

# AVIATION WEEK Airports

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## ! Intelligence

**More carriers at Brussels Airport** are using the fast lane, which offers quicker security screening for business passengers. Introduced in March 2007, the program now has 11 participating airlines. Fast-lane users still undergo the same security screening as all other passengers, but using a special bar code on their boarding passes, they can pass more quickly through security via a separate screening point.

**Chicago O'Hare International Airport** has partnered with the city's Dept. of Cultural Affairs Public Art Program to unveil the new Beacons in the International Terminal 5. Created by artist Steven Heyman, the pair of 16-foot Beacons — one blue and the other orange — are suspended above the exit bays of the terminal's lower level.

**The new Vizzit store** is now open at Amsterdam Schiphol Airport's Pier B. The store allows passengers to make last-minute purchases before boarding their flights. Items available include perfume, liquor, special offers, souvenirs and snacks under the airport's See Fly Buy shopping program.

**Oman Aviation Services (OAS)**, parent of Oman Air, has inked a four-year, \$4.2 million deal with SITA to do IT improvements at Muscat International Airport to cover all essential airport operations including check-in, flight boarding and baggage management. SITA will install and maintain AirportConnect Open, its common use passenger processing system that supports Common Use Terminal Equipment; SITA Bag-Manager for baggage reconciliation; and PassengerHandler, a common software language facility designed for airline and handling agent staff to process passengers at the check-in counter more efficiently.

The McGraw-Hill Companies

## Five Good Questions With SeaTac Airport Director Mark Reis

Mark Reis is the managing director of Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, the 17th busiest passenger airport in the U.S. He was the deputy managing director of Sea-Tac Airport from 2000 to 2004. Before that, he was the general manager of commercial development at Sea-Tac and director of finance for the Port of Seattle, and he has been with the port since 1988.

Before coming to the port, Reis served as executive director at two non-profit organizations, the Northwest Conservation Coalition and the Northwest Renewable Resources Center. From 1978 to 1980, he worked for the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs on energy legislation.

**Aviation Daily:** We've done several stories on the environmentally friendly practices and efforts at SeaTac. Why has this been such a priority for the airport?

**MR:** The airport has a unique opportunity as a public enterprise to do this. We have more cash flow and more discretion than local governments do, on the one hand. On the other hand, as a public agency as opposed to the private sector, we can look over the horizon rather than at quarterly returns. So it puts us in a unique situation to demonstrate leadership and do the right thing. My view is that as a global society, we have no choice but to do something very aggressively and very quickly on global warming. While it's true that aviation's contribution to global warming is relatively small — at 2%-3%, depending on which numbers you look at — and airports are a fraction of that compared to airlines, every industry has to do its piece of the puzzle. We have a political environment in Seattle and Washington State that is very supportive, and that means we have an infrastructure in place that is not available in other parts of the country.

For us to do very aggressive recycling at SeaTac — and we're really pushing the envelope on what airports have done — is relatively painless for us because our community has a huge recycling structure we can tap into. If you're in a city where that infrastructure is not as robust, it's harder for an airport to do it.

**AD:** SeaTac brought in the Clean Airport Partnership to review the airport's environmental efforts. What was the impetus behind doing that and why was it important to bring them in as an independent eye?

**MR:** It wasn't as much an independent eye as an audit to see things maybe we didn't see. We were fairly confident that we were probably more aggressive than most airports, but that isn't to say that we could be sure we knew everything. At the same time, it was worth it to have a sense as to whether or not other airports or industries were comparable. We wanted to know if we were doing things we could learn from or hadn't thought of. On the one hand, we got a good report card that showed we're making progress, and on the other, it was a good opportunity.

