection 8.1*, the airport operator shall make all reasonable efforts to provide the assistance specified in **Annex I** in such a way that the person concerned is able to take the flight for which he or she holds a reservation.

8.3 The provisions of *subsection 8.1* shall apply on condition that:

- a) the person presents himself or herself for check-in:
 - (i) at the time stipulated in advance and in writing (including by electronic means) by the air carrier or its agent or the tour operator, or

- (ii) if no time is stipulated, not later than one hour before the published departure time, or
- b) the person arrives at a point within the airport boundary designated in accordance with *Section 6*:
 - (i) at the time stipulated in advance and in writing (including by electronic means) by the air carrier or its agent or the tour operator, or
 - (ii) if no time is stipulated, not later than two hours before the published departure time.

8.4 When a disabled person or person with reduced mobility transits through an airport to which these Regulations apply, or is transferred by an air carrier or a tour operator from the flight for which he or she holds a reservation to another flight, the airport operator shall be responsible for ensuring the provision of the assistance specified in **Annex I** in such a way that the person is able to take the flight for which he or she holds a reservation.

8.5 On the arrival by air of a disabled person or person with reduced mobility at an airport to which these Regulations applies, the airport operator shall be responsible for ensuring the provision of the assistance specified in **Annex I** in such a way that the person is able to reach his or her point of departure from the airport as referred to in *Section 6*.

8.6 The assistance provided shall, as far as possible, be appropriate to the particular needs of the individual passenger.

9. Responsibility for assistance at airports

9.1 The airport operator shall be responsible for ensuring the provision of the assistance specified in **Annex I** without additional charge to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility.

9.2 The airport operator may provide such assistance itself. Alternatively, in keeping with its responsibility, and subject always to compliance with the quality standards referred to in *Subsection 10.1* of these regulations, the airport operator may contract with one or more other parties for the supply of the assistance. In cooperation with airport users, through the Airport Users Committee/Airport Facilitation Committee where one exists, the airport operator may enter into such a contract or contracts on its own initiative or on request, including from an air carrier, and taking into account the existing services at the airport concerned.

9.3 The airport operator may, on a non-discriminatory basis, levy a specific charge on airport users for the purpose of funding this assistance.

9.4 This specific charge shall be reasonable, cost-related, transparent and established by the airport operator in cooperation with airport users, through the Airport Users Committee/Airport Facilitation Committee where there exists or any other appropriate entity.

10. Quality standards for assistance

10.1 The airport operator shall set quality standards for the assistance specified in **Annex I** and determine resource requirements for meeting them, in cooperation with airport users, through the Airport Users Committee/Airport Facilitation Committee where one exists, and organizations representing disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility, if established.

10.2 In the setting of such standards, full account shall be taken of internationally recognized policies and codes of conduct concerning facilitation of the transport of disabled persons or persons with reduced mobility, notably the *ICAO-Annex 9, Chapter 8, F – Facilitation of the transport of persons with disabilities*.

10.3 The airport operator shall publish its quality standards.

10.4 An air carrier and the airport operator may agree that, for the passengers whom that air carrier transports to and from the airport, the airport operator should provide assistance of a higher standard, if possible, than the standards referred to in *subsection 10.1* or provide services additional to those specified in **Annex I**.

10.5 For the purpose of funding either of these, the airport operator may levy a charge on the air carrier in addition to that referred to in *Subsection 9.3* of these regulations, which shall be transparent, cost-related and established after consultation of the air carrier concerned.

11. Assistance provided by air carriers

An air carrier shall provide the assistance specified in **Annex II** without additional charge to a disabled person or person with reduced mobility departing from, arriving at or transiting through an airport to which these Regulations apply provided that the person in question fulfill the conditions set out in *Subsections 8.1, 8.2 and 8.4* of these regulations.

12. Training

12.1 Airport operators and air carriers shall:

- a) ensure that all their personnel, including those employed by any sub-contractor, providing direct assistance to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility have knowledge of how to meet the needs of persons having various disabilities or mobility impairments
- b) provide disability-equality and disability-awareness training to all their personnel working at the airport who deal directly with the travelling public
- c) ensure that, upon recruitment, all new employees attend disability-related training and that personnel receive refresher training courses when appropriate.

12.2 Training requirements are specified in **Annex III**.

13. Enforcement body and its tasks

13.1 AACTL is designated body responsible for the enforcement of these Regulations as regards flights departing from or arriving at airports situated in territory of the RDTL. Where appropriate, the AACTL shall take the measures necessary to ensure that the rights of disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility are respected, including compliance with the quality standards referred to in *subsection 10.1* of these regulations.

13.2 The AACTL as a body designated under *subsection 13.1* of these regulations shall also ensure the satisfactory implementation of *Section 9*, including as regards the provisions on charges.

14. Complaint procedure

14.1 A disabled person or person with reduced mobility who considers that these Regulations has been infringed may bring the matter to the attention of the airport operator or to the attention of the air carrier concerned, as the case may be.

