



ACI-NA Comments to DOT Regarding Contingency Planning Guidelines Document

Airports Council International-North America (ACI-NA) welcomes this opportunity to comment on the “Development of Contingency Plans For Lengthy Airline On-Board Ground Delays” report (Model Plan) prepared by the National Task Force To Develop Model Contingency Plans To Deal With Lengthy Airline On-Board Ground Delays (Task Force). ACI-NA’s members are the state, local and regional government entities that own and operate commercial service airports in the United States and Canada. Our member airports serve more than 95 percent of the U.S. domestic scheduled air passenger and cargo traffic and virtually all U.S. scheduled international air travel.

ACI-NA staff, along with executives from several large and small member airports, were pleased to participate in deliberations led by the Department of Transportation (DOT). It is appropriate that DOT recognized the important role airports play in assisting passengers during lengthy delays, whether those travelers are on the airplane or in the terminal, as both situations have a significant impact on airport operations, facilities and finances. Airport directors have shown they are not only committed to the safety and security of passengers, but also to working with airlines and government officials to ensure that passenger needs are met during extended ground delays.

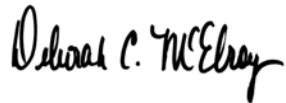
The Task Force should be commended for its success in producing a Model Plan that addresses the majority of issues raised by industry and passenger advocates. Although it is seldom possible to come to complete agreement on a set of divergent opinions, the many presentations and spirited discussion yielded a compromise report that addresses the key concerns. It will help facilitate better planning, communication and coordination among all parties.

Several airports have already moved forward in implementing many of the measures in the Model Plan, even prior to its issuance. Both Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport and Hartsfield Jackson Atlanta International Airport held “diversion workshops” over the last few months to work with their hub airlines and smaller airports that could be affected by delays and diversions. ACI-NA is also planning a series of workshops across the country to brief member airports about the Model Plan and the importance of collaboratively working with airlines, community organizations and federal officials at their airport in the development of contingency plans.

As was amply demonstrated during the Task Force deliberations, only through such successful collaboration, including cooperation from officials with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP), will meaningful progress be made in addressing extended tarmac delays.

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in the Task Force.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah C. McElroy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deborah C. McElroy
Executive Vice President, Policy & External Affairs

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