



The Consumer Council

Flights and Rights

A Consumer Council research report into passengers' knowledge of their rights and attitudes to air travel



May 2010



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Introduction

The Consumer Council represents the interests of air passengers travelling to and from Northern Ireland. We work with airlines, airports and Government to help ensure passengers receive the highest standards of service when travelling by air.

To represent consumers effectively it is important that we understand their views. In February 2010 the Consumer Council undertook research to find out what local passengers' experiences of air travel are actually like.

Air travel is important to consumers living in Northern Ireland. It provides access to a range of holiday destinations and enables consumers to visit family and friends living abroad. Air travel also plays a vital role in supporting Northern Ireland's economy by providing access to markets, encouraging inward investment and boosting tourism.

In recent years consumers have benefited from an increase in the number of air routes available from Northern Ireland. The introduction of no-frills airlines has also made flying more affordable, opening up the opportunity to travel by air to a large number of consumers.

The number of passengers travelling to and from Northern Ireland's airports has increased significantly over the past decade. Approximately 7.5 million passengers travelled through Northern Ireland's airports in 2009 compared to 4.6 million in 2000.¹

Northern Ireland is served by three airports, Belfast International Airport (BIA), George Best Belfast City Airport (GBBCA) and City of Derry Airport (CODA). A significant number of passengers also choose to travel from Dublin Airport.

¹ Data provided by the UK Civil Aviation Authority.

Research objectives

The research study was undertaken to identify:

- 1 Passengers' knowledge of their rights when travelling by air;
- 2 Passengers' views on the cost of travel and the standards of service provided; and
- 3 How passengers travel to and from Northern Ireland's airports and their views on the environmental impact of air travel.



Methodology

The research was completed using a number of methods. These included undertaking several focus groups across Northern Ireland and carrying out a survey with a broad range of air passengers. Further detail on the research methodology is provided below.

Focus groups

Participants were selected to represent a range of different ages, backgrounds and travel behaviours. They were required to have flown at least once within the last year. Table one provides an overview of each focus group.

Table one

Location	Age Range of Participants	Travel profile	Reason for flying
Belfast	30 +	Frequent flyer – 4 or more times in last year	Mainly business, some leisure
Derry	18 to 29	Moderate flyer – 2 to 3 times in last year	Mainly leisure
Enniskillen	45 +	Occasional flyer – once in last year	Mainly leisure
Newry	30 +	Occasional to moderate flyer – 1 to 3 times in last year	Mainly leisure and with children
Belfast	18+	Passengers with a disability ²	Mainly leisure

Questionnaire Survey

A door-to-door survey was carried out with 754 air passengers across Northern Ireland. Participants were selected to represent a range of different ages, backgrounds and travel behaviours and were required to have flown at least once within the last two years.

² As this focus group aimed to identify barriers to air travel for people with a disability individuals were not required to have flown within the last year to participate.

Key findings

- The vast majority of passengers are satisfied with the service they receive when travelling by air.
- Most passengers prioritise price over quality of service, especially when booking short domestic flights.
- Less than half of all passengers who experienced a problem with an airline or airport in the past two years made a complaint.
- On the whole passengers have very limited knowledge of their rights if their flight is delayed or cancelled or if they are denied boarding.
- Airlines vary in terms of the level of assistance provided to passengers who have experienced disruption to their flights. Many passengers believe they have fewer rights to assistance and compensation when travelling with no-frills airlines.
- The majority of passengers with a disability and passengers with reduced mobility are satisfied with the assistance provided by airlines and airports. However various barriers to travel remain for passengers with a disability.
- The vast majority of passengers pay for flights using a method which incurs a payment fee.
- Many passengers believe the final ticket price is not clear from the beginning of the online booking process.
- The majority of passengers believe taxes and charges, payment fees, check-in fees and baggage charges should be included in the advertised fare.
- Most passengers travel to the airport by car, very few travel by public transport.
- Although half of passengers believe air travel contributes to global climate change, the majority (especially those who don't travel often) do not believe passengers should pay for the environmental impact of flying.

Research findings

Demand for air travel in Northern Ireland

Frequency and purpose of travel

There is a high demand for air travel across Northern Ireland. Over half of all passengers travelled three times or more in the last two years and around one third flew more than five times.

Table two

Number of return flights in the last two years	Percentage of passengers ³
One to two	40%
Three to four	26%
Five to ten	24%
More than ten	8%

Leisure travel was the most common reason for flying with 84 per cent of Northern Ireland passengers travelling for this purpose. Only three per cent of passengers travel solely for business purposes (although 14 per cent travel for both leisure and business).

Airports and airlines

- Of Northern Ireland's three airports Belfast International Airport has the highest volume of passengers. City of Derry Airport has the lowest. Almost 90 per cent of passengers travel from either Belfast International Airport or George Best Belfast City Airport. Passengers choosing to fly from Dublin represent a small but significant proportion of the market at around eight per cent.
- Reflecting its market share in Northern Ireland, Easyjet was the most popular choice of airline amongst passengers surveyed. Passengers were least likely to have taken their most recent flight with Continental. The vast majority of passengers travel on scheduled services, only 14 per cent of passengers travel on charter flights.⁴

³ Total does not amount to 100 per cent due to rounding.

⁴ Charter flights are flights sold by a tour operator, for example Thomas Cook, which cannot be bought directly from the airline by a member of the public.

Table three

Airline	Percentage of passengers ⁵
Easyjet	32%
Charter airline	14%
Ryanair	13%
Aer Lingus	11%
Flybe	8%
BMI	6%
Other	6%
Jet2	4%
BMI Baby	3%
Continental	2%

Standards of service

On the whole most passengers are satisfied with the airline they last travelled with. Nine out of ten passengers were satisfied with the service they received on their last flight.

