

# Service Animal Relief Areas: Guidance and Best Practice

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**7th Annual FAA National Civil Rights  
Training Conference for Airports, 9/7-9/2016**



*Open Doors  
Organization*

# Open Doors Organization

- Chicago-based non-profit founded in 2000
- Mission—to create a society in which persons with disabilities have equal opportunities as consumers
- Primary Focus—Travel and Tourism



ODO Director Eric Lipp

# ODO Aviation Initiatives

- Airline and Airline Service Symposia
- ACI Training—Online and Classroom
  - Disability Awareness, Accommodating PWDs
- Initial and Refresh Training for Airline Complaints Resolution Officials (CROs)
- Aviation Access Certification Program—for airline service company employees

## ODO Aviation Initiatives/2

- Ground Handling Wheelchair Stowage Workshops
- Technological Solutions—ODO-designed belt loader device for wheelchairs
- Participation on airline advisory boards and Federal committees including TSA
- Consultative Services—Staff training, Videos, Accessibility Audits, etc.
- Consumer education/media outreach

# Universal Access in Airports

- 6th UAIA—November 14-16, 2016, SFO
- 2-day event held biennially since 2006
  - Open exchange of ideas and best practices on how to improve accessibility and customer service for air travelers with disabilities and seniors
  - Who attends—airports, airlines, service companies, aviation suppliers, disability organizations
- 9 CEUs for Accredited Airport Executives—*New!*



# Service Animal Relief Areas

- Federal Regulations
  - Air Carrier Access Act
  - Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- FAA Draft Advisory Circular AC 150/5360-14A
  - Proposed standards for design and location
- Open Doors Organization Guide for SARAs
  - User Needs and Expectations
- Airport Best Practice
- Design Issues and Challenges
- Q&A/Discussion

# SARAs—Federal Regulations

- Air Carrier Access Act—14 CFR Part 382
  - Final Rule—May 13, 2008 (effective May 13, 2009)
  - 382.51(a) As a carrier, you must comply with the following requirements with respect to all terminal facilities you own, lease, or control at a U.S. airport:
    - (1) You must ensure that terminal facilities providing access to air transportation are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs.
    - (5) In cooperation with the airport operator and in consultation with local service animal training organization(s), you must provide animal relief areas for service animals that accompany passengers departing, connecting, or arriving at an airport on your flights.

# SARAs—Federal Regulations/2

- Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973—49 CFR, Part 27
  - Final Rule—August 5, 2015
  - **27.71 Airport facilities.**
  - (h) *Service animal relief areas.* Each airport with 10,000 or more annual enplanements shall cooperate with airlines that own, lease, or control terminal facilities at that airport to provide wheelchair accessible animal relief areas for service animals that accompany passengers departing, connecting, or arriving at the airport subject to the following requirements:

# SARAs—Federal Regulations/3

- (1) Airports must consult with one or more service animal training organizations regarding the design, dimensions, materials and maintenance of service animal relief areas;
- (2) Airports must establish at least one relief area in each airport terminal;
- (3) Airports must establish the relief area required by paragraph (h)(2) of this section in the sterile area of each airport terminal unless:
  - (i) The Transportation Security Administration prohibits the airport from locating a relief area in the sterile area, or
  - (ii) A service animal training organization, the airport, and the carriers in the terminal in which the relief area will be located agree that a relief area would be better placed outside the terminal's sterile area.

# SARAs—Federal Regulations/4

- (4) To the extent airports have established service animal relief areas prior to the effective date of this paragraph:
- (i) Airports that have not consulted with a service animal training organization shall consult with one or more such organizations regarding the sufficiency of all existing service animal relief areas,
  - (ii) Airports shall meet the requirements of this section August 4, 2016.

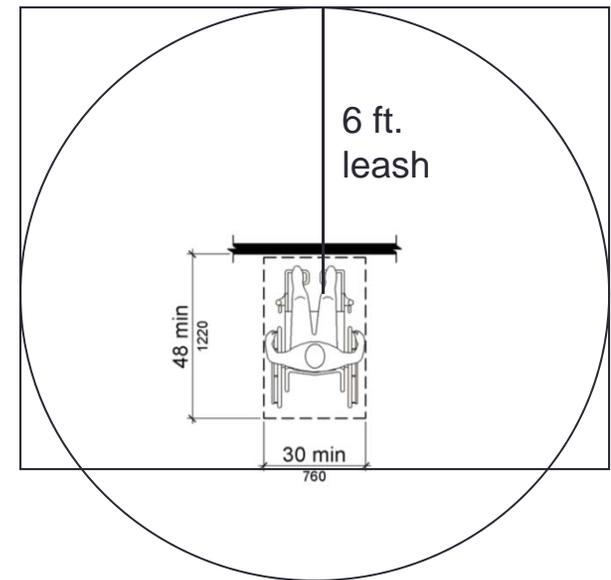


# FAA Advisory Circular AC 150/5360-14A

- Draft issued May 6, 2016
- Applies to airports operated by public entities and those receiving federal financial assistance.
  - Mandatory for all SARA projects funded under the Airport Improvement Program (AIP) or with revenue from the Passenger Facility Charges (PFC) program.
- Proposes detailed standards for SARAs in Appendix A
- Standards were developed in conjunction with nationally recognized service animal training organizations
  
