
UNIT 10 PASSENGER HANDLING SERVICES

Structure

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10.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- explain the ticketing procedure,
- define the embarkation and disembarkation process,
- describe the steps of embarkation and disembarkation,
- discuss the responsibilities of passenger handling,
- identify and list the situations of passengers with special needs,
- define out of pocket expenses; and
- discuss the challenges of passenger handling.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

A passenger with respect to air travel is someone who travels in the aircraft of an airline but is neither piloting it nor working on it. A passenger needs to have valid documents and contract of carriage to be permitted to enter the airport as well as to board a flight or disembark from the flight and enter the destination city. The contract of carriage between the airline and the passenger is referred to as a passenger ticket. Passengers must retain their passenger tickets with them at all times when travelling since they are necessary right from for entering the airport, check-in as well as security, immigration procedures and boarding the flight. Information reflected in the ticket / contract of carriage between passenger and airline include the necessary information and notices for travel, such as the Passenger's Name, Itinerary, Fare, PNR (Passenger Name Record), Departure/Arrival Gate(Optional), Value Added Services if any (Free Meals, etc.), Code Share Flight if applicable, Stop Over Details if applicable, etc. These tickets may or may not be refundable but they are definitely non-transferable.

As discussed in the previous unit, Travel Information Manual (TIM) is the manual that provides all valid and accurate information with regard to travel documentation requirements as well as passenger handling. Airlines have a specialized team of professionally recruited and qualified employees who help in guiding customers through the variety of services anticipated from a Passenger Services team. The range of services hence provided in making passenger's travel experience hassle free, are termed as Passenger Handling Services. The Passenger Services team is in charge of providing all international airlines, VVIP private fleet, and executive charter clients with a smooth, professional, and seamless customer experience from arrival gate through boarding. These personnel are on the front line serving the customer. The personnel have the essential knowledge to properly represent the airline and guarantee that passengers are handled smoothly at all stages of their airport experience. Passengers being customers are the most important part of any service providing organisation and therefore careful handling of passengers is important for any airline.

We have discussed passenger handling in Unit 1 wherein we have discussed about passenger handling at different times in the airport. In this Unit we will discuss the procedure of passenger handling by airline from check- in to Embarkation & Disembarkation. Instruction for handling passengers with special needs as mentioned in the TIM as well as challenges faced in passenger handling are discussed in sections below.

10.2 EMBARKATION AND DISEMBARKATION

Embarkation is the process of loading passengers onto a passenger ship or aeroplane. It is similar to and overlaps with individual boarding on planes and ships. The boarding and stationing of passengers in accommodations (cabins) by personnel and crew members is known as boarding or embarkation.

Refer to the Figure 10.1, we can see the procedure that is followed for incorporation of the passengers onto a flight. We can break down this procedure into smaller steps for better understanding:

Step 1:

Arrival at the airport - As the passenger arrives at the airport, they need to produce a photo identity proof, along with the boarding pass if they have done web check in or the ticket. This can either be in a digital form or a printout.

Step 2:

Check-in- Once the passenger has successfully entered the airport, they need to head towards the check-in counter of the airline they are going to board. With the modern facilities many airports have self-check-in kiosks set up by respective airlines for the ease of the passengers. Passengers who have had web checked in may proceed to the fast backdrop of counters and further to the next step security check. However, other passengers may need to check in at the counter/kiosk, get their baggage labelled, tagged and checked-in before proceeding towards Security Check. Here the passengers would also be provided with proper boarding passes.

Step 3:

Security Check- This is an important step when it comes to embarkation procedure. All passengers irrespective of their status, privileges, etc. are required to undergo

a Security Check. Under the step all the belongings of the passenger and they, themselves need to be scanned before moving on to embarkation.