The level of customer satisfaction varies between airlines. Easyjet has the highest level of customer satisfaction whilst Ryanair has the lowest. Table four provides details of passengers' satisfaction in relation to the airline they most recently travelled with.

Table four

	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Don't know
Easyjet ⁶	91%	6%	4%	0%
Aer Lingus ⁷	90%	6%	5%	0%
BMI	90%	4%	6%	0%
Charter airline	89%	5%	6%	1%
Other	87%	5%	8%	0%
Flybe	84%	9%	7%	0%
Ryanair	79%	6%	15%	0%

⁵ Total does not amount to 100 per cent due to rounding.

⁶ Total does not amount to 100 per cent due to rounding.

⁷ Total does not amount to 100 per cent due to rounding.

It is clear from the focus groups that passengers experience more problems with the broader travel experience than with the flight itself. Problems regarding compulsory online check-in were highlighted. Many passengers, especially older passengers, are daunted by online check-in and feel it adds stress to their journey. Compulsory online check-in can also cause problems as it may require passengers to access a computer when away on holiday.

Passengers highlighted the need for improvements in customer service during security screening. Although recognising and accepting the need for security, they believe security staff could do more to improve the passenger experience. Those who raised this as an issue explained they had been dissatisfied with the security screening process for their last flight and many believe security staff should be trained to provide a better standard of customer service to travellers.

The majority of Northern Ireland passengers are driven by price, especially when booking short domestic flights and are not particularly concerned regarding the standard of service they receive. Some passengers do not even expect to receive a good standard of service when paying a low fare.

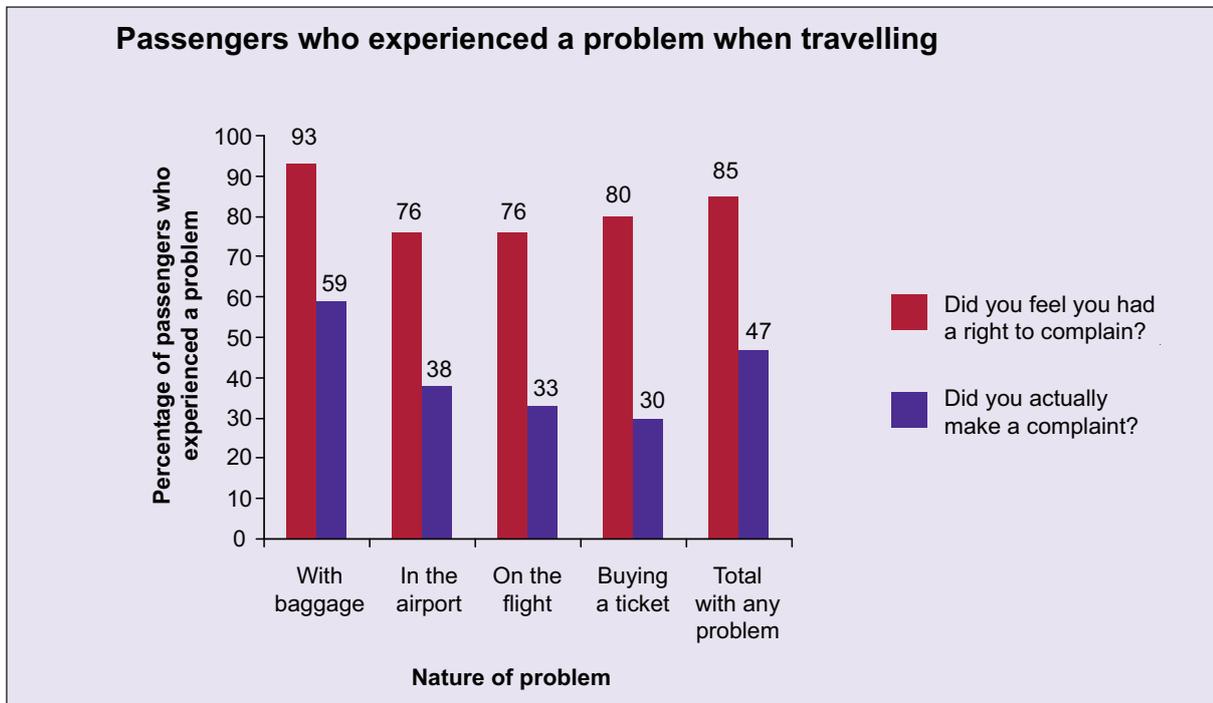
“ If you book on the no-frills airlines you think well you get what you deserve, if you get a poor service you think well, I’ve only paid for a poor service so you don’t complain. ”

Air passenger complaints

A quarter of air passengers experienced a problem in the last two years. Problems with baggage are most common, followed by problems experienced in the airport and problems arising whilst on the flight. Other problems experienced by passengers include difficulties with booking flights and making changes to existing bookings.

It is worrying, however, that many passengers who experience problems are reluctant to complain. Whilst 85 per cent of passengers who did experience a problem felt they had a right to complain, less than half actually made a complaint. Figure one illustrates the gap between passengers’ belief in their right to complain about certain issues and the number of complaints actually made.

Figure one



There are a number of factors which contribute to passengers' reluctance to complain:

- Passengers fear missing their flight if they take time to make a complaint;
- Airlines do not provide passengers with adequate information regarding who complaints should be directed to; and
- Passengers believe airline and airport staff often do not have the authority to resolve complaints.

Air passenger rights

Passengers' awareness of their rights

It is not uncommon for passengers to experience disruption to their travel plans caused by flight delays, cancellations or denied boarding. It is therefore important that passengers are aware of their rights when they experience this type of disruption.⁸ However, it appears that passengers' awareness of their rights when travelling by air is limited.

⁸ For information on passengers' rights under Regulation (EC) 261/2004 see Appendix 1.