- [Unofficial summary provided by ODO]

# Proposed FAA Standards

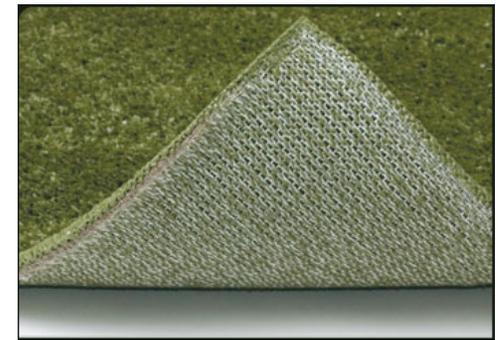
- A.2 Number.** Must be located on an accessible route to each terminal. One relief area may serve two or more terminals if travel to and from it meets reasonable transit times as defined in paragraph A.3
- A.3 Transit time.** No more than 15 minutes from any gate, based on a walking pace of 200 ft/min. Includes expected time spent using transportation vehicles and waiting time for an escort, wheelchair, or elevators
- A.4 Size and shape.** May be of any shape, but must be designed to accommodate a person using a wheelchair handling a service animal on a six-foot leash. In busier locations, a relief area may be sized to accommodate more than one service animal at one time.



# Proposed FAA Standards/2

## **A.5 Surfaces.** A relief area should have at least two different surfaces.

- One hard and located immediately inside the entrance to allow wheelchair access. This surface should be delineated in a manner to indicate the portion intended to be traversed by people, and the portion intended for animal relief.
- The other an appropriate softer surface, such as gravel or mulch for outdoor areas, and artificial turf specially designed as an animal relief surface, treated to inhibit the spread of disease, for indoor (and outdoor) areas.



K9 Grass

## **A.6 Fencing.** Fencing or another suitable barrier, with an accessible gate/entrance, adequate to contain service animals must be provided.

# Proposed FAA Standards/3

## **A.7 Plumbing.**

- The SARA must include a sink with a faucet for hand washing. Water must be potable as a drinking water supply for animals.
- A separate water supply must be included for use in cleaning the surface.
- The surface must be constructed with adequate drainage to facilitate regular cleaning.

## **A.8 Location.**

- Outdoor locations are preferred, as all service animals are trained to use outdoor relief areas.
- Where it is not be feasible to establish an outdoor relief area within the sterile area, the relief area will have to be constructed indoors.
- SARA must not be co-located with a designated smoking area.

## **A.9 Weather protection.**

- Outdoor SARA must include weather protection from sun and precipitation.
- If the SARA is close to operating aircraft, protection from jet blast and prop wash must be provided.

# Proposed FAA Standards/4

## A.10 Scent.

- The sense of smell is much more acute in animals than in humans. This can be a help or a hindrance in encouraging service animals to use a relief area. Pheromone-scented surfaces or devices can be beneficial, while disinfecting chemicals with strong odors can be detrimental.

A.11 **Accessories.** The SARA, at a minimum, must include:

1. A three-dimensional device (e.g. rock or fake fire hydrant) to encourage urination by male dogs.
2. Animal waste bags.
3. A waste receptacle.

**Note:** The disposal bags and receptacle must be located just inside the entrance to the SARA on an accessible route and at a height reachable by wheelchair users.



Pheromone-scented  
fire hydrant

# Proposed FAA Standards/5

## A.12 Wayfinding and Signage

### A.12.1 Signage Standardization is desirable.

- The sign (shown at right) with or without accompanying text, may be used with directional arrows to guide users to the SARA.
- The signage, when used, must be included in airport layout maps and wayfinding instructions provided throughout the airport.
- In addition, signing at the SARA should indicate the following:
  1. The need for handlers to clean up after animals;
  2. The location of waste disposal bags, and waste receptacles, hand washing facilities, and any other facilities (e.g. automatic flushing controls);
  3. Instructions for the operation of any facilities;
  4. Contact information for maintenance and assistance.