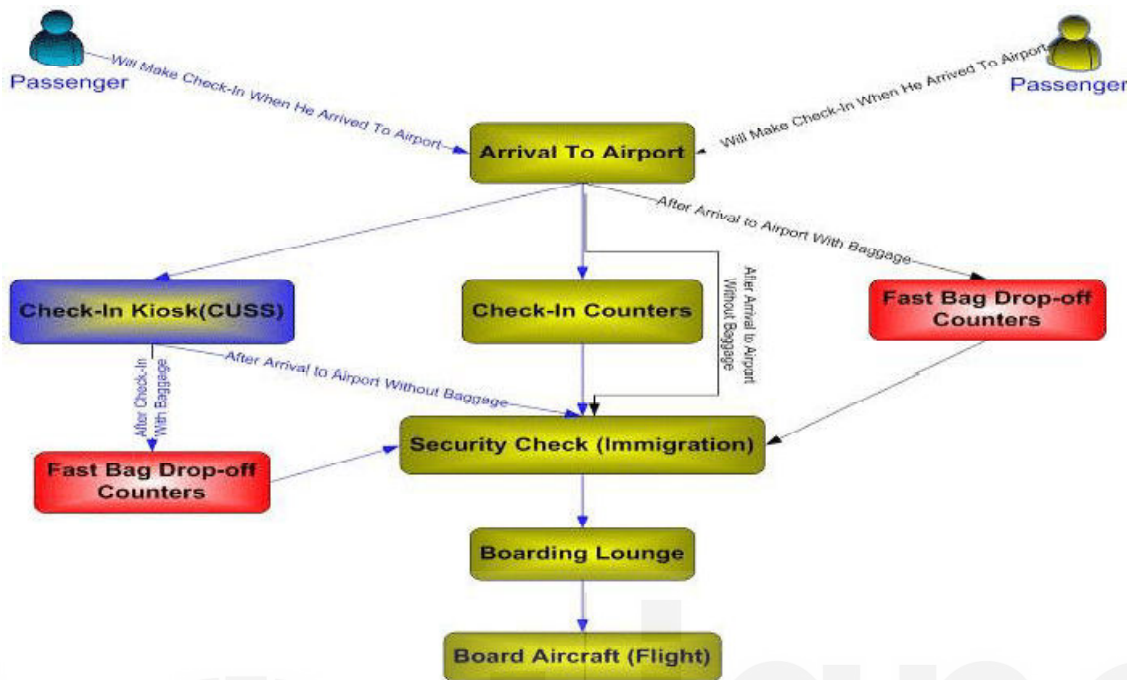


Figure 10.1: Embarkation Procedure

Source: researchgate.net

Step 4:

Immigration check- A vital step when it comes to international travel is immigration check. Passenger is required to show their valid travel documents in order to be allowed by the respective government/authority to fly to the desired destination. This step in itself involves a major step of documentation check. To ensure efficient and smooth flow of services for the best of the passengers travelling experience, proper travel documents are not only necessary but an important aspect. Based on the latest trends and industry best practises, passengers’ assessment and exceptional handling techniques involve proper documentation to be handed over to the respective airline representative in order to save time, costly delays and penalties.

Passenger is responsible for obtaining the correct entry permits at the airport of not only the origin city/country but also of the destination. These documents are:

- i Photo ID proof (Aadhar/Passport in India is preferred)
- ii Valid ticket
- iii Boarding Pass
- iv Passport (for international travels)
- v Visa (If Applicable)
- vi Travel Insurance(if applicable)
- vii Health Certificate(If Applicable)
- viii Travel permits to sensitive areas (If Applicable)

- ix Custom declaration form
- x Forex Card/ Forex Currency
- xi Proof of accommodation/ Hotel booking
- xii Invitation / Sponsorship Letter (If Applicable)

The requirements of necessary travel documents may differ from airline to airline and from country to country. It is always advisable to inform the passengers at first point of contact for the requisites as may be needed to produce for effective Embarkation Procedure.

Step 5:

Boarding lounge: It is a significant step when it comes to the embarkation procedure where passengers wait at the lounge area when the specific boarding gate has either not been confirmed or is already in operation with another flight. Here the passengers can wait peacefully while being informed about their specific flight arrival and departure status.

