Charlotte Airport Director Urges TSA Not To Cut Staff

From May 2 to May 6, passengers can join the TSA Pre✓® program at Gerald R. Ford International airport.

I am speaking for those who fear raising their voice and I will continue to raise this issue until all TSA agents treat travelers at Newark Airport with respect". TSA is able to hire up to 45,000 officers under an arbitrary budget cap set by Congress, yet the agency doesn`t even hire up to the cap - preferring to let passengers stand in line and endure long waits.

For major airlines trying to serve more passengers than ever, longer lines are, in a word, unacceptable. He confirmed that about 60 TSA positions are being eliminated as a result of the new automated baggage screening system, but said that won't impact the number available to staff security checkpoints. This year, the maximum wait time to get through security in Orlando was 50 minutes. If you think the waits at airport security are bad now, just wait until summer. "However, these solutions need to be permanent and long-term", Barnes said, adding that the airport's "passenger activity is expected to increase by 13 percent this summer with the addition of new domestic and global flights".

Orlando International Airport has already hired 27 private security personnel to help move the lines along more quickly at check points. "We're going to investigate what it would take to privatize, we're looking at other airports that have privatized", said SEA-TAC Managing Director Lance Lyttle. Cagle said in 2014 the TSA got rid of three of its eleven Advance Imaging Technology (AIT) for repositioning, bringing the total to seventeen. A Williamsburg man was caught by Transportation Security Administration officials on Thursday as he attempted to carry a loaded handgun through a security checkpoint. We all want security at airports, but TSA has an obligation to be properly staffed to handle the traffic.

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Days into Raleigh-Durham International Airport’s new parking plan and RDU president and CEO Michael Landguth says “it’s going very well,” but there’s some misinformation out there among travelers. A new ParkRDU Premier option means “stress-free,” dedicated first level parking and covered spaces – just steps to the terminal, according to the airport.

But he’s hearing some questions regarding the upgrade that’s coming – RDU’s new online parking reservation system, debuting in May. The airport is promoting the system as a way to guarantee garage entry in advance and save money.

The challenge his office is dealing with right now is educating the public about that new option.

“It’s whatever is easiest for you,” he says, adding that passengers can continue parking the same way they’ve been doing since the airport’s inception. The online system is another choice. “When the online reservation system comes on board, that’s just where you’re going to get your best value.”

“We have 10 million people coming through this facility on an annual basis, and that’s a lot of people to reach,” he says. “We’re trying all the different means and methods, from radio to TV, to Web to social media.”

As for the parking options that debuted earlier this month, Landguth says the rollout went better than he expected.

Lauren Ohnesorge covers information technology and entrepreneurship—Triangle Business Journal.
A FedEx employee fell asleep while loading a plane early Friday morning — and woke up nearly 800 miles away.

The grounds crew employee was loading a FedEx Airbus A310 when he fell asleep, reported FOX 34. He was in the back, unconscious, when the flight left Memphis International Airport, in Tennessee, at 4:02 a.m. The plane was almost to Lubbock International Airport, in Texas, when the employee woke up and found himself in the back of an airborne plane, according to the City of Lubbock.

He knocked on the closed cockpit door, making his presence aware to flight crew.

They told him to sit in the jump seat and prepare for landing, Lubbock Airport's executive director Kelly Campbell told FOX 34.

The airport was notified about the surprise passenger at 5:17 a.m., and the flight landed at 5:35 a.m. The flight was greeted by airport police and staff, who determined that the stowaway did not have criminal intent.

The employee was not arrested.

"There was never any danger to our employees or cargo," FedEx said in a statement. "We are fully cooperating with investigating authorities."

Reported By Cailey Rizzo, Mashable
As the Charleston International Airport redevelopment project comes to a close - completion of the five-year project is expected this month - Airport authorities are turning their attention toward developing a more racially diverse economic footprint.

Over the past several years, members of the Charleston County Aviation Authority, which is the agency that sets policy for the airport, felt it should better reflect the county’s population in all aspects, most importantly economically. Deputy Executive Director James Preacher said they had statistical information, but no plan to utilize that data.

To solve that problem, they looked to Sharon McGhee, the airport’s director of Human Resources. A 17-year employee, McGhee spent three years as HR director. She did such a good job diversifying the staff - about 32 percent of airport’s 173 employees are minorities, last May the authority hired McGhee as its new Director of Community Relations. In her new role, McGhee will lead the airport’s efforts to achieve diversity in workforce and vendor participation.