The survey findings show seven out of ten passengers feel unaware of their rights when a flight is delayed or cancelled. Eight out of ten stated they would be unaware of their rights if they were denied boarding as a result of their airline overbooking the flight. The level of awareness focus group participants had in relation to their rights was also very low with no one aware that their rights as passengers are protected by European Law.

Despite the fact that passengers are mostly unaware of their rights under European Law, when presented with a list of suggested options many are able to identify correctly the types of assistance and compensation they feel should be provided if their travel plans are disrupted. For example:

- Approximately three quarters of passengers correctly believe airlines are required to provide passengers with free meals and refreshments if their flight is delayed by more than two hours;
- Half of all passengers correctly believe they are entitled to reimbursement of their fare, alternative travel arrangements and overnight hotel accommodation if their flight is cancelled; and
- Two-thirds of passengers correctly believe they are entitled to alternative travel arrangements if they are denied boarding. Just over half believe they are entitled to financial compensation and reimbursement of their ticket.

However:

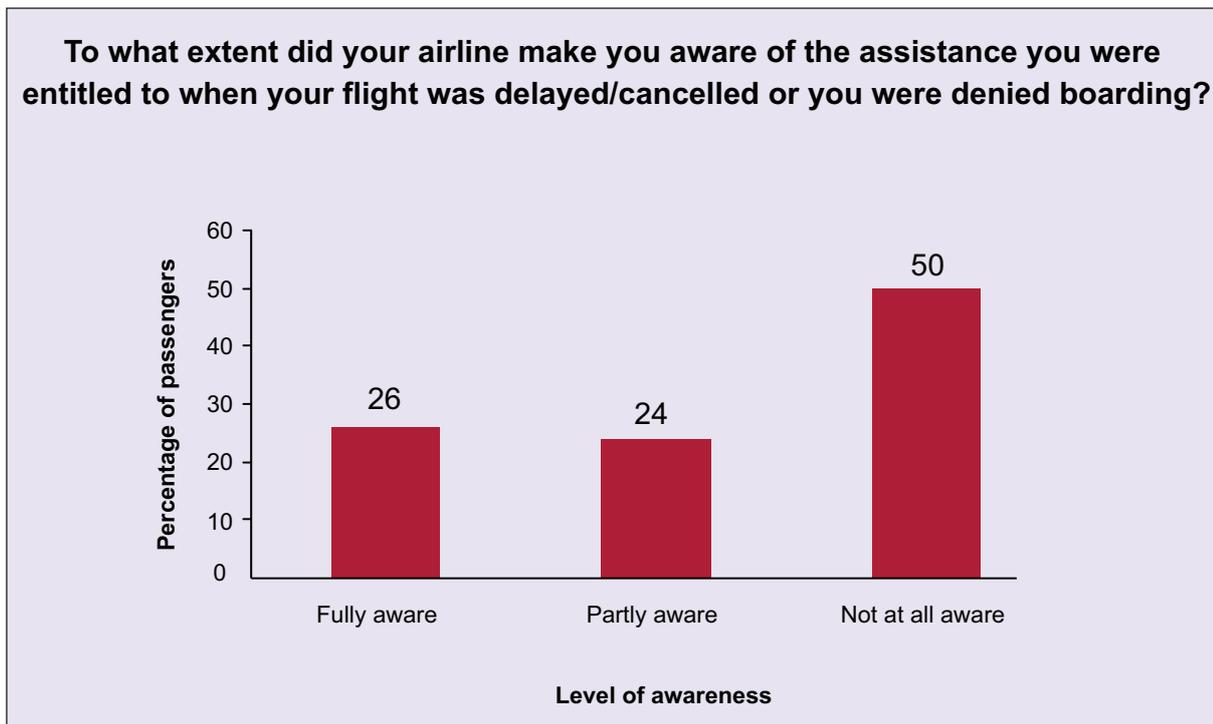
- Only a quarter of passengers feel they would be entitled to free telephone calls and e-mails if their flight is delayed and just one in five feel they would be entitled to hotel accommodation if they were delayed overnight;
- Only one third of passengers feel they are entitled to financial compensation if their flight is cancelled for a reason within the airline's control; and
- In the case of denied boarding approximately 40 per cent of passengers correctly believe they are entitled to meals and refreshments and overnight accommodation. Only a quarter of all passengers feel they should receive telephone calls and e-mails free of charge.

“ There's absolutely nothing to protect consumers when it comes to airline travel, they can bump you, they can cancel and they can delay and it's tough, there's no consumer protection. ”

Passengers not informed of their rights by airlines

Half of all passengers who have experienced disruption to their travel plans did not receive any assistance from their airline. Only a quarter of passengers who have been inconvenienced confirm their airline made them fully aware of the assistance they were entitled to.