Step 6:

Boarding Gate: Passengers are called for boarding on flight through transport vehicles or ramps in order of their seat allotment, privileges, status or special requirement requests. The boarding passes of passengers are checked in accordance with the manifest.

Let's continue now with the *Disembarkation* procedure now. The act of passengers and crew de-boarding an aeroplane is known as disembarkation. It is the procedure for exiting an aircraft or removing goods/baggage from the aircraft's holding area. This procedure broadly involves four steps:

Step 1:

De-Boarding the aircraft: Most of the Airlines follow a set protocol when it comes to the boarding from aircraft. Guests on board are informed prior to landing that they would be deboarded in order of their row. Persons are not allowed to exit until the passengers in front and behind them have vacated their seats, according to the deboarding protocol. All passengers must remain seated until the row in front or behind them becomes available. Passengers are also informed beforehand about the belt number for their baggage claim in the aircraft itself. Prior to these announcements the cabin crew would hand out the custom declaration form to the international passengers for the ease of custom clearance on arrival. From the aircraft the passenger may be transferred either on a transportation vehicle or on the ramps to reach the arrival gate.

Step 2:

Immigration: The international passengers on arrival are required to go through an immigration check at the arrival country. This would again require them to show their respective travel documents for entry into the country. In case of improper or false documents, as the case maybe, the destination country reserves the right to deport the passenger immediately or hold the passenger until a proper clearance is given.

Step 3:

Baggage claim: After deboarding the aircraft and successfully passing through the immigration check, passenger can collect their checked-in baggage from the respective baggage belt. All the passengers are pre- informed during the flight before deboarding about their baggage claim area and belt number. In case of missing baggage, passenger must immediately inform respective authorities for appropriate actions.

Step 4:

Custom clearance and departure: Once the passengers have deboarded, passed through immigration check and claimed their respective checked- in baggage, they are required to also pass-through customs for international passengers only. At customs passengers are required to declare any items of significant value, as may be permitted or not by the government/ authority of the respective country/s. Falsely declaring at customs is a criminal offence, after successfully passing through customs, passenger, can leave the airport.

10.3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF PASSENGER HANDLING

Passenger handling for an airline in the airport involves many activities which can be as mundane as giving directions to special request like meal or carrying medicines or even accessibility issues. All the activities undertaken for the passenger may not be under the domain of airline management. We can therefore broadly classify services offered and responsibilities of passenger handling into two broad groups as discussed below:

1. Responsibilities of Airline Management:

Passenger handling responsibilities of an airline include airline bookings and issuance of ticket, check-in facilities, instructions at the boarding gate for passengers taking the departing flights, addressing passengers at the gate of arriving flights, checked baggage transfer, and the processing of various other inquiries. Customers who require assistance with wheelchairs, strollers, and other items can request special requirements services from airlines. Services that are the responsibility of airline management can be listed as below:

- i. **Issuing Ticket** - Each passenger - adult, child, infant, or a pet - must hold a valid ticket for the respective journey leg. Issuing a ticket is the primary function of Passenger Handling Procedure. This involves the function of providing airline representatives who are responsible for handling ticket reservations, cancellations, rescheduling/rebooking, and informing customers when a flight has been delayed or cancelled. Passengers can now book their tickets on the airline website or they can also purchase it from the counter on arrival at the airport. There are also other ways to book an airline ticket- it can be also booked through travel agents or stand-alone retail stores or partner online travel agents. Earlier, all passengers were required to carry a printout of the ticket for entering the airport however, in today's time passengers can just carry a digital copy of the ticket on their phone, tablet, etc. to gain entry at the airport. Many passengers also prefer to carry their boarding passes which they

have procured through the web check-in process. Importantly, a passenger travelling internationally need to show passport, and VISA along with the ticket/ PNR.

