

The FOB system: a new way to secure transfer

Pierre Margot-Cattin, Professor, University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland, Sierre, Switzerland (présentateur); Sidney Salgues, Puzzle Aventure, Lavey, Switzerland

People with disabilities and their tourism experiences have largely been an under researched phenomenon. Darcy (2002) highlighted the lived experiences made by people with disabilities with high support needs who travel or wish to undertake travel. Described as nightmare, but at the same time great experiences that make them feel alive, travel is often a source of stress and lack of comfort. As mentioned by Isabelle Ducharme, Kéroul's Chairwoman, during the last TRANSED in Hong-Kong, traveling being disabled person needs courage, a bit of unconsciousness to accept uncomfortable situations and a certain idea of risk management.

In another paper Darcy (2007) demonstrates that airline procedures created a newly disembodied experience that transformed a person's impairment into socially constructed disability. The resultant experience for many was a heightened anxiety, helplessness and, in too many cases, humiliation. The major moments when these experiences raise are moments of extreme dependence on staff and crew members, due to transfer in "someone else chair" or transfer on board of aircrafts, boats or coaches. A common assistive device used to help people with mobility limitations to board a plane is an aisle chair (a specially designed wheelchair capable of fitting down the narrow aisles of a plane or a bus). Trained staff should be available to help a person transfer from the wheelchair to the aisle chair and from the aisle chair to the plane seat. Today no improved technical help has been developed to guarantee sufficient comfort and secure conditions during these transfers. Based on these findings the authors of this presentation have analyzed the procedure of transfer in the peculiar context of an aircraft cabin. They have defined, in collaboration with concerned users, specifications for a simple and intuitive device in order to secure users and help staff assistance during these transfers.

This presentation will complete the previous analyses which have highlighted the high support needed by people with disabilities as well as the assistance staff's needs when it come to transfers. It will be an opportunity to present a World Premiere: the prototype of the FOB System (Fly Over Barriers System), an easy and simple system to secure transfers, rescue or evacuate people with disabilities.

Bibliography:

Darcy S. (2002), *Marginalized participation : physical disability, High support needs and tourism*, in : Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Volume 9, Nr 1, Bowen Hills (Australia)

Darcy S. (2007), *Improving airline practices by understanding the Experiences of people with disabilities*, Travel and Tourism Research Association, Annual conference proceeding, Lake Orion, USA