

Media Release

CAG and SATS roll out autonomous wheelchairs to enhance travel experience for passengers with reduced mobility

- *Autonomous wheelchairs provide passengers with reduced mobility (PRMs), greater independence and convenience in their airport journey.*
- *The technology complements frontline staff by supporting wheelchair assistance, particularly during periods of high demand.*
- *The deployment underscores Changi Airport's commitment to making air travel more inclusive and seamless for passengers with mobility needs.*



SINGAPORE, 4 AUGUST 2026 – Changi Airport Group (CAG), together with ground handling partner SATS Ltd, is commencing the first phase of autonomous wheelchair deployment at Changi Airport following successful trials, to enhance the travel experience for passengers with reduced mobility (PRMs).

The autonomous wheelchairs, which are operationalised and managed by SATS, enable PRMs to move through the terminals more independently, reducing reliance on one-to-one staff assistance. This service complements existing support for PRMs, enabling ground staff to focus on those who require higher levels of care and assistance.

Demand for special assistance services is expected to increase with an ageing population profile and as air travel continues to grow. Changi Airport recorded a 20% increase in requests for wheelchair assistance between 2023 and 2025, reflecting the growing need for mobility support among travellers. Meeting this growing demand with traditional wheelchair services require significant manpower and coordination across multiple airport touchpoints.

The autonomous wheelchair service deployment is an investment under SATS' Hub Handler of the Future operating model. Supporting about 10% of daily mobility assistance demand in Changi, it reinforces Changi's efforts to make air travel more inclusive and seamless, by leveraging automation and technology to strengthen operational efficiency and support the growing demand for mobility assistance services.

Design and use





The autonomous wheelchair is equipped with safety features including a seatbelt (top) and a control panel to request assistance, if needed (bottom)

Designed to help passengers get around the terminals safely and comfortably, the autonomous wheelchair uses advanced sensors to detect obstacles and human traffic while navigating customised routes. Its omni-directional wheels enable smooth and precise manoeuvring. Safety features include seatbelt monitoring, which allows the wheelchair to move only when the seatbelt is securely fastened, as well as an emergency stop button and an assistance call function. A rear basket accommodates cabin-sized luggage.

The autonomous wheelchairs are programmed to transport PRMs along predefined routes within departure transit areas. Each journey is monitored by a SATS ground handling supervisor at a control centre. By automating selected wheelchair journeys, the technology complements frontline staff, enables more efficient resource deployment and strengthens the sustainable delivery of mobility assistance services as demand grows.

Launched in Terminal 3 in March 2025 and later expanded to Terminal 2, the trials tested the autonomous wheelchair technology across diverse operating environments and passenger journeys. More than 13,000 passengers have used the autonomous wheelchairs since the trials began. Selected PRMs travelling on participating flights who required wheelchair assistance and could walk short distances independently were invited to participate. Trained staff were available throughout the journey to provide support where required.

Prior to the passenger trials, CAG led the initial phase of testing to ensure that the autonomous wheelchairs could operate safely within the airport environment. Together with SATS, this included assessment of speed controls, passenger safety and comfort, obstacle detection and navigation performance. CAG also organised learning visits and industry engagements to assess how autonomous wheelchairs were used at other airports and evaluate their suitability for Changi.

Mr Damon Wong, Senior Vice President, Airport Operations Planning, CAG said, “At Changi Airport, we are committed to making travel more comfortable and convenient for every passenger. For those with reduced mobility, navigating a large airport can be challenging. The autonomous wheelchairs offer these passengers greater independence and convenience, while enabling frontline staff to provide more dedicated care to those who require higher levels of need. This marks another milestone chapter in our CARE@Changi journey and reflects our ongoing efforts to strengthen the mobility assistance and explore innovative solutions as demand continues to grow.”

Mr Edwin Tan, Vice President, APS and Terminal Services, SATS said, “This deployment marks another milestone in our ‘Hub Handler of the Future’ journey, where automation and our people work together to deliver enhanced passenger experiences. In the first phase of the roll out of autonomous wheelchairs at Changi Airport, we are adding a new mobility solution that complements our existing fleet of manual wheelchairs, buggies and e-Caddies, giving transfer passengers with reduced mobility more choice while equipping our workforce with new skills to work alongside advanced technologies. Through a centralised operations model, we can intelligently deploy autonomous wheelchairs and other mobility assets across Terminals 2 and 3 based on real-time demand, improving resource utilisation, operational efficiency and service responsiveness. SATS is setting a new benchmark for accessible, seamless and future-ready ground services.”

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About Changi Airport Group

Changi Airport Group (Singapore) Pte Ltd (CAG) (www.changiairport.com) was formed on 16 June 2009 and the corporatisation of Singapore Changi Airport (IATA: SIN, ICAO: WSSS) followed on 1 July 2009. As the company managing Changi Airport, CAG undertakes key functions focusing on airport operations and management, air hub development, commercial activities and airport emergency services. It also manages the Changi East development project, which includes the building of a new Terminal 5 for Changi Airport. CAG also operates Seletar Airport (IATA: XSP, ICAO: WSSL) and through its subsidiary Changi Airports International, invests in and manages airports around the world.

One of Asia's most connected international aviation hubs, Changi Airport links Singapore directly to about 170 cities globally, with close to 100 airlines operating more than 7,100 flights weekly. Jewel Changi Airport, a multi-dimensional lifestyle destination, opened in April 2019, bringing Changi Airport's shopping and dining offering to over 700 F&B and retail outlets. Changi is the world's most awarded airport, having received over 700 accolades for its consistent and excellent airport staff service, passenger experience and safety standards.

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About SATS

Headquartered in Singapore, SATS Ltd. (SGX: S58) is one of the world's leading providers of air cargo handling services and Asia's leading airline caterer. SATS Gateway Services provides airfreight and ground handling services including passenger services, ramp and baggage handling, aviation security services, aircraft cleaning and

aviation laundry. SATS Food Solutions serves airlines and institutions, and operates central kitchens with large-scale food production and distribution capabilities for a wide range of cuisines. SATS is present in the Asia-Pacific, the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa, powering an interconnected world of trade, travel and taste. Following the acquisition of Worldwide Flight Services (WFS) in 2023, the combined SATS and WFS network operates over 225 stations in 27 countries. These cover trade routes responsible for more than 50% of global air cargo volume. SATS has been listed on the Singapore Exchange since May 2000. For more information, please visit www.sats.com.sg