- ii. **Cancellation and refunds** - This function involves not only cancelling tickets and processing refunds but also taking the requests of rescheduling and rebooking tickets. Staff members who perform this function are responsible for providing timely information of any flight cancellation, reschedule, flight number change, terminal change, boarding or de-boarding as well as gate change to the passengers and other respective authorities. In case of cancellation or rescheduling of flights, if the policy allows, the passengers can claim their full refund or compensation. Generally, any cancellation from the airline's end attracts full refund to the customers. However, in case of cancellation from the passenger a certain percentage of fee may be charged as cancellation fee.
- iii. **Special requests:** The primary services of this function involve taking meal requests, special service requests and even refund processes of the special request made before, as the case may be. Now, with advanced technology, this function can be performed virtually while booking tickets online or through an agent; thus saving time and efforts of the passenger as well as the airline staff. We shall discuss this function more in detail in section 10.4.
- iv. **Passenger Check-In** - This service comprises trained staff members delivering check-in counter services such as boarding pass issuance and paperwork checks. As per the airlines policy there may be privileged members/ frequent flyer special queue for speedy access and customer satisfaction. On arrival at the airport, the first thing a customer should do is check-in. According to airline regulations, check-in must be completed within a certain time-frame prior to boarding. This time period might range from 30 minutes to 4 hours before the departure time and vary for different airline and sector.

The check-in process is usually handled by the airline or a third - party handling agency. Passengers normally check-in any baggage that they do not want carry or are not permitted to carry to the cabin of the aircraft. Passengers are given a boarding pass that includes their name, PNR (Passenger Name Record), route leg, seat number, boarding gate, special services requested, flight number, code share flight data, and stopover information. It may also contain meal details, or upgrades as may have been requested.

- v. **Baggage** - This function of baggage handling covers several services and is a very broad term. Baggage can be roughly be categorised into three sections,
 - a. *Check- in baggage:* This type of Baggage is the one which passengers' hand over to the airline staff members at the checking point. It is labelled and transported for loading on the flight. The baggage which generally fall under this category are suitcases, large bags, sometimes they could also be special equipment. Staff members assist passengers with tagging luggage for easier identification as part

of this service. They also recommend labelling every luggage with their name, address, and phone number on both the inside and outside. This service also involves weighing checked bags, and charging for excess baggage.

- b. Cabin baggage:** This category of baggage includes small size bags and suitcases of specific dimensions which can be easily stored in the overhead cabinets on a flight. As per the individual airline policy, each passenger can carry on board a free cabin baggage. A free baggage allowance generally contains one piece of aircraft cabin baggage and a hand bag for economy class passengers. Depending on the business class facility or not, this allowance may vary. The baggage carried here should not be confused with the carry - on baggage.
- c. Carry - on baggage:** Baggage of this kind generally include laptop bags, purses, handbags, et cetera. These are smaller in size and can be easily carried by the passenger and even kept with them while on the flight as they do not hinder the passage area.

An airline may refuse a carry-on baggage and may require the passenger to check-in his baggage if it exceeds the quantity, weight and dimensions as specified in respective policy. Excess baggage, over and above the total baggage allowance, including carry-on and check-in baggage is liable for baggage allowance charges as may be applicable. Although this function may be considered a part of 'passenger check-in' function but comes with a large area to be covered with more responsibility and hence considered as a separate function.

Once the baggage has been checked-in, labelled, they are sent over to the Baggage loading area, where the baggage is segregated as per the flight, reconciled by the employees, and consolidated in trolleys to be dispatched to the RAMP (Region of Aircraft Movement and Parking). The baggage is hence loaded in the cargo section of the aircraft to be transported at the destination.

- vi Boarding Gate -** Once the passenger has gone through check – in and baggage drop, they move towards the boarding gate. This function involves smooth transition of passengers from gate to the respective seats allotted in the aircraft. The boarding gate staff of the airline announces the boarding of passengers as per the privileges or seating plan wherein their boarding passes are checked and compared to the manifest, and then transported safely on the vehicle / ramp for on boarding. This also involves great coordination with the airside staff members looking after technical aspects and availability of transportation vehicles.
- vii Cargo Management-** The function of cargo management is an umbrella term for baggage handling, transport, baggage claim and also providing services for missing or baggage tracing by the airline.