14.2 If the disabled person or person with reduced mobility cannot obtain satisfaction in such way, complaints may be made to AACTL designated *under subsection 13.1* of these regulations, about an alleged infringement of these Regulations.

14.3 A disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility should be informed of their rights under this Regulation and of the possibility of complaint.

15. Signatories

CASR Part 14 is hereby approved by the signatories bellow:

Prepared by:



Zezinho António Filomeno Gusmão
President Board of Directors of AACTL, I.P.

Dili, 17/04/2026

Approved by:



Miguel Marques Gonçalves Manetelu
Minister of Transport and Communications

Dili, 17/04/26

ANNEX I - Assistance under the responsibility of the Airport Operator

Assistance and arrangements necessary to enable disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility to:

- communicate their arrival at an airport and their request for assistance at the designated points inside and outside terminal buildings mentioned in *Section 6*
- move from a designated point to the check-in counter
- check-in and register baggage
- proceed from the check-in counter to the aircraft, with completion of emigration, customs and security procedures
- board the aircraft, with the provision of lifts, wheelchairs or other assistance needed, as appropriate
- proceed from the aircraft door to their seats
- store and retrieve baggage on the aircraft
- proceed from their seats to the aircraft door
- disembark from the aircraft, with the provision of lifts, wheelchairs or other assistance needed, as appropriate
- proceed from the aircraft to the baggage hall and retrieve baggage, with completion of immigration and customs procedures
- proceed from the baggage hall to a designated point
- reach connecting flights when in transit, with assistance on the air and land sides and within and between terminals as needed,
- move to the toilet facilities if required.

Where a disabled person or person with reduced mobility is assisted by an accompanying person, this person must, if requested, be allowed to provide the necessary assistance in the airport and with embarking and disembarking.

Ground handling of all necessary mobility equipment, including equipment such as electric wheelchairs subject to advance warning of 48 hours and to possible limitations of space on board the aircraft, and subject to the application of relevant legislation concerning dangerous goods.

Temporary replacement of damaged or lost mobility equipment, albeit not necessarily on a like-for-like basis.

Ground handling of recognized assistance dogs, when relevant.

Communication of information needed to take flights in accessible formats.

ANNEX II - Assistance under the responsibility of air carriers

- Carriage of recognized assistance dogs in the cabin, subject to national regulations.
- In addition to medical equipment, transport of up to two pieces of mobility equipment per disabled person or person with reduced mobility, including electric wheelchairs (subject to advance warning of 48 hours and to possible limitations of space on board the aircraft, and subject to the application of relevant legislation concerning dangerous goods.
- Communication of essential information concerning a flight in accessible formats.
- The making of all reasonable efforts to arrange seating to meet the needs of individuals with disabilities or reduced mobility on request and subject to safety requirements and availability.
- Assistance in moving to toilet facilities if required.
- Where a disabled person or person with reduced mobility is assisted by an accompanying person, the air carrier will make all reasonable efforts to give such person a seat next to the disabled person or person with reduced mobility.

Annex III - Staff Training

This annex provides guidelines to airport operators, air carriers and any sub-contractors, on whose principals they shall establish their own training programs for their personnel who will be providing assistance to disabled passengers and passengers with reduced mobility.

All airport personnel involved with passengers, including security personnel, should be trained to meet the special needs of handicapped passengers. Generally, such training should be provided on special and regular courses.

People with disabilities have widely varied needs. To meet these needs, a substantial emphasis must be placed on ensuring that passenger-facing staff (including security staff) have a clear awareness and understanding of disabilities (including hidden disabilities) and how to engage and communicate with such passengers and their families and friends. This in turn puts a substantial emphasis on staff training. Airport operator should:

1. Ensure that all their personnel, including those employed by any sub-contractor, providing direct assistance to disabled persons and persons with reduced mobility have knowledge of how to meet the needs of persons having various disabilities or mobility impairments.
2. Provide disability-equality and disability-awareness training to all their personnel working at the airport who deal directly with the travelling public.
3. Ensure that, upon recruitment, all new employees attend disability related training and that personnel receive refresher training courses when appropriate". It is suggested that staff (including sub-contractors) working on behalf of airport operators, air carriers or ground-handling service providers who provide direct assistance to disabled persons and those with reduced mobility should have a specific and effective knowledge of how to meet the needs of these passengers
4. Given the varied needs of people with hidden disabilities, training modules should cover awareness of the behaviors of people from the hidden disability's spectrum, in particular dementia, autism, learning disabilities, anxiety issues, mental health impairments, visual impairments and hearing loss. Training modules should also cover communication with people with hidden disabilities, as well as the practical assistance they are likely to need when travelling by air.

Airport security personnel training:

- Understand the needs of people with disabilities and challenges related to aviation security screening processes.
- Examine the current opportunities for improvement that are available to security screening providers at airports.
- Awareness of the initiatives and best practices key international and regional organizations are implementing; and
- Explore the future improvement opportunities and challenges of emerging technologies might provide.