

Accessing Passenger Vessels: Guidance for Disabled People and Persons with Reduced Mobility

On behalf of the Mobility & Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) I would like to offer the following comments:

Generally the Guide is well written, however, it is based on the assumption that Ports are always large places to serve large cross-channel ferries. In Scotland, a lot of ferries call at small unmanned landing stages where no assistance may be available for disabled passengers. The Scottish Ferries Review are aware of the issue.

Turning to the subject of assistance dogs, while these sections do not generally give cause for concern, there are some inaccurate cross references. For instance in para 5.3.7 it states that 'You can find more information about travelling by sea with an assistance dog in Sections 4.4.7 and 7.7.' Section 4.4.7 and 7.7. do not exist - although there are references in 3.4.7. and 6.7.

While the Guide Dogs publication 'Travelling abroad with your guide dog or other assistance dog: Guidelines on preparation of UK guide dogs and other assistance dogs for international travel' (2009) is referenced in the end references, the correct title is not used. It would also be useful to flag this within the document in the first section on Assistance Dogs, as not everyone looks at the end references section. A copy of the publication is attached above.

Paragraph 6.8 makes reference to self service arrangements on board with regard to food.

There is no comment here on how these arrangements would operate for passengers with assistance dogs. It is not just wheelchair users who can have problems accessing self service facilities. If a lone individual is holding their assistance dog's harness in one hand it can be very difficult to carry a tray or food in the other.

Finally, the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland is not on the list of useful contacts at the end – would it be possible to include the Committee's details there?

MACS Secretariat
19 October 2010