

Press Office
City of Chicago, Department of Aviation
Nuria I. Fernandez, Commissioner



News Release

December 31, 2007

Contact: Karen Pride
(773) 686-3700
kpride@ohare.com

THE CHICAGO AIRPORT SYSTEM 2007 YEAR IN REVIEW

CHICAGO – The City of Chicago Department of Aviation today summarized its significant accomplishments in 2007:

Building on its robust air service, O'Hare International Airport welcomed back Austrian Airlines, which operates nonstop flights to Vienna; and Virgin Atlantic Airlines, with nonstop flights to London. Additionally, low-cost carrier JetBlue began operating nonstop flights to New York and Long Beach.

The Department also celebrated the opening of a new and improved facility for the United Service Organizations (USO) of Illinois in Terminal 2 at O'Hare. The 24-hour center provides military personnel and their families with a place to relax, enjoy a meal, check e-mail, phone home and re-adjust to life before returning home or being deployed.

At Midway International Airport, the Department of Aviation began operation of a new inline baggage handling system. The \$42 million project, completed on time and within budget, replaced nine explosive detection systems (EDS) located in the airport's ticketing lobby with a new behind-the-scenes baggage handling conveyor system. The new system is designed to screen more than 30,000 bags per day. O'Hare added to its current inline systems in Terminals 1 and 5 with completion and full operation of a new system in Terminal 3.

The Department also undertook an ambitious program to re-issue airport access identification badges with a new biometrics component to all airport employees. In addition to a photograph and badge expiration date, these new badges now contain biometric data that will require the employee to provide their fingerprint at the same time the badge is used to gain access to secured areas. The re-issuance of access badges was completed at O'Hare in the beginning of October.

At the Chicago Airport System, passenger safety and security is our primary focus. In 2007, significant safety-enhancing developments took place on the airfields of O'Hare and Midway including:

- To better ensure runway safety, the Department of Aviation is installing Engineered Material Arrestor Systems (EMAS) at Midway and O'Hare. EMAS is a mixture of water, foam and concrete that crushes in a controlled manner under the weight of an aircraft and gradually stops its forward momentum.

- More -

At Midway, the installation of the arrestor bed at the end of Runway 31C was completed in September and arrestor beds at the ends of Runways 4R, 22L and 13C are now complete.

In August, the Department received a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant to support installation of EMAS at each end of Runway 4R-22L at O'Hare. Construction began in September and is scheduled for completion in 2008.

- This summer, two runways at O'Hare were re-designated in order to accommodate pilots as they adjust to the visual development of the future north runway scheduled to be commissioned in November 2008. As construction on the O'Hare Modernization program continued, Runway 9R-27L was renamed Runway 10-28 and Runway 9L-27R was renamed Runway 9R-27L.
- In September, the FAA began use of an airport surveillance system known as ASDE-X at O'Hare. This state-of-the-art technology gives air traffic controllers an improved picture of airport ground movements by displaying information from a range of surveillance sources. The system is designed to help warn controllers of potential aircraft collisions.

Also in 2007, the Department of Aviation provided new services, amenities, facilities and concessions offerings to travelers passing through our airports including:

- In July, the Department of Aviation, together with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities, unveiled the Accessible Kiosk for travelers with disabilities. These specially designed kiosks are equipped with a public access videophone (PAV) that allows people who are Deaf, hard of hearing or have speech impediments, to place a call to request services or communicate with family, friends or another Deaf person using sign language. Chicago has received national attention for providing the newest generation of videophone technology and offering the most sophisticated level of communications access possible for Deaf and hard of hearing travelers. The first kiosk was installed in Terminal 3 at O'Hare.
- Twenty public restrooms throughout O'Hare were rehabilitated and re-designed with new fixtures, lighting and baby-changing counters. The Department also moved closer to its goal of upgrading all of O'Hare's public restrooms to meet ADA requirements by mid 2008 with completion of 60 percent of restrooms. An additional family companion restroom was added at O'Hare this year to bring the total number to 12. These areas provide a room to accommodate families with small children or the elderly who need extra assistance when using restroom facilities.
- A total of 21 concessions leases were awarded to new and existing companies at the Chicago Airport System. The new concepts at O'Hare include Garrett Popcorn Shops, Barbara's Bookstore, Auntie Anne's Pretzels, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Nuts on Clark and CIBO Express Gourmet Market. These concessions offer unique goods and services while meeting the highest standards of quality and value for travelers passing through O'Hare and Midway