Figure two



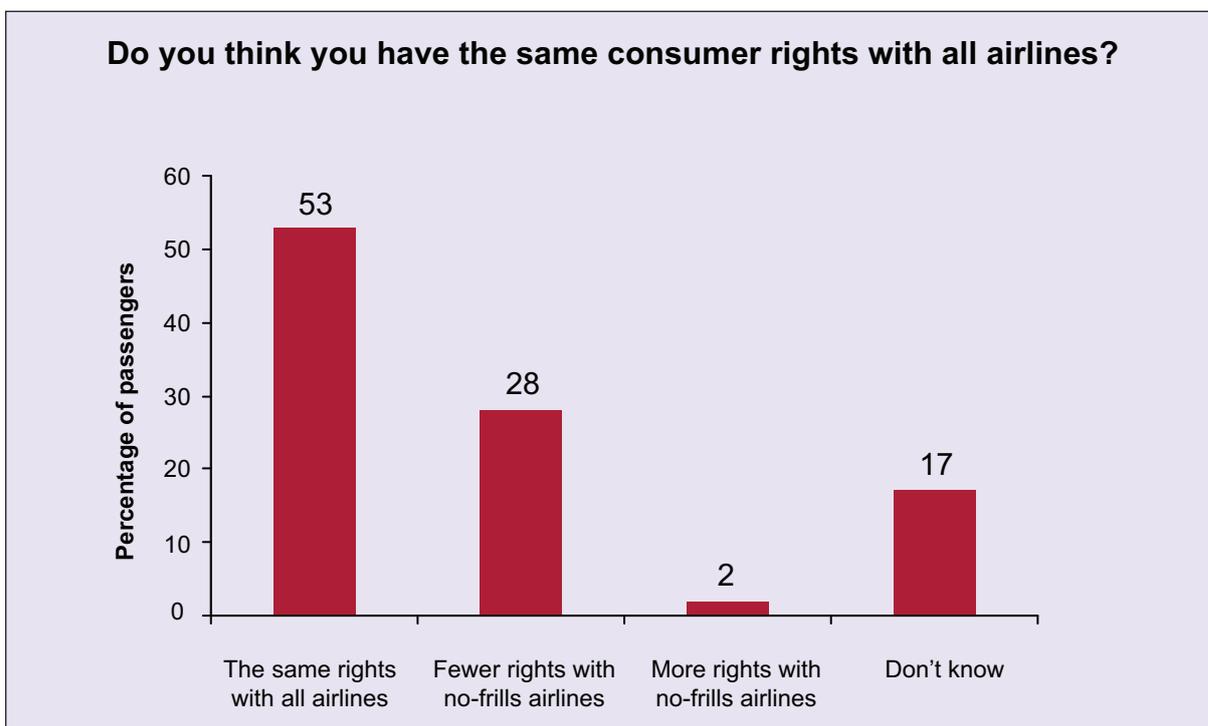
There is clearly an inconsistent approach across the airline industry in terms of assisting passengers when flights are delayed or cancelled or passengers are denied boarding. The experiences of focus group participants varied significantly. Several participants received meals and others overnight accommodation in cases of long delays and cancelled flights. Other participants stated they received no assistance. No one was aware of the point at which passengers become entitled to meals, phone calls or e-mails in the case of delays, or compensation for cancelled flights or denied boarding.

“ It would be better if you were actually given a leaflet along the lines of say, 10 bullet points; this is what you’re entitled to if there’s a delay or we’re over booked. ”

Passengers' perception of their rights with no-frills airlines

There is a common perception among passengers that their rights vary depending on which airline they are travelling with. Only half of passengers are aware they have the same rights with all airlines. Over a quarter of passengers believe they have fewer rights when travelling with no-frills airlines.

Figure three



Some passengers believe the introduction of no-frills airlines to Northern Ireland has led to a reduction in the rights of air passengers. However passenger rights have been strengthened in recent years following the introduction of European Consumer Protection Law.⁹

“ Years ago you knew you had rights but since these cheapies have started we know we haven't rights. ”

⁹ A regulation (EC 261/2004) is in place to protect the rights of passengers travelling with any airline within the European Union.

The rights of passengers with a disability or reduced mobility

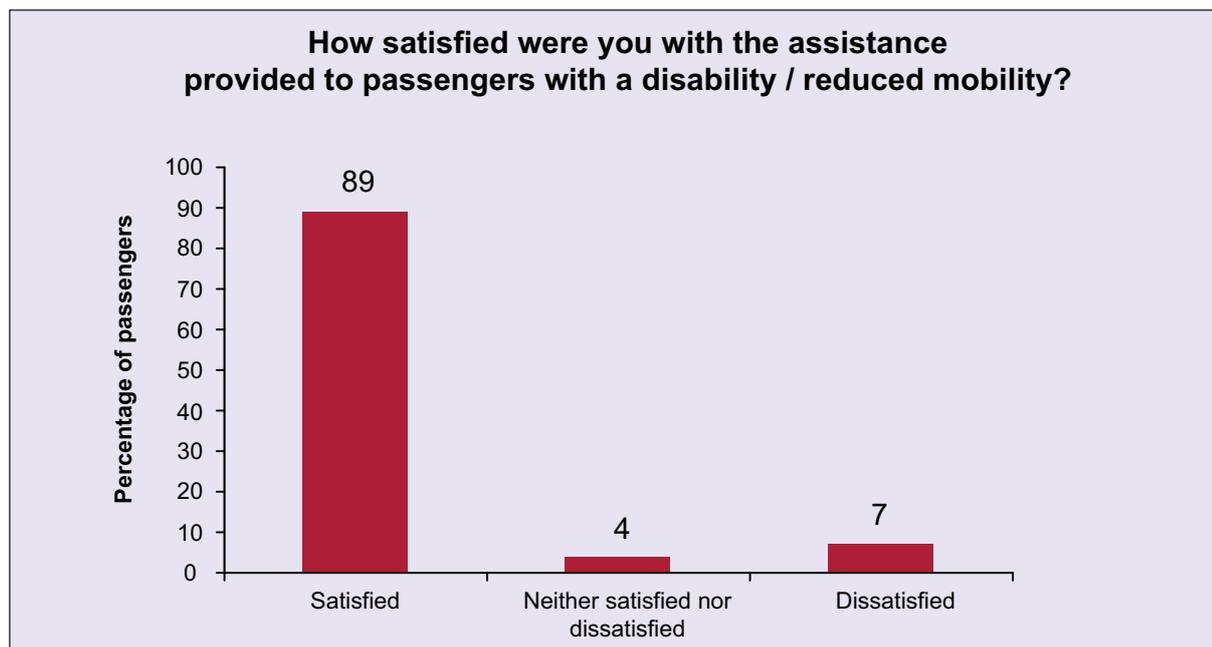
In the last two years a significant number of passengers have needed assistance when travelling because of a disability or reduced mobility, or have travelled with someone who has required assistance. Airports and airlines are required to provide assistance throughout the whole process of air travel, from booking flights, arriving at the airport and checking in, right through to boarding the plane and leaving the destination airport.

