



Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport Issues Statement on Taxi Management Contract Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 11, 2009 (New Orleans, LA) The New Orleans Aviation Board is confident that it has not violated any laws or ethical procedures in the awarding of the contract for management of taxicab and ground transportation services. The Aviation Board and staff will fight the legal challenges by one of the companies that were not awarded the bid.

The move toward standardization of transportation services began in 2004 after Mayor C. Ray Nagin's Blue Ribbon Committee recommended changes to the Aviation Board. Aviation Board Chairman Dan Packer says that the goal is to provide tourists, convention goers and New Orleans citizens' taxi service from the airport in clean, safe and insured vehicles driven by friendly and honest drivers.

In a procurement process that stretched over seven (7) years and included three separate bid processes, Dulles Transportation Services of Virginia was selected to initiate ground transportation enhancements that will improve customer service (i.e. requiring child safety seats and credit card machines), monitor the quality of transportation vehicles, increase professionalism and provide higher standards for taxi and transportation operations at the airport.

Louis Armstrong Airport Director, Sean Hunter, says that while the Airport is encouraged and motivated by the prospect of enhanced services for the public, we are also mindful of the needs of the dedicated taxi cab drivers who serve the metropolitan area. "We have committed to a 120 day transition period once a contract has been negotiated," Hunter says. A series of informational meetings have been implemented to educate and inform drivers about the new policies and criteria for airport transportation services. Drivers will be provided assistance in meeting the new criteria, and incentives will be implemented to help those drivers who have difficulties meeting the criteria. Hunter says the bottom line is that "all drivers will be treated fairly and with respect".

Hunter added, "The allegations in the law suit filed on our process will be addressed. We are supremely confident that we have conducted an open, transparent and valid process that will result in better transportation services for the traveling public."

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