2. Responsibilities of Externally Managed Teams:

There are other responsibilities with regard to the services that are offered to

the passengers in the airport by externally managed team, other than airline management. These responsibilities are:

- i Security Check:** This function is of utmost importance when it comes to safety and security of the passengers as well as the crew/ staff members and airport. It requires thorough scrutiny of passenger's belongings along with physical scanning of the passenger himself/herself. The authority of permitting or not permitting a passenger inside the airport or transferring to the gate for boarding remains with the security personnel. He/she may demand for the opening of all the baggage for a re-check, in case of any suspicion. This function carries a great responsibility to ensure safety of all. In most of the airports, after the security check, a stamp shall be placed on the boarding pass and/or hand baggage tag. Security check-in in almost all the airports of India is undertaken by CISF personnel.
- ii Baggage Screening:** In some airports, there will be a mechanism to screen/ check the baggage, especially check-in baggage. X-Ray scanner is used to screen the baggage with the prime objective to check whether any object that could be used as a weapon, or a bomb or otherwise could pose a threat to flight security is not in the baggage. This is usually can be arranged before to the check-in counter.
- iii Immigration:** This function is not required in domestic sector flights. However, it plays a vital role when it comes to international travels. The personnel assigned with immigration responsibility have a great skill of understanding body language with attention to detail when scanning the travel documents. Immigration is permission for a passenger to travel from one country to another. In the passenger handling procedure, this process is performed twice, at the origin country and at the arrival country. By the virtue of job description, immigration personnel have the authority to not permit a passenger to carry on with the travel places any further.

This is an important area as far as the entry and exit from a country is concerned. Once the passenger completes the emigration check for an international trip, the person has left the country in the official records. If he/she wants to enter back to the country, he/she has to pass through the same system in the arrival location. At the emigration/passport control centre, the officials will verify the boarding pass, the passport and the visa for entering the other country, the passenger is travelling to. Once the documents are found in order, the travel will be recorded in the official system of the country and exit stamp will be entered in the passport (nowadays, everything is electronic and hence placing stamp may not be there in all the airports).
- iv Customs:** Although this function is primarily performed by a separate police force, while the airline staff members are there to assist in case required. The cabin crew is also responsible partially for provision of smooth custom clearance service. Cabin crew must inform the passengers prior to landing to fill in the custom declaration form and provide assistance if required. The passenger, after collecting the baggage, moves on to the customs area and verify that the baggage that is being carried does not have any unlawful items into the country. Baggage screening mechanism

is available at the customs area as well. For the passengers, there are two ways to move ahead through customs:

- ✓ *Green channel*: This is for the passengers who do not have any dutiable goods. Though Green channel passengers are not subject to any customs formalities, spot-checks are undertaken occasionally.
 - ✓ *Red channel*: It is for passengers who bring in dutiable goods from other countries. Passengers accomplish the formalities required by the Customs and required duty amount is remitted for the identified dutiable items.
- v **Air Traffic Control**- The personnel performing air traffic control services have great technical know-how and they support by providing real time updated information of weather, facilities status at departure and arrival airports, appropriately informing about aircraft parking spot with taxi-in and taxi-out route and any other services as may be required for hassle free arrival and departure of flights.
- vi **Passenger Facilitation** - This function primarily focuses on the crucial yet not very obvious areas of Passenger Handling Procedure with the aim to provide an “end-to-end” passenger experience that is secure, seamless and efficient. The services under this category not only encompass the tasks performed by staff members but also those at the lounge area, shopping arena, toilet facilities, etc.

As we have learned above about various functions involved in Passenger Handling Procedure, these functions are not limited as listed. Each airline and airport may perform these functions as per their own standard policies or may skip or add a few additional functions.