For more information on the rights of passengers with a disability or reduced mobility download a free copy of *Access to Air Travel* from www.consumerCouncil.org.uk.

Overall passengers are very satisfied with the levels of assistance provided to passengers with a disability or reduced mobility at Northern Ireland's airports. 89 per cent of passengers who received assistance were satisfied with the service provided.



Figure four



Passengers with a disability, however, have a limited awareness of the assistance they are entitled to when travelling. On the whole they understand they are entitled to assistance when making their way through the airport and help boarding the aircraft. However, there is very little knowledge that the rights of passengers with a disability or reduced mobility are protected by European law.¹⁰ They also feel that airlines and

¹⁰ A regulation (EC 1107) is in place to protect the rights of people with a disability and reduced mobility.

airports do not do enough to inform them of their rights. The research indicates the vast majority of passengers with a disability do not know they have a responsibility to notify the airline they require assistance at least 48 hours before travelling.

“ As far as airlines are concerned, you’re only disabled if you have a wheelchair. ”

Passengers with a disability identified the following issues as barriers to air travel:

- A lack of consistency between airline policies concerning the carriage of passengers with a disability. Differences across airline policies make it difficult to determine which airlines require a passenger with a disability to be accompanied by another person who can provide assistance;
- Poor customer service and a lack of sensitivity or awareness of specific needs from airport security staff when screening passengers with a disability;
- Seating on aircraft is often unsuitable for passengers with a disability and toilet facilities on board aircraft are inadequate for the needs of wheelchair users;
- Airline and airport staff are more focused on the needs of passengers with a visible physical disability. The needs of passengers with hidden disabilities or learning disabilities are often overlooked; and
- Airline and airport staff are not trained to handle telephone calls from people with speech impediments. This prevents some passengers from accessing information over the telephone or seeking guidance concerning an airline or airport’s complaints process.

“ No airports take into consideration learning difficulties of any description in [designing] their signage. ”

Passengers with a disability who have experienced problems when travelling explained airline complaint procedures often fail to meet their needs. Airline complaint procedures often do not take consideration of passengers with learning disabilities, for example, dyslexia. This can lead to problems as many airlines refuse to accept complaints made verbally. Passengers also questioned why some airlines restrict the number of people with a disability accepted to travel on a flight, noting that no other type of business would be permitted to discriminate on the basis of disability.

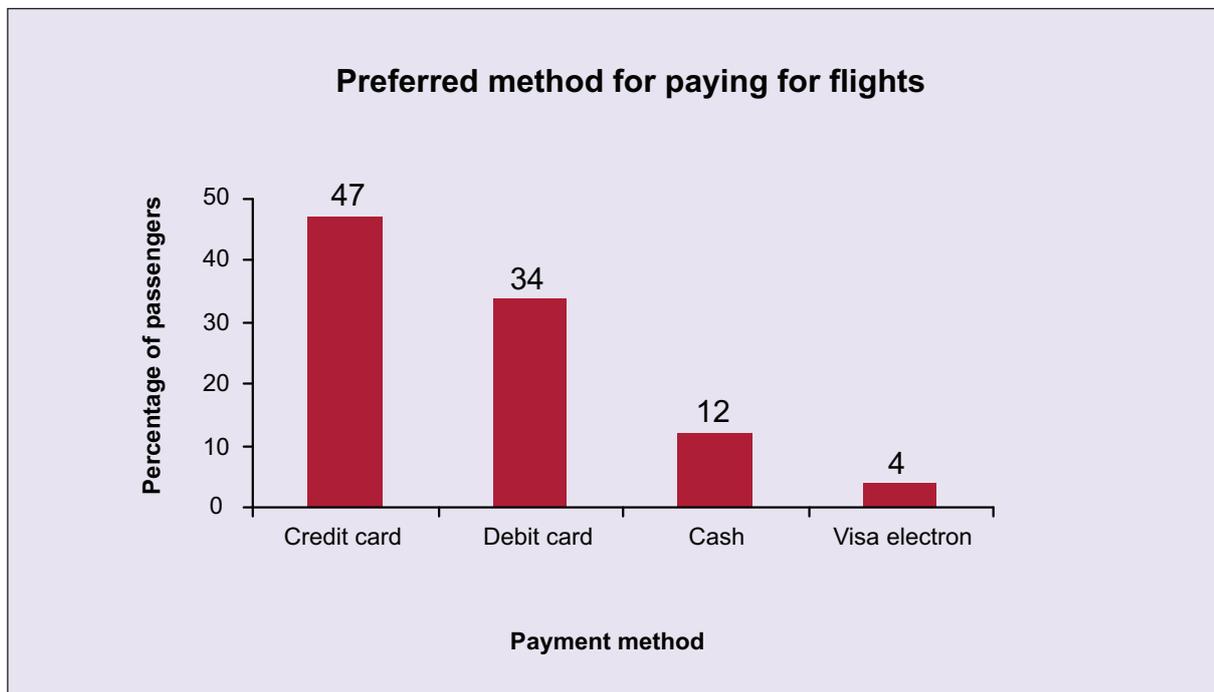
Paying for travel

Booking

The vast majority of passengers buy airline tickets online. This is reflective of the market share held by no-frills airlines in Northern Ireland. One fifth of passengers buy their tickets in travel agents and a small number (2 per cent) by telephone.

