ST Engineering and Acumen Design Associates launch ACCESS – the world's first expanding PRM aircraft lavatory

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• Lavatory wall expands to offer disabled passengers 40 per cent more space

- The patented design requires no alteration of an airline's current cabin layout
- ACCESS will be available as a retrofit or line-fit for both A321 and B737 aircraft

ST Engineering (https://www.stengg.com/en/aerospace/), in partnership with Acumen Design Associates (https://acumen-da.com/), today announces the launch of ACCESS – a new aircraft lavatory which, through the use of a moving wall, expands to offer passengers with reduced mobility (PRMs) 40 per cent more space.

The additional space creates a lavatory large enough to allow a passenger in a wheelchair and a carer, if needed, to enter and use the facilities with ease. It also means passengers no longer have to be transferred behind a curtain, providing them with the privacy and dignity every passenger deserves.

The innovative design is a direct replacement for the standard narrow-body E-lavatory at the aft door and ACCESS can be retrofitted or line-fitted to both A321 and B737 aircraft.

The controlled expansion is carried out by a crew member using a latch on the outside wall of the lavatory. Passengers can then use the space unassisted or with the help of a carer or family member. When unexpanded, the lavatory can be used as normal and has the same footprint as a standard module, meaning there is no reduction in galley space or existing seating capacity and airlines do not have to alter their cabin layout to benefit. However, through the clever use of space, the redesigned interior feels much larger than the standard E-lavatory.

To create an elegant and improved experience for all passengers, the lavatory also has a number of modern interior design features, including:

• A secondary door which can be opened at an angle to create an expanded entranceway (24" wide) for an aisle chair

• Vertical, horizontal and fold-down grab bars to make both assisted and unassisted transfer as easy and quick as possible

- · Lowered sink height to enable use from a seated position
- A range of feature lighting which includes curved floor-to-ceiling strip lights
- Large vanity and full length mirrors, as well as a side-shelf for personal items
- Anti-slip flooring and cutting-edge hygiene technologies such as anti-microbial surface finishes and touchless faucet and flush mechanisms

Detailed research was undertaken during the conceptualisation and design process, with disabled passengers attending a series of product testing sessions to provide feedback and help shape the final interior design.

Mary Doyle, Founder and Owner of Rocket Girl Coaching (https://www.rocketgirlcoaching.com/), is named as

one of Britain's most influential disabled people* and is an accessible aviation consultant. As part of the research process she stated: "As an independent manual wheelchair user for many years, I've experienced the good and bad of aircraft lavatories. I have regularly flown both long and short-haul for over 25 years and believe there are four main things which can improve the on-board experience: more space, highly sanitised work surfaces, greatly improved physical supports for unassisted transfer and anti-slip flooring. And whilst lavatories serve a functional need, I believe they should look beautiful too, in keeping with excellent customer experience."

Carriers are not currently required by law to provide an accessible lavatory on single-aisle aircraft. With more long-range narrow-body aircraft entering service, there is no legal guarantee disabled passengers will be provided for – although this is expected to change.

Daniel Clucas, Senior Designer at Acumen Design Associates said: "Many disabled passengers avoid flying because of the compromises they have to make – especially when using the on-board lavatory. During our research we heard first-hand how those that do fly will even avoid using the lavatory altogether if possible. As more single-aisle aircraft take to the skies, ACCESS can ensure disabled travellers have the space, privacy and support features in place to never have to worry about that again."

Cassandra Sexson, Director of Business Development at ST Engineering, added: "Our vision was to overhaul the on-board lavatory experience and create an inclusive interior that improved the flying experience for all passengers. Having worked with Acumen to identify the main accessibility issues with current lavatory designs, ACCESS is able to offer airlines an innovative new product that tackles one of the biggest issues faced by disabled passengers when they fly."

The project marks the second collaboration between ST Engineering, a world leader in MRO services that is committed to pioneering new cabin interior products that improve the passenger experience, and Acumen Design Associates – one the world's leading aviation design houses.

-ENDS-

*Named in the Shaw Trust #Power100 2018 list – for more information visit: https://www.rocketgirlcoaching.com/

About Acumen:

Acumen Design Associates (https://acumen-da.com/) is a multi-award winning design consultancy based in London, United Kingdom. Acumen has enjoyed nearly forty years of international success, creating market-leading products and remarkable customer experiences for many of its 'blue-chip clients. Acumen is a team of creative thinkers, designers and brand specialists, passionate about improving the way people live and move.

The company's inventive and disruptive approach is constantly challenging the status quo resulting in a wide portfolio of international patents, particularly in the aviation sector where they have led the innovation agenda. For example, Acumen invented the iconic 'Bed in the Sky' for British Airways in 1996 and more recently the world's first three-room VIP suite, The Residence, for Etihad Airways.

Acumen's airline experience spans more than 45 projects for a diverse range of international airlines around the globe which has given them a rare insight into premium passenger's future needs and expectations. For more information, please visit: www.acumen-da.com (https://acumen-da.com/)

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About ST Engineering:

ST Engineering's Aerospace sector operates a global network of facilities and affiliates in the Americas, Asia Pacific and Europe, providing a wide range of aviation services that include airframe, component and engine MRO, aviation materials and asset management services, aircraft interior solutions, technical vocations and air charter services. We are the largest commercial airframe MRO service provider in the world, supporting a broad global customer base that includes leading airlines, airfreight operators and national armed forces.

We are one of just a few MRO service providers in the world with in-house engineering capabilities, which allow us to provide end-to-end cabin reconfiguration solutions – from design and certification, to implementation and maintenance – all under one roof.

On top of providing after aftermarket care, we also design and manufacture original aircraft cabin interiors, floor panels and aircraft seats. We are excited to add the ACCESS lavatory to our portfolio of products. www.stengg.com/en/aerospace (https://www.stengg.com/en/aerospace/)

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