Year in Review/page three

- In May, O'Hare celebrated the opening of La Tapenade Mediterranean Café, a new upscale eatery located in Terminal 1. The full service café serves breakfast, lunch and dinner including international dishes made from ingredients such as homemade chutneys, Tzatziki sauces, hummus, fire roasted vegetables, fine cheeses and specialty grilled meats.
- In October, Romano's Macaroni Grill was opened in Terminal 3 at O'Hare. The restaurant, designed to capture the heart of the Italian dining experience and ambience, features a full bar, signature wines, classic Italian dishes, homemade pizzas, desserts, and breakfast scramblers and frittatas. O'Hare is the 2nd airport in the nation to feature the Macaroni Grill concept.
- In November, we celebrated the completion of the Battle of Midway memorial exhibit with the addition of photographs, narratives and three interactive video kiosks. The complete exhibit provides an educational experience that raises awareness of the contributions that the pilots, engineers and City of Chicago made to the World War II effort.

O'Hare was the fortunate recipient of many works of art in 2007 including:

- In collaboration with the City of Chicago Cultural Affairs percent-for-art program, two pieces were commissioned: one entitled, "Beacons" consisting of brightly lit geometric sculptures suspended over the exit bays in Terminal 5; the other entitled, "Jet Trails", a 50 foot architectural enhancement gracing the south security checkpoint at Terminal 1.
- Additionally, the Sister City of Amman, Jordan generously offered a 22,860 stone mosaic replicating one of their city's great landmarks, displayed in Terminal 5 departure level; and After School Matters provided a 35,000-piece Venetian glass mosaic in the rotunda between Terminals 2 and 3, as well as whimsical, brightly-colored 'chandeliers' hanging in the connector bridge between Terminals 1 and 2.

The Chicago Airport System also introduced new initiatives to provide excellent customer service to travelers well before they arrive in the terminals including:

- In March, the Department launched a service that provides real-time flight information to travelers at O'Hare and Midway Airports via e-mail capable devices such as cell phones, Blackberrys and laptop computers. The service sends airport data direct and free-of-charge.
- In August, the Department of Aviation, together with the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), began operating two flight information display systems (FIDS) inside the CTA Clark/Lake Station to assist passengers traveling to O'Hare and Midway International Airports. The new displays mirror the flight information monitors at airports and allow passengers to get real-time information on departing flights before they set off for the airport.

- In September, the Chicago Airport System introduced an ordinance to the Chicago City Council establishing new rates for parking at O'Hare and Midway International Airports. The new rates are intended to steer cost-conscious travelers to the economy lots at both O'Hare and Midway Airports and help keep the close-in main terminal garages open and available. The parking rate restructuring will generate nearly \$24 million in additional revenue annually to help support airport operations. The new rates took effect December 1.

This year, more homes and schools received sound insulation under the Department's Residential and School Sound Insulation Programs. These programs are recognized as the most aggressive in the nation.

- Now in its 12th year, the program has insulated over 10,000 single-family and multi-unit dwellings homes and 114 schools to reduce aircraft noise in the communities located near O'Hare and Midway International Airports.

For the eighth consecutive year, O'Hare won the Award for Best Airport in North America by a premiere travel magazine (2005–2007 by *Global Traveler* magazine, 2000–2004 by *Business Traveler* magazine). Midway was ranked among the top five medium-size airports for the 2007 North American Airport Satisfaction Index Study by J.D. Power and Associates.

~ ~ ~ ~

The Chicago Airport System is self-supporting, using no local or state tax dollars for operations or capital improvements at O'Hare and Midway International airports. Together, Chicago's airports generate more than \$45 billion in annual economic activity and create 540,000 jobs for the region. Please visit www.flychicago.com to learn more about the Chicago Airport System.