# Proposed FAA Standards/6

## A.12.2 Other guidance.

- Signage should be supplemented with means, including auditory announcements, to guide people with vision impairments.
- Braille signing must be installed adjacent to the side of doors and gates opposite the hinges.
- Airports are encouraged to adopt state-of-the-art technology (e.g., smart phone applications) as it becomes available.



Tactile bathroom map,  
Haneda Airport

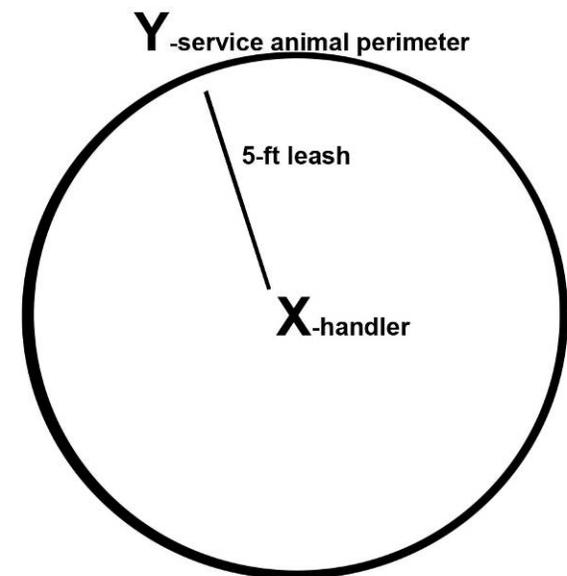
# Service Animal Relief Areas in Airports: A Guide from ODO

- Provides detailed guidance on how to construct, maintain and promote SARAs
- Answers questions on the needs and preferences of service animals and their handlers
- First released at 2010 Universal Access in Airports conference
- Now reformatted with photos and expanded resource section
- <http://opendoorsnfp.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/08/ReliefGuideRev.pdf>



# SARA Design & Location—ODO

- Must be wheelchair accessible and large enough for the animal to circle its handler (approx. 60 sq. feet)
- Provide bags (preferably biodegradable) and trash receptacle in easy to reach location
- Locate airside and landside in each terminal
- In large terminals, multiple locations may be necessary to minimize...
  - Handler effort/fatigue
  - Time required
  - Dog's activity before boarding the plane
- Identify locations on signage, maps, website



Escort stands outside animal's perimeter

# SARA Design & Location—ODO/2

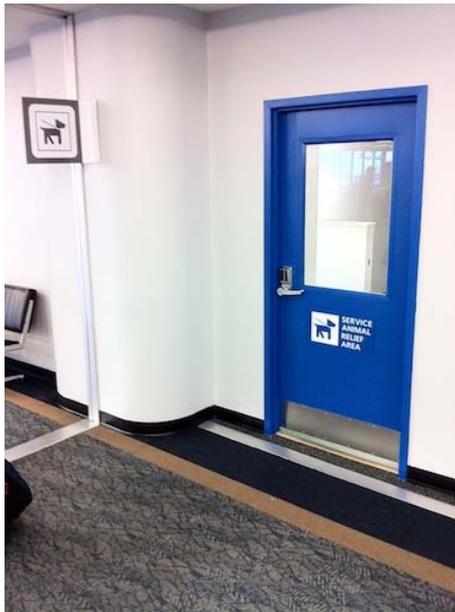
Also provide:

- Pooper scooper with long handle—especially important for those with mobility limitations
- Water bowls as most traveling animals get dehydrated and some handlers may not have their own
  - Note: Pooper scoopers and bowls can be permanently attached to prevent theft
- Water source and drainage for maintenance
- Signage about usage and responsible behavior (use of pick-up bags)
- Safety lighting as needed
- Accessories that encourage relief such as shrubs or fire hydrants are exceptional



