



Airport Sees Record Numbers for Essence

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – July 10, 2007, New Orleans – Essence Music Festival resulted in increased air service at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport.

Essence has always created a surge in travel. This year, Southwest Airlines responded to that surge by increasing flights to accommodate the crowds coming to New Orleans to enjoy the annual musical celebration. Southwest added 5 round trip flights on Sunday, July 8 for a total increase of 685 seats each way. The additional flights were to Nashville, Dallas, Houston (2) and Orlando.

Reports from the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on the total number of passengers who were processed through security following Essence placed the Sunday and Monday after the festival in the top 5 departure days since Hurricane Katrina. On a normal Sunday prior to Katrina, the Airport saw approximately 17,500 passengers depart the city.

#1	May 7, 2007	Jazz Fest (2 nd weekend)	15,868
#2	July 8, 2007	Essence (Sunday)	15,767
#3	July 9, 2007	Essence (Monday)	15,472
#4	March 27, 2007	Cardiologist	14,996
#5	November 13, 2006	Realtors	14,695

TSA reported some wait times in excess of 20 minutes over the period. Passengers are always encouraged to arrive at the airport at least 90 minutes prior to their departures due to that possibility.

Sean Hunter, Director of Aviation stated, "We are delighted to see that passenger numbers continue to climb toward pre-K levels. This is a key indicator of our region's economic recovery. We commend the airlines for their role in the recovery. They continue to add flights to their daily schedules and some respond to peak demand periods with additional flights. This air service is essential for our business, leisure and convention activities to rebound. I offer a special word of thanks to Southwest Airlines for their sponsorship of the Essence Music Festival and the increased flights."

Currently, Armstrong International has service to 37 destinations on 123 daily flight departures with 14,276 seats.

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