The payment method used by passengers is important as many airlines charge an additional fee for paying by credit and debit cards. Figure five indicates the majority of passengers incur additional payment charges as most passengers pay using credit or debit cards. It is likely that the passengers who pay by cash purchase flights through travel agents. The Visa Electron option which enables passengers to book tickets with most airlines without incurring an additional payment charge is the least used method of payment, chosen by only one in every twenty five passengers.

Figure five



On the whole, passengers feel they get good value for money when booking flights. Nearly eight out of ten passengers feel the most recent flight they booked was good value. When passengers consider the Northern Ireland aviation market of the 1990s, they strongly agree there is now greater choice, competition, route availability and better value for consumers.

Transparency

Despite positive findings concerning the overall cost of air travel, passengers have a number of concerns regarding the clarity of fare prices. While two-thirds of passengers believe the cost of additional items such as baggage and insurance is made clear during the ticket booking process, one in five disagree, believing charges for additional items are not clearly shown by airlines.

“ When you start off the process online you haven’t got a clue, when you hit the submit button you don’t know what’s coming. ”

A significant proportion of passengers, 32 per cent, believe the final ticket price is not clear from the beginning of the booking process. This lack of clarity is a particular issue for passengers who book flights online with 39 per cent believing the final price is not clear from the beginning of the process. Only eight per cent of passengers who book by telephone and four per cent who book through a travel agent share this view.

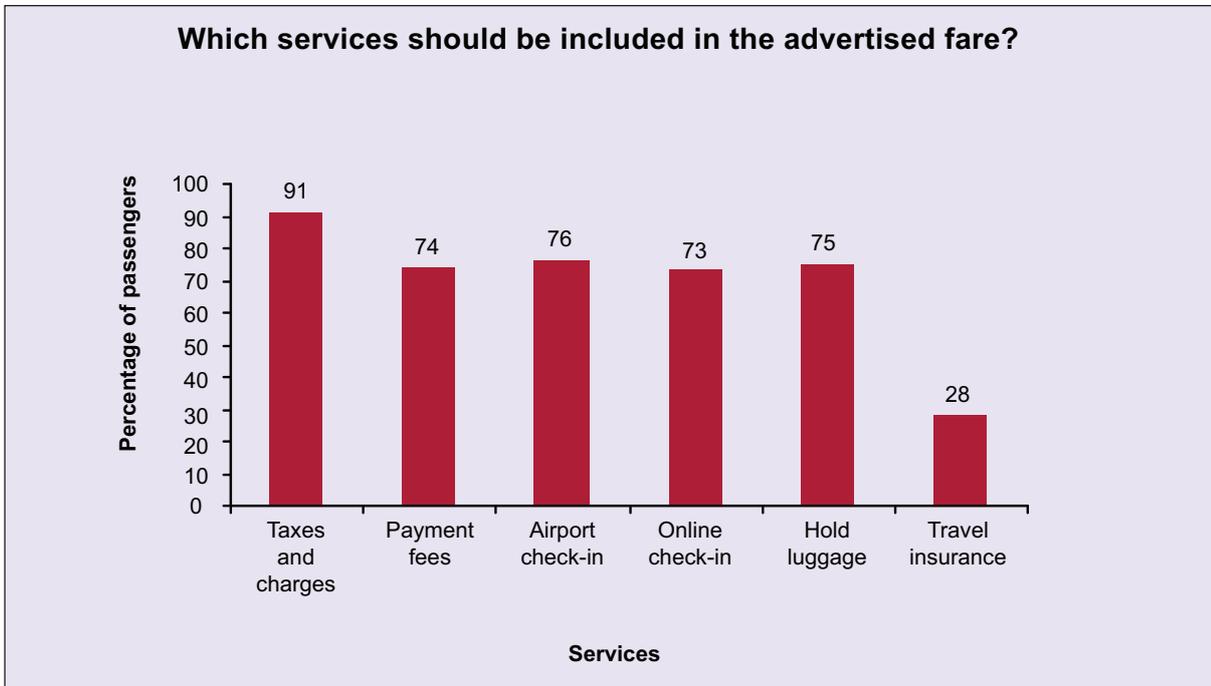
A lack of clarity in airline fare pricing structures makes it much more difficult for passengers to compare prices between airlines. Only 49 per cent feel it is easy to compare the final price of different airlines or routes. A similar trend characterises views on ease of comparing the overall quality of service offered by different airlines. Only 41 per cent of passengers feel it is easy to make this comparison and a 25 per cent believe it is not easy to compare service standards between airlines. The result is passengers do not shop around as much as they would like to. For many passengers, once they find a fare they feel is reasonable they will purchase the ticket without further comparison.

Additional charges

On the whole, passengers are dissatisfied with the practice of airlines advertising low fares and adding extra charges for services at various points during the booking process.

“ You have to be very careful or you’re hit with charges, it’s grossly unfair. ”

Figure six



91 per cent of passengers feel taxes and charges should be included in the advertised fare.

Approximately three quarters of passengers believe payment fees should be included in the advertised fare, as should the cost of online check-in and airport check-in. This suggests that the current trend of airlines pricing these elements of the fare separately is not what consumers want.

Three quarters of passengers would also prefer charges for hold luggage to be incorporated into the advertised fare. However, a number of passengers prefer the option of being able to buy a cheaper ticket without paying for check-in baggage if it is not needed. Younger people and business travellers are most likely to favour the option of charging for baggage separately.

There is a clear preference for travel insurance to be priced separately. Only 28 per cent of passengers believe travel insurance should be included in the advertised fare. Airlines should recognise consumers' preferences and only offer travel insurance as an "opt-in" rather than an "opt-out" service.