10.3.1 Out of Pocket Expense (OPE)

Out of Pocket Expense (OPE) are a type of provisional compensation offered by airlines around the world to help passengers deal with the difficulty caused by mishandled baggage. The Out-of-Pocket Expenses are paid under *three* circumstance – Delayed, Damaged or Lost Baggage. Out-of-Pocket Expenses, is offered on any of these three occasions but there are exception and few limitations according to which the Airlines offer the passengers this interim relief. The limitations are:

- ✓ As a standard practice, the maximum OPE is usually US \$125 (Per ticketed passenger).
- ✓ When possible, customers should be limited to US\$25 each day.
- ✓ OPE should not be permitted until the day after the missing baggage is reported.
- ✓ Before authorising the OPE, the contents must be appended to the file.
- ✓ Counsel passengers to keep their boarding passes and receipts, and explain how they can be compensated.
- ✓ Customers at home are not eligible for OPE.
- ✓ Customers whose bags are displayed as out of delivery are not eligible for OPE.

- ✓ Non-Revue, Buddy Pass, and other subsidised airline employee passengers are not eligible for OPE.
- ✓ AHL should be duly documented with OPE details and submitted.

There is an exception to the rule wherein the passenger themselves were at fault for the baggage being held. For example, if the passenger had mistakenly packed battery or electrical item in checked in baggage.

Check Your Progress-1

1. What do you understand about the term ‘Ticket’?
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2. What are the two categories in which Passenger Handling Procedures can be classified?
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3. Enumerate the functions of Passenger Handling Procedures?
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10.4 PASSENGERS WITH SPECIAL NEED

Passengers who identify as having special needs (as specified by each airline) will be required to fill out a special needs form. The passengers with special needs require individual attention on enplaning, deplaning, during flight, in an emergency evacuation and during ground handling. The passengers with special need can also be important to the Airline or the country. Generally, but depending on the airline, ‘passengers with special needs’ includes but is not limited to:

1. **Incapacitated passengers:** Passengers are considered incapacitated when their physical, medical or mental condition requires individual attention which is not normally extended to other passengers. Passengers with reduced mobility are also referred to as “medically compromised”. The requirement becomes apparent from special requests made by the passengers and/or their family or by the medical authority or from obvious abnormal physical or mental conditions observed and reported by airline staff or industry associated persons (travel agents, etc). Incapacitated passengers are identified in airline messages by AIRIMP codes, as listed below:
 - a. MEDA (Medical Case)

- b. STCR (Stretcher passenger)
 - c. WCHR (Wheelchair- R for Ramp)
 - d. WCHS (Wheelchair- S for Steps)
 - e. WCHC (Wheelchair- C for Cabin)
 - f. BLND (Blind Passenger)
 - g. DEAF (Deaf Passenger)
2. **Pregnant Woman:** Pregnant women can fly up to the 28th week of their pregnancy without a doctor's report. Pregnant women expecting one baby can fly with a doctor's report that states that they are fit to fly by air carriage between 28-36 weeks. After that, they are no longer fit to fly even with medical clearance. Medical clearance must be dated maximum 7 days prior to the flight. The doctor's name and surname, diploma number and signature must be shown clearly on the medical clearance.
 3. **Infants:** Many airline policies vary for how old babies have to be to fly. From the medical point of view, many require babies to be at least one week old and some accept babies older than 14 days of birth for carriage and he/she is accompanied by an adult passenger and not suffering from any illness. Since infant has no seat status, a Bassinet (BSCT) is provided free of charge for infants.
 2. **Minors Travelling on their own (UNMR):** The minors who are travelling unaccompanied by an adult are offered special assistance by almost all Airlines. Child passengers who have celebrated their seventh birthday on or before the day of travel, but have not yet celebrated their eleventh birthdays, and are permitted by their parents or legal guardians to travel unattended are known as unattended Minor. The prerequisite of this special needs service is the authorization form, also known as a consent form, provided by the guardian or parent of the minor. This form should not only list out any kind of medical attention that might be required by the child but should also mention the details of the person meeting the child at the arrival country. In order for the children to travel unattended, all reservations of every flight have to be approved by parents or legal guardians must bring the children to check-in at least two hours before take-off.