McGhee says it’s a no-brainer that minority businesses should participate in the economic activities that generate the airport’s $39 million annual operating budget. To facilitate that, the airport has developed an internal database which it uses to communicate with minority firms about every manner of business opportunities from construction, special events and furnishings to employment.

In February, more than 100 business owners attended the second of four South Carolina DBE Fly-In events hosted at Charleston International Airport. The events are an opportunity for minority and women-owned businesses to connect with key leaders at the state’s major airports. Potential vendors can get information by going to www.chs-airport.com.

And there are opportunities for vendors. With over 3.4 million passengers passing through the airport last year, those opportunities are increasing. According to one source, the airport’s first minority-owned vendor is expected to be contracted this year.

Reported by Barney Blakeney, The Chronicle
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The Georgia Aquarium, the National Archives, Cotton Bowl stadium, the Portland International Airport and the national Missile Defense Agency are a few of the design and construction projects by two firms recently selected to build Lafayette Regional Airport’s new terminal.

Last week, the Lafayette Regional Airport Commission announced Atlanta-based firm Heery International and RS&H based in Jacksonville, Florida, as the architects and engineers for the four-year project.

The two firms were chosen through a tedious interview process that began in January, said Kam Movassaghi, former state transportation director and member of the terminal committee.

The firms were selected from eight major companies vying to build the $90 million, 107,520-square-foot terminal.

Reported by Jessica Goff, The Advertiser
Golden Triangle Regional Airport Hosts “Drone 101” Seminar

Columbus/Starkville/West Point, Miss. — The Golden Triangle Regional (GTR) Airport recently hosted over 60 people at a seminar on unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) operations. The class, dubbed “Drone 101” was open to the general public and included speakers from industry, Mississippi State University, the nearby Columbus Air Force Base, and the GTR Airport. The primary focus of the event was to bring people together who would be operating aircraft, both manned and unmanned, in the local area.

It is estimated that over one million unmanned aircraft were sold over this past Christmas, and the goal of the seminar was to provide information on FAA rules and regulations, industry trends, hot items in research, and local flying patterns to owners in the area. Mississippi State University is home to the FAA’s Center of Excellence for Unmanned Aircraft. In addition, Columbus Air Force Base is the busiest flying base in the world, with over 300 flights each day operating in the local area.

“This was an outstanding opportunity to bring aviators together from all segments of the industry to discuss how to operate safely,” said Mike Hainsey, GTR Airport’s Executive Director. “This was a huge success.”

The GTR Airport is already planning a follow-up seminar in the fall after the small UAS rules are finalized by the FAA.

For more information contact Mike Hainsey, GTR Airport Executive Director, at 662.327.4422 x201 or mhainsey@gtra.com. Or log onto the website at www.gtra.com.
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Signature Flight Support continues to gather momentum in Europe by expanding into its newest region through the acquisition of a 60% share of Prime Aviation Services S.p.A. from SEA Prime S.p.A., who will remain a 40% shareholder. SEA Prime S.p.A. is 100% owned by SEA S.p.A., the airport manager of Milan Linate and Milan Malpensa.

The newly-refurbished FBO in Milan-Linate (LIML/LIN) and satellite stations in Milan-Malpensa (LIMC/MXP), Rome-Ciampino (LIRA/CIA) and Venice Marco-Polo (LIPZ/VCE) add four locations to Signature’s European network now totaling 31 FBOs in EMEA and 199 globally. Signature Flight Support’s European network is represented in 9 of the top 25 European airports in terms of business and general aviation activity. The FBOs will be fully-branded Signature Flight Support.

The partnership has been formed one year after the relaunch of business aviation by SEA S.p.A. at Milan Linate, the first business aviation airport in Italy with over 22,000 movements per annum. In particular, the relaunch has seen the refurbishment of the General Aviation Terminal in 2015 and is part of investments in excess of 25 million Euros beginning in 2015 through 2020.

Nearly a year ago, Flagler County commissioners approved a name change for the Flagler County Airport.

In line with the planned improvements, longer runway, and an emphasis on attracting corporate jet traffic, the new moniker is Flagler Executive Airport. However, signs at the facility and official documents carry the old name.

Airport Director Roy Sieger said getting approval from county commissioners for the name change was only the first step. Now it’s in the hand of the Federal Aviation Administration.

