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AIRPORT REPORT

ARMSTRONG INTERNATIONAL HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

By **Iftikhar Ahmad**, Director of Aviation

As we approach the 10 year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina, we reflect upon emergency preparedness at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport. Our region will never forget August 29, 2005 and the catastrophic blow of Hurricane Katrina. The Airport was closed to commercial air traffic on August 28, 2005, shortly before the hurricane made landfall. Fortunately, the Airport suffered no significant airfield damage and was able to support the recovery efforts for the community. The Airport reopened to commercial flight operations on September 13, 2005.

Since that time, we have invested in a new state-of-the-art emergency operations center (EOC). The EOC serves as the command and operations center for Airport staff during a storm or other emergency event affecting the Airport. We also have a comprehensive Hurricane Preparedness Plan that is annually reviewed to identify any changes needed since the last storm season. The Plan includes close coordination with local, state and federal government officials, as well as airlines, tenants and vendors who operate at the Airport. The Airport staff tests our emergency plans by conducting annual emergency exercises and participating in regional preparedness exercises, because our number one concern in an emergency is the safety of our passengers, our neighbors and staff.

If a tropical storm or hurricane is approaching the New Orleans region, the Airport will remain open for as long as the airlines continue to operate flights. The decision to cease flight operations will vary from airline to airline, and each airline determines when to terminate their flight operations based upon the evolving weather conditions. If you plan on traveling by air out of the region due to an impending storm, plan early and keep in contact with your particular airline for flight status. If you are traveling with pets, check with your airline prior to coming to the Airport to verify that they allow pets to travel on their aircraft.

Please be aware that not all of the airlines allow pets and there are federal limits as to the number of pets allowed on each flight.

In the event of an approaching landfall of a tropical storm or hurricane to our area, law enforcement presence will be enhanced to ensure a secure environment and controlled access to the Airport facilities. When a storm is approaching and you have confirmed flight plans, please make sure you carry some form of flight confirmation and personal identification because it may be required for entrance to the Airport terminal. The flight confirmation may be an email detailing your flight information, a boarding pass or ticket receipt. If you do not have the necessary documentation, it may delay your entrance to the Airport. At the peak of the storm and continuing until Airport recovery efforts are completed, access to the Airport will be restricted. Once flights cease, the general public and non-essential personnel will be asked to evacuate from the Airport. For safety reasons, the Airport is not a public shelter and the general public will not be allowed to ride out a storm at the Airport.

As a storm approaches, please remember to check with your particular airline on the status of your flight on your airline's website or contacting their customer service telephone number. Airport staff will continue to work closely with local, state and federal government officials, as well as each of our airlines, tenants and vendors to ensure the safety of all passengers before, during and after any emergency. ✈



Iftikhar Ahmad, Director of Aviation for Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport may be reached at airport@flymsy.com. Check your local listings for the air time of the Armstrong International Airport 30 minute television program, "Airport Alive" or view it on the airport website, www.flymsy.com, by clicking on the "Airport Alive" link on the "News and Stats" page. You can now follow the airport on [facebook.com/MSYAirport](https://www.facebook.com/MSYAirport) and Twitter [@NO_Airport](https://twitter.com/NO_Airport). To find out how to be a volunteer at the airport, click on "Ambassador" on the airport's website homepage.