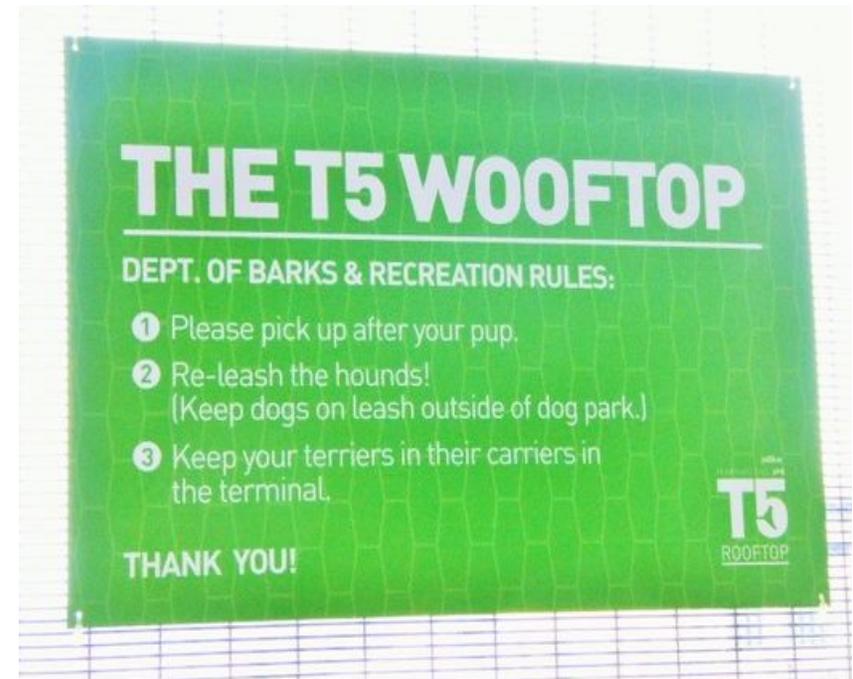
# Airport Best Practice—IAD

- State of the art drainage system—handlers push a button on exit to have the area rinsed
- Large area with no barriers impacting handler use



# Industry Best Practice—JFK

- Rooftop terrace at JetBlue's T5



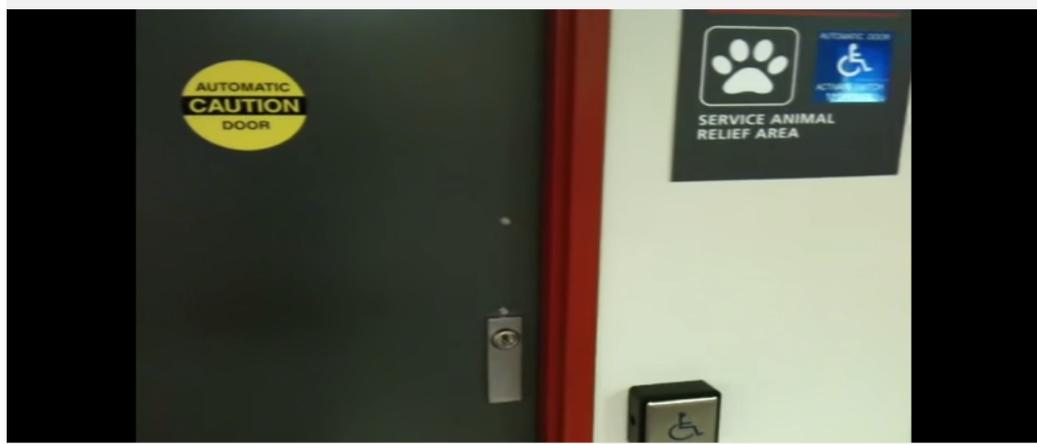
# Industry Best Practice—PIT

- Push button automatic door
- Large area with two surfaces, sink, good drainage and maintenance equipment
- Companion restroom next door



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJW5s30IIPQ>

# Airside Relief Area—PIT



Pittsburgh Airport - Doggie Restroom / Pet Relief Area

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJW5s30IIPQ>

# Design Issues & Challenges

- Relief boxes too small for the larger breeds that typically serve persons who are blind or use a wheelchair



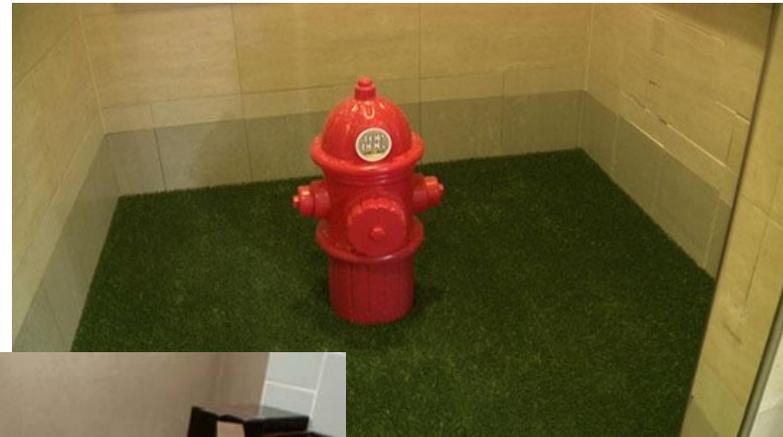
## Design Issues & Challenges/2

- Space for wheelchairs to maneuver is limited and curbs make it difficult to clean up or reach controls/amenities



# Design Issues & Challenges/3

- Central placement of fake fire hydrants creates a barrier for larger animals and handlers



# Design Issues & Challenges/4

- What are your challenges in creating accessible airside SARAs?
  - Space
  - Location
  - Budget
  - Suitable materials
  - Maintenance
  - ?



# Questions?

For additional information:  
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# Thank You!