Sieger said the reason for delay in officially changing the name stems from the FAA wanting to give aviation publications advance notification.

"It’s not really a vetting, but there’s a lot of different publications and these publications come out at different times so (the FAA) waits until it can get published in all of them at the same time," he said.
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Punta Gorda Airport in Florida is the latest airport that has replaced the TSA with private security to improve the flying experience of passengers.

According to ABC, a company called ISS Action will handle security by the summer at the airport.

Pam Seay with the Charlotte County Airport Authority said the decision was made to make security more efficient and maybe even friendlier.

“I believe this will be better. Most people are never going to notice anything,” Seay said.

She also says the move saves the airport money. In addition, private companies can hire more security agents than the government can. Many hope that means a faster line.

Budget cuts at the TSA are really making security lines at airports around the country miserable for everyone.

By Rickey Yaneza, Rickey, LLC

Airport managers in Plant City and Winter Haven said the number of planes passing through their airports increases dramatically during the Sun ‘n Fun Fly-In, now under way at Lakeland Linder Regional Airport through Sunday.

“We’re using the south side of the airport for planes,” said Leo Treggi, manager at Winter Haven’s Gilbert Field, “and we usually don’t use that. It’s on the other side of the airport.”

Cindy Barrow, longtime manager of the city-owned Bartow Municipal Airport, said Thursday that she counted 97 planes parked on that airport’s ramp, with only five or six available spaces left. But when the weather is good, we see a tremendous increase.”

Suzie Schottelkotte, The Ledger
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The government is bringing together top airline and auto company executives to discuss aviation industry practices such as safety data sharing that automakers could adapt to help reduce car accidents, a leading cause of death in America.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Federal Aviation Administration have invited chief executives from major automakers and aviation industry leaders to an April 22 event, according to an invitation reviewed by Reuters that has not been made public.

NHTSA spokesman Bryan Thomas confirmed the event was taking place. General Motors CEO Mary Barra will attend, a spokesman for the automaker said.

Federal regulators are urging automakers to consider an industry-wide collaboration to support safety, modeled on the aviation industry, where airlines share safety data to help identify possible defects in parts.

The meeting is the first of its kind and follows a voluntary safety agreement that 18 major automakers reached in January with the government after weeks of auto safety talks in the face of a series of massive recalls of faulty parts.

Shooting Drones is a Federal Crime

According to the FAA “regardless of the situation, shooting at any aircraft — including unmanned aircraft — poses a significant safety hazard. An unmanned aircraft hit by gunfire could crash, causing damage to persons or property on the ground, or it could collide with other objects in the air.”

To reach this justification, the FAA turned to 18 U.S.C. 32, a law that in part expands “United States jurisdiction over aircraft sabotage to include destruction of any aircraft in the special aircraft jurisdiction of the United States.” That means pilot’s licenses for drone business operators, and it means that when the FAA bans aircraft for miles around the Super Bowl, that ban applies to drones too.

Kelsey D. Atherton, Popular Science
In collaboration with the aviation industry, the FAA approves new renewable jet fuel pathways through ASTM International. It is created from an alcohol called isobutanol that is derived from renewable feed stocks such as sugar, corn or forest wastes.

Other previously approved fuels include:

- Synthesized Iso-parafins (SIP) which convert sugars into jet fuel.
- Hydro-processed Esters and Fatty Acids Synthetic Paraffinic Kerosene (HEFA-SPK), which use fats, oils and greases.
- Fischer-Tropsch Synthetic Paraffinic Kerosene (FT-SPK) and Fischer-Tropsch Synthetic Kerosene with Aromatics (FT-SKA). Both fuels use various sources of renewable biomass such as municipal solid waste, agricultural wastes and forest wastes, wood and energy crops. These fuels can also be made from fossil resources such as coal and natural gas.

After the Boeing 737 made a complete stop at the gate, the flight attendant opened the plane’s front door, deployed the emergency slide, slid out and walked away.

"When we landed ... we were told to stay in our seats as de-planing would take a bit longer," passenger Jonah Vella told local news station Click 2 Houston. "Everything seemed to be pretty standard." According to the station, there was a medical emergency happening at the back of the plane at the same time that diverted passengers' attentions. There were 159 passengers onboard the flight, plus six crew members, including the flight attendant in question.

While the flight attendant’s motive is not immediately clear, United said that they believe the action was done intentionally.

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