

# Airport report

## Airport Capital Improvement Projects Near Completion

**By Iftikhar Ahmad**  
Director of Aviation

Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport is entering into the final phase of the \$356 million modernization of the airport, as we get closer to our construction deadline of Super Bowl 2013. Most of the 14 projects that made up the Capital Improvement Project list have now been completed and we are wrapping up the construction phase on outstanding projects. The Terminal IV and IV-A phases, which are the final steps in the new look, are well underway and are giving a hint to our passengers what their airport will soon look like. In the West Lobby, attractive new carpet and airline signage is in place and the security checkpoint expansion is underway. In the Jazz Alley, the hallway connecting the West Lobby to the Parabola, flooring is being replaced and the construction on an expanded Westwin News & Gifts has begun. In the Parabola, the new location for Whitney Bank above the Concourse C security checkpoint is now visible. In the East Lobby on Level 2, all of the new modern ticket counters are now in place with final finishes pending for the interior lobby structures. On Concourse B, Southwest Airlines has begun their \$3 million gate enhancements and at the end of the concourse new carpet has been laid in the U.S. Airways gate area. Best of all, our new concessions are starting to appear. Last month, the new Saints Store, located across from Hudson News near the Concourse B entrance, opened for business as well as Perlis Cajun Clothing and Hudson News on Concourse D. Many of the new Airport restaurants have completed the design stage and their construction is underway.

In other Airport news that unfortunately was overshadowed by Hurricane Isaac, Southwest Airlines has announced additional service that will increase their presence in New Orleans with a total of 114 daily flights by March 2013. They currently operate 76 daily flights from Armstrong International. Air Tran Airways, a wholly owned subsidiary of Southwest, operates 8 daily flights. The 35% increase in service over their average share is a huge win for our area. The additional flights will bring approximately 1.5 million additional seats into the New Orleans market annually. This new service will include Newark and a new South Florida destination – Key West. Also, Air Tran

will begin service to Orlando. With the increase in flights by Southwest Airlines together with Spirit Airlines' announcement to start operations at MSY, we hope to get much closer to our goal of 10 million passengers next year.

And speaking of Isaac, I am pleased to say that damage to the Airport from the storm was not severe and air service was restored shortly after restoration of commercial power. Our emergency backup generators worked as planned and barring the delay in the restoration of power to the terminal, the impact to the Airport was sustainable. During the storm, Airport status updates were provided on our award winning website and social networks. Please note that these are always reliable sources for the latest Airport information, when enduring an emergency that affects Armstrong International. If you are not a Facebook "friend" of the airport, please "like us" today.

By the end of the year, we will be wrapping up completion of the modernization of Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport and looking ahead towards the beginning steps of analyzing the feasibility of our long term infrastructure development. I am pleased that through the efforts of the New Orleans Aviation Board to provide an updated look with new amenities, we have revived a historic institution that our community can be proud to call "their Airport". ✈



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