*Continued on Page 2*

## Five Good Questions (Cont.)

Now we charge them only for the debt service for the aeronautical side. They don't pay any of the concessions or for the debt service, and they pay no coverage as long as we can meet our obligations, which we think we can do through the term of our agreement. At our discretion, we have the contractual opportunity to use any net income we have over and above what we need for our coverage program to pay for things that the airlines have an obligation to pay for if we want to further reduce their costs. For example, we're paying part of the cost of the Federal Inspection Service (FIS) facility charges to bring them down to market level. The contract requires airlines to pay the full cost of the FIS, but if we did that, it would cost airlines about double what our competitors charge them. So we decided it was not in our self-interest to have higher FIS charges, so we brought them down.

In the summer of 2003, the airlines came to us and said we were overly optimistic on how fast we'd recover from 9/11. The enplanement forecast we had been using that came from them was way too high. When we reduced the enplanement forecast and with our projection of capital program spending and debt servicing, we looked out and said that by 2009, we were expecting our cost per enplanement would be over \$25. We said that just wasn't doable, so we immediately put in place a very aggressive program to bring it down. We initially said we won't let it get above \$18. We wanted to drop it by over 25%. We had a five-part program, including operating costs, capital costs, financing costs and more federal support for the runway, and we got the projections down below \$18 within about a year. When we went to our commission with a projected budget for 2008, we were projecting for 2009 a CPE of less than \$12.50. It's become a way of life for us to constantly look for ways to reduce airlines' costs wherever we can. **-benet\_wilson@aviationweek.com**

## Panama City Eyes Cargo Traffic Growth For New Airport Project

Florida's Panama City-Bay County International Airport is building a new intermodal cargo facility as part of the greenfield airport construction project currently under way.

The airport, which is relocating to a new site located on 4,000 acres of land donated by property development firm The St. Joe Company, is planning to tap into the sharp increase in cargo traffic to the region, said Randy Curtis, executive director of the airport authority. In the past three years, the port of Panama City has gone from handling almost no containers to handling 55,000 containers per year.

The new intermodal facility will connect the port with

rail lines and interstate highways and will be a short distance by road from the new airport, said Jerry Ray, senior VP for strategic alliances for the St. Joe Company.

The facility will be built on several thousand acres and will be connected to the new airport by a road with no overhead obstructions — important in transporting oversized cargo, Ray said.

Panama City hopes to take advantage of its geographical location to tap into the growing trade between the U.S. and South America, particularly with Chile and Peru, Curtis said. From those countries, Panama City offers the most direct air and sea links by distance, he said. And from Panama City, cargo can be trans-shipped to points in the Midwest and South, he added.

The existing airport cannot handle the volume of cargo traffic expected, Curtis said. Hemmed in by the sea on one side and residential and commercial development on the other three, the existing airport has no room to expand and does not comply with FAA runway overrun requirements (AIRPORTS, Oct. 30, 2007).

The new airport, which is expected to open in May next year, will have an 8,400-foot runway, which can be expanded up to 12,000 feet, Curtis said. **-madhu\_unnikrishnan@aviationweek.com**

## Qantas Tests Millimeter Wave Technology At Melbourne Airport

Melbourne Airport is partnering with Qantas to test millimeter wave security technology.

The airline is using a ProVision Portal in its domestic terminal to scan the body and identify all objects concealed on or carried by a traveler. The demonstration is being done to allow for passenger comment on the system, said Geoffrey Askew, Qantas Group's general manager of security.

"Passengers are invited to view and test the equipment on a voluntary basis in order for Qantas to gain customer feedback on this new technology," said Askew.

Passengers walk into the unit and stand in a designated spot for three seconds with arms raised, then leave the unit.

"The millimeter waves used to generate the individual's image are not invasive or harmful. The image created simply resembles an outline of the person and indicates the position of any foreign object," Askew explained. "The face is unrecognizable and sensitive areas of the body are blurred. The security operative is the only person with access to the image and that person is located away from the screening location."

Qantas intends to use the technology at other airports once Melbourne's results are known, said Askew. "This is a major advancement on current technology and will eventually deliver significant improvements for security and the efficient movement of passengers through airport terminals," he added.

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