“ Charging for online check-in is ridiculous, the whole thing literally is labourless, there’s absolutely no cost to it whatsoever. ”

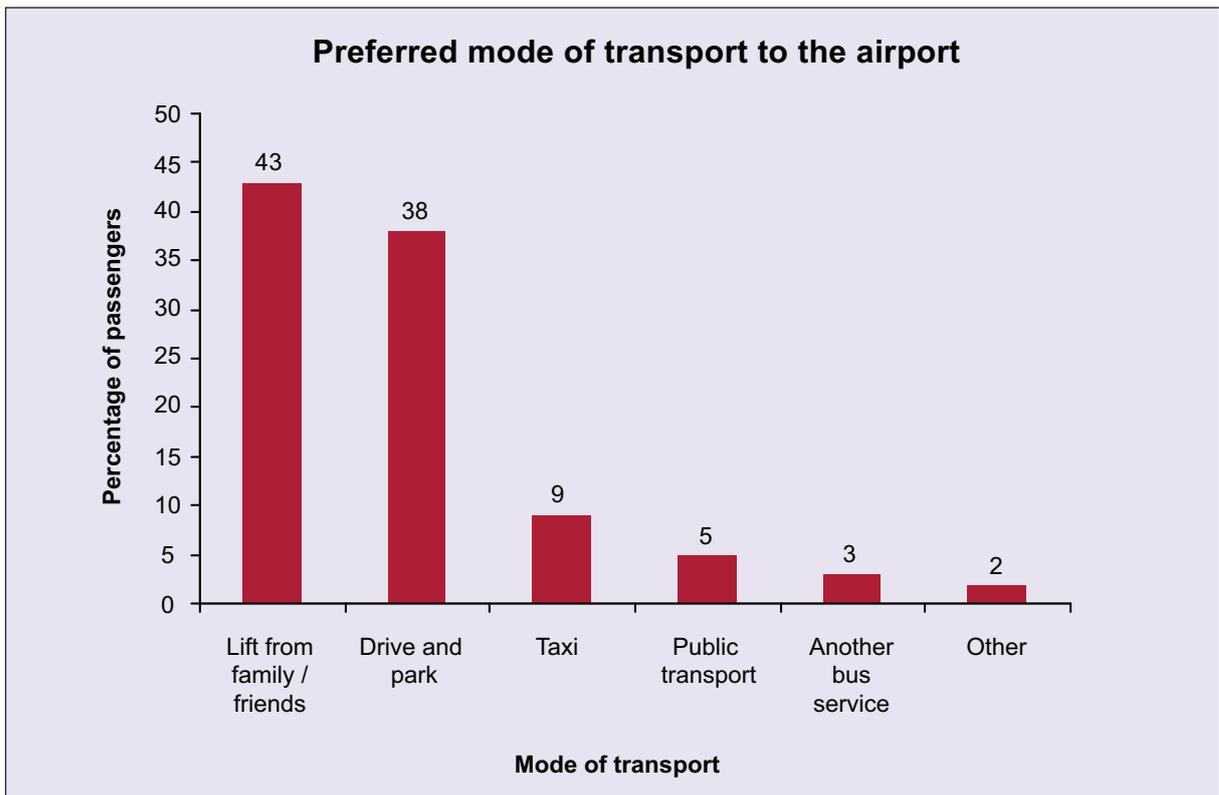
The focus group discussions supported the findings of the questionnaire survey with passengers voicing the following concerns:

- Certain airlines are intentionally unclear regarding the final price of their fares;
- Many of the additional charges imposed by airlines are exploitative and unjustifiable;
- Passengers no longer believe the low fares advertised will bear any resemblance to the final ticket price; and
- Passengers are irritated by additional charges and would prefer the airlines to advertise accurately the actual fare, not unrealistic “low fares”.

Transport to the airport

The number of passengers taking public transport is currently low. Most prefer to travel to and from the airport by car, either getting a lift from family or friends or driving and parking at the airport. Figure seven shows the various transport options available and their popularity.

Figure seven



A number of reasons were given during the focus group discussions as to why so few people travel to Northern Ireland's airports by public transport. These include:

- Passengers from Newry and Enniskillen feel it is much easier to access Dublin Airport by bus than either of the Belfast airports. Translink services require passengers to travel into Belfast and take a separate bus to either GBBCA or BIA, significantly increasing journey lengths.
- The frequency of public transport to CODA is currently very low. A greater frequency of services, more closely aligned to flight times, would increase the number of passengers travelling by public transport to the airport.
- Passengers believe the rail service to GBBCA requires improvement and would welcome the introduction of a rail link to BIA.

The environmental impact of air travel

Many passengers feel their contribution to climate change is negligible as they fly only two or three times a year and usually take short trips. Just under half of passengers believe air travel has a negative impact on climate change whilst a quarter believe it has no impact on climate change. Many passengers are undecided on the issue.

Approximately a quarter of passengers believe they should pay for the environmental impact of travel, however over half were opposed to this idea. Whether or not air passengers believe air travel has a detrimental impact on the environment, there is reluctance for direct charging on the consumer to pay for such an impact.

The UK Government levies Air Passenger Duty (APD) on every flight within the UK. Although introduced as an "environmental tax" the proceeds of the duty are not ring-fenced for climate change prevention initiatives. The majority of passengers believe, however that the proceeds of APD should be used to fund environmental initiatives rather than general government spending.

“ If you’re not flying that often the environment isn’t something that you would think about, it’s different if you’re flying every week. ”

Generally, passengers feel that in order to reduce the environmental impact of air travel, efficiency improvements should be made by airlines rather than reductions in the total number of passenger journeys. However, business travellers suggested more could be done to utilise electronic communication. Some felt that teleconferencing and videoconferencing could significantly reduce the need for business travel and lead to a more efficient use of resources, both financial and environmental.



Conclusions

The Northern Ireland aviation sector has experienced significant development in recent years. The Consumer Council has welcomed increases in the choice available to passengers as a result of growth in the number of airlines operating and routes available. Greater competition between airlines has also kept many fare prices low with passengers reporting good value for money when travelling by air.