Authorized personnel will attend to children that travel unattended through the procedures of passing through security controls, passenger waiting areas and boarding gates until the child boards on the aircraft. Unattended child passengers are boarded on the plane by authorized personnel and handed over to the pursers. The seat numbers of unattended child passengers are chosen from seats that are near the cabin crew. As a result, they can travel under the supervision of the cabin crew during the flight. Unattended child passengers are delivered by the purser to the officers awaiting the flight on the arrival stations in exchange for a signed "Authorization Form". Authorized personnel are in charge of conducting all transactions in the arrival station such as passport controls, customs and baggage delivery. Unattended child passengers are delivered to the persons stated on the "Authorization Forms" in exchange for their signatures, after the stated names of the persons taking delivery of the children are verified.

- 3. Senior travellers and families with young children:** When travelling alone senior travellers can request special assistance through the form listing out the special needs that need to be taken care of. A crew member would generally assist the senior travellers with stowing their baggage, helping with check-in and boarding, provision of wheelchairs if needed, as well as special dietary requirements, etc. Also, families travelling with children are given special care and assistance within the airport and wherever possible are boarded first.

Travel these days an essential activity and becoming accessible across the world, almost all airlines provide special assistance to travelers with disabilities. This would not only include provision of wheelchairs, medical assistance but also some airlines provide Braille magazines and interpreters. Not limited to certain ones, many airlines cater to people with physical as well as intellectual disabilities. It is essential for the passenger or passenger's attendant to clearly mention the requirements in the form to checking preferably during ticket booking to avoid last minute hassles and smooth delivery of services.

- 4. Travelers with disabilities:** With travel being an essential activity and becoming accessible across the world, almost all airlines provide special assistance to travellers with disabilities. This would not only include provision of wheelchairs, medical assistance but also some airlines provide Braille magazines and interpreters. Not limited to certain ones, many airlines cater to people with physical as well as intellectual disabilities. It is essential for the passenger or passenger's attendant to clearly mention the requirements in the form to checking preferably during ticket booking to avoid last minute hassles and smooth delivery of services.

No airline should refuse to carry persons traveling in a stretcher or incubator or persons with severe mobility impairments and persons with autism, cerebral palsy, mental retardation and multiple disabilities, if they are accompanied by an escort who will be responsible for them and their needs of embarking, disembarking, during flight, and during emergency evacuation. However, the airlines shall provide necessary assistance to persons with hearing or vision impairments in case they wish to travel alone without an escort.

- 5. Travelling with pets:** It is essential for the passenger travelling with pets to ensure for several things before undertaking the travel plan. They not only need to make sure their companions have good health but also provide apt and all necessary information to the airline's staff. This will ensure the well-being of their pets during the flight and will also help to avoid any kind of hassles on board.
- 6. Important Passenger (IP):** Members of parliament, Prominent Statesman, Commanders in chief of Military forces and official delegates of government, are some of the people considered as IP or VIP.
- 7. Commercially Important Passengers (CIP):** Directors of Civil Aviation, Chairman and Chief Executives of other airlines, Chairman, Directors, Presidents of Important companies, Radio and Television producers, Editors and senior journalists of newspapers, travel writers, Celebrities and other such passengers who can enhance the image of the Airlines are considered as Commercially Important passengers (CIP)
- 8. Very, Very, Important Person (VVIP):** Heads of State, Crown Princes and Prime Ministers, Presidents and their wives or husbands are considered VVIP and special attention is given to them.

Check Your Progress-2

1) What are the embarkation steps followed by an airline?

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2) List out the types of Special Needs Passengers one might need to serve.

