

# Airport report

## Preparing for the Super Bowl

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Director of Aviation

New Orleans has been the host to some very big sporting events over the years, but none bigger than a Super Bowl. As everyone must know by now, New Orleans will be in the spotlight on Feb. 3, 2013 when the Super Bowl returns to the Crescent City for a 10th time. This high profile game will bring attention to our region, our city and our airport. We must be prepared and that is why planning at the Airport is very much underway. Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport is the official welcome site for our flying visitors, so everything must be ready and function as close to perfect as possible. There will be no second chance to make a great first impression.

The Super Bowl organization consists of many committees that have working groups who meet regularly to plan. The MSY Airport Super Bowl Committee has seven internal working groups that consist of Airside Operations, Public Safety & Security, Ground Transportation, Public Relations & Media, Terminal Operations, Concessions and Construction. These groups are responsible for a myriad of details too numerous to mention in this report. However, some highlights include developing ground transportation routes, compiling assets needed for conducting a welcome, developing a private aircraft (General Aviation) parking plan for the vast number of planes that will land, depart and park on our tarmac, coordination with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Fixed Base Operations (FBO) that will handle the increased General Aviation and charter traffic, and most importantly working with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to accommodate additional security screening that will be needed for the day after the Super Bowl.

The last time the Super Bowl was in New Orleans was 2002, shortly after 9/11. The Airport is undergoing major renovations both inside and out and the Super Bowl is our target date for completion of the Airport terminal modernization. As I reported last month, in addition to the \$300 million Airport capital improvements scheduled and underway, the introduction of new concessions and restaurants will involve store renovations that must be completed by the time Super Bowl fans arrive as well. It will take a team effort to coordinate the necessary renovation completions with contractors and vendors. Next, the opposing teams that will play in the Super Bowl will draw enough friends and fans to significantly increase the daily passenger traffic through Armstrong International, not to mention the impact it will have on commercial and private airports from Baton Rouge to

Mississippi during Super Bowl week. To accommodate the expected increase in passenger loads, airlines will add seating to their normal schedule with additional or larger aircraft. Our customer service representatives along with Host Committee Volunteers will hand out beads, maps and sanctioned literature to arriving passengers, while brass bands serenade the arrivals in our updated baggage claim.

I anticipate that the security screening after the game will present one of the greatest challenges, because of the vast number of passengers that must be processed on the day following the game. To make the outbound process work efficiently, we are incorporating a special 5-4-3-2-1 message for our outbound passengers. It works like this. Check out of your hotel 5 hours before your departure time; Turn in your rental car 4 hours before your departure time; Check in at the ticket counter 3 hours before your departure time; Be at the security screening checkpoint 2 hours before your departure time; And finally be at your gate 1 hour before your departure time. To expedite the screening of the thousands of passengers leaving after the game, additional security checkpoints will be in place as well as auxiliary locations for screening in the terminal and special sites on the airport grounds. Our New Orleans Aviation Board (NOAB) office staff along with our Customer Service Representatives and numerous volunteers will be in the terminal to assist our passengers during their check-in process.

It is an honor to be chosen to host this exciting sporting event. The new look of our airport and special welcome will hopefully make a positive impression on our incoming guests and set the tone for what will be a fun time for all in our great city. As we prepare to meet the challenges of a Super Bowl host, the NOAB staff will play an important role in making this Super Bowl the best one ever. ✈



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