This growth in choice has also been accompanied by good standards of customer service, although there remains scope for improvements both by airlines and airports.

The Consumer Council recognises passengers will experience problems from time to time when travelling. However, it is important that passengers feel confident to make complaints when problems do occur. Airlines and airports should review their complaints handling processes to ensure they adequately meet the needs of their customers.

It is clear there is a need for a consistent approach across the airline industry to inform passengers of their rights. When flights are delayed or cancelled or passengers are denied boarding, airlines should actively inform passengers of their rights and provide them with the assistance and compensation they are legally entitled to.

Ensuring consistency across airline policies and full compliance with European Regulations, including those which require assistance for passengers with a disability, will remove the barriers which continue to deter some people from travelling.

In order to make informed purchases consumers need to know the true cost of the various options available. The Consumer Council believes there is a need for greater transparency in airline ticket selling processes. As long as airlines continue to advertise low fares which increase dramatically once charges for particular services are added, consumers will find it difficult to compare the costs of travelling with different airlines.

At present very few passengers travel to and from Northern Ireland's airports using public transport. The Consumer Council encourages Translink, private transport providers and Government to examine opportunities for improving public transport services to Northern Ireland's airports. Specific attention must be directed at improving links to our airports across Northern Ireland.

Air travel plays a vitally important role for consumers in Northern Ireland. The Consumer Council recognises, however, that aviation has a negative impact on global climate change. We believe it is important that Government Air Passenger Duty levied on every passenger flight from Northern Ireland is ring fenced to fund activities aimed at alleviating climate change.

Recognising the increasing numbers of people choosing to fly, the contribution of aviation and airports to our economy, the current debate surrounding airport expansion and environmental and sustainability issues, the Consumer Council believes it is now time to develop an aviation strategy for Northern Ireland. Any strategy must examine our local context and clearly set out a future vision and direction for aviation in Northern Ireland.



Recommendations

Airlines

- Airlines must ensure they inform passengers of their rights when flights are delayed, cancelled or passengers are denied boarding. Airlines should consider the needs of passengers when providing information to ensure it is clear and understood. Airlines must meet fully their legal requirements when providing assistance to passengers.
- Airlines should fully comply with their legal requirements regarding the carriage of passengers with a disability or reduced mobility. Passengers are disadvantaged as a result of inconsistencies between airlines especially in relation to acceptance of bookings, determining when a passenger should be accompanied, allocation of seating and carriage of medical equipment.
- Airlines should ensure their fares are advertised in a clear, transparent manner inclusive of all unavoidable charges.
- Optional services and check-in options should be sold on an '*opt-in*' basis as opposed to an '*opt-out*' basis.
- Airlines must provide passengers with information concerning their complaints handling processes and ensure passenger confidence by providing appropriate responses to complaints within a clearly communicated timeframe.

Airports

- Staff should be visible at key locations throughout the airport to assist passengers and respond to complaints concerning airport services.
- All staff should be trained to recognise the needs of all passengers with a disability, not only passengers with a visible disability.

Government

- The Northern Ireland Assembly should develop a clear strategy setting out the future direction for aviation in Northern Ireland.
- Public transport links should be further improved to provide passengers with direct access to Northern Ireland's airports from major towns and cities.
- Business travellers, including those representing the public sector, should be encouraged to make more use of teleconferencing and video-conferencing to reduce dependence on air travel and achieve savings both in financial and environmental terms.
- The proceeds of the UK Government's Air Passenger Duty should be ring-fenced to fund activities to address climate change.

The Consumer Council

- Ensure passengers are better informed about their rights when travelling by air and that they know and understand the role of the Consumer Council in relation to handling complaints about air travel.
- Encourage passengers to feel confident about raising issues and making complaints to airlines and airports about poor service and disruption to travel plans.
- Work with airlines and airports to address existing issues with customer service and improve how they respond to passenger complaints.

Civil Aviation Authority

- Ensure airlines operating from Northern Ireland fully comply with all European consumer protection legislation.
- The CAA should continue to analyse and review complaint statistics and issues raised by passengers against specific airlines to identify trends and particular problems.

Appendix 1

Background to air passenger rights

The rights of air passengers in cases of flight delays, cancellations and denied boarding are protected by European Law.¹¹ If a flight is subject to a long delay passengers are entitled to meals and refreshments and free telephone calls or e-mails. Passengers are also entitled to compensation if their flight is delayed by at least three hours and a full refund if their flight is delayed by more than five hours. If a flight is cancelled or if a passenger is denied boarding the passengers involved are entitled to meals, refreshments and communications assistance plus compensation and a refund of their ticket or rerouting.

Passengers will not be compensated in the case of long delays and cancellations if the cause of the delay/cancellation is beyond the control of the airline (for example due to bad weather or strike action).

Airlines have a legal obligation to display a notice at check-in informing passengers to contact a member of airline staff for information concerning their rights if their flight is delayed, cancelled or if they are denied boarding. Airlines are also required to present passengers with written information outlining their rights in cases of flight delays, cancellations and denied boarding.

¹¹ Regulation (EC) 261/2004.

Appendix 2

What is the Consumer Council?

The Consumer Council is an independent consumer organisation set up by Government in 1985 and is funded by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment. We work to bring about change to benefit Northern Ireland's consumers, by making their voice heard and making it count. We represent consumers' interests in the areas of transport, water and energy. We also have responsibility to educate consumers on their rights and responsibilities and to provide them with the skills they need to make good decisions about their money and manage it wisely.

We handle consumers' complaints about buses, trains, planes, ferries, electricity, natural gas, coal and water.





The Consumer Council

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Fax: 028 9065 7701

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complaints@consumercouncil.org.uk

Websites: www.consumercouncil.org.uk
www.consumerline.org