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10.5 CHALLENGES OF PASSENGER HANDLING

With every task at hand there comes a few challenges that are needed to either overcome or find ways to minimize the damage caused by such challenges. Likewise, when carrying on Passenger Handling Procedure there are some challenges that the airline staff, management, airport authorities or the governing bodies might face. Since the airline staff are the first responders in Passenger Handling Procedure, it is imperative that they are trained, informed and provided with adequate authority to resolve issues, as and when they may arise. A few of the common challenges are:

1. **Difficult Passengers:** As human nature is unpredictable and there are several types of passengers boarding daily, it is not an uncommon where the airline staff has to deal with one or more difficult passengers. At the given time of the incident, whosoever may be at fault, the airline staff needs to maintain patience, a warm smile while providing possible solutions.
2. **Technical Glitches:** As the aviation industry is largely dependent on technology, right from issue of ticket to departure, most of the services under Passenger Handling Procedure need technical assistance. In such incidents of technical glitches, respective employees/administration should act promptly in informing the passengers and providing with most viable alternatives.
3. **Ensuring Sustainability:** Aviation industry is one of those which creates tons of carbon footprint along with noise pollution. With rising climate change issues and constant pressure from the governing bodies such as UNWTO, it is difficult for the airlines and its staff members to ensure sustainability when the industry is ever growing.
4. **Increasing Air Traffic:** The fact of ever-growing industry also implies opening up of new travel sectors and destinations resulting in increased air traffic. With increased flight numbers there comes an increased number of passengers with limited manpower to perform the services as needed under Passenger Handling Procedure. It not only creates pressure of performance with limited resources but also physical and mental fatigue, tight schedules, and even more stress of controlling air traffic especially in times such as bad weather.
5. **Cut-throat Competition:** The extensive and fast-paced industry as aviation, when combined with intense competition, creates a challenge of survival with satisfactory, if not great, performance by airlines and its employees. Many

times airlines cut down their manpower and slash down their fares just to keep the airline operations ongoing. This results in utter dissatisfaction among the employees as the work is more with less manpower and even lesser perks. It is not possible to survive, let alone achieve excellence, when the airline representatives are unhappy and cannot perform their services to the best of their abilities.

Thus, just like any other industry, aviation industry also deals with its own set of challenges which primarily affects their employees and may seldom create ineffective, unsafe and unsatisfactory experiences for passengers.

Check Your Progress 3

- 1) Enlist the major challenges faced while performing Passenger Handling services.

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- 2) What do you understand about Out-of-Pocket Expenses? Mention any two.

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10.6 LET US SUM UP

This unit discusses the basic functions that are followed by an airline for effective and satisfactory passenger handling. To maintain the standard of services and satisfactory passenger experience it is essential that the airline staff, be it cabin crew member for the ground staff or the ticketing personnel, should be well-trained, informed and proactive to meet the needs of the travelers. This becomes all more essential when it comes to serving passengers with special needs. Briefly speaking passenger handling procedure involves issuing tickets, cancellations/ refunds, handling baggage, check in, security checking, boarding, inflight services, deboarding, hand baggage claims and most importantly handling special need requests.

In this unit we have also learnt about some very common out of pocket expenses that are generally ignored by the passengers themselves; however, it is the duty of the airline’s staff to make the passengers remember the specific terms and conditions and policy regulations as may apply. We have also discussed the challenges that are faced when providing services of effective passenger handling. A few of them maybe due to human factors involved but considering that the aviation industry is largely dependent on technology, some challenges come into the picture due to this factor as well.

10.7 FURTHER READINGS

- A Practical Guide to Airline Customer Service: From Airline Operations to Passenger Services by Colin C. Law
- Airport Operations by Norman J. Ashford, H. P. Martin Stanton, Clifton A. Moore, Pierre Coutu, John R. Beasley
- Aircraft Ground Handling by Subhash S. Narayanan

10.8 CLUES TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress-1

1. Refer 10.1 and frame your answer.
2. Refer 10.2 and frame your answer.
3. Refer 10.3 and frame your answer.

Check Your Progress-2

1. Refer 10.4 and frame your answer.
2. Refer 10.5 and frame your answer.

Check Your Progress-3

1. Refer 10.6 and frame your answer.
2. Refer 10.7 and frame your answer.

10.9 ACTIVITIES

1. Go to a hotel and find out about their process of handling guests with special needs/disability. Compare and study it with respect to handling of passenger with special need by airlines.
2. Meet an airport official or airline official and learn about the process of handling VIP and CIPs.