

Media Release

ACI Airport Service Quality Awards 2008

GENEVA, 10 March 2009 – Airports Council International (ACI) today announced the top performing airports in the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Survey – the most thorough airport customer service benchmarking programme available to airport management teams. The survey captures the passengers' perception of the quality of more than 30 aspects of service that they have experienced at the airport. Interviewing covers every day of the week and every month of the year to ensure coverage of all seasons and all peaks and troughs.

In the category Best Airports Worldwide, and for the fourth year in a row, the top three performing airports in the world were in the Asia-Pacific Region, with Incheon International Airport in South Korea winning the coveted Best Airport Award. Passenger satisfaction with the new Terminal 3 promoted Singapore Changi Airport into 2nd place this year, with Hong Kong International Airport coming in at a close 3rd place.

The top performing airports in other regions were Zurich, Switzerland (Europe), Halifax, Canada (North America), Guayaquil, Ecuador (Latin America & Caribbean), Tel Aviv (Middle East) and George, South Africa (Africa). In the five categories based on annual-passenger traffic size, top honours went to Halifax (less than 5 million), Central Japan (Nagoya) (5-15 million), Taipei (15-25 million), Seoul Incheon (25-40 million) and Hong Kong (over 40 million). The top ranking airports for each category are listed at the end of this release.

To be eligible for the annual rankings, an airport must participate during all four quarters of the year. In 2008, the rankings were based on the results of over 200,000 questionnaires completed by passengers at 108 airports. Thanks to the extensive and regular feedback, the ASQ programme allows airports to immediately reap the benefits of gaining insight into how their passengers rate them, and they can also follow the results of other participating airports around the world.

Director General, Angela Gittens comments, "As the industry benchmark of airport service quality, the ASQ Survey programme is enabling airports to understand and respond to the needs of their passengers. Survey results show that overall passenger satisfaction continues to improve year-on-year. This reflects the importance airports are placing on customer satisfaction and the innovation in services that we are seeing worldwide. The programme continues to grow which demonstrates that airports care very much about their customers, no matter how tough the economic situation."

A reliable monitor of airport service, ASQ is used by many airports as one of the key performance indicators of the airport's service. ASQ data is often linked into service level agreements, key performance indicators, concession agreements, privatisation agreements and remuneration contracts all over the world.

Airport staff are vital for the provision of excellent service, but if there is a fundamental problem with the airport's infrastructure then no people-based initiative will solve that issue. Top airports recognise that the most important aspect of providing great service in an airport is the provision of a spotlessly clean terminal and a relaxed, open, friendly ambience. They also recognise that it is vital to address the basics first. Comfortable waiting areas, good signage and clean, readily accessible washrooms are the most important elements to a passenger, for example. ASQ identifies where the key issues lie.

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Commenting on the Best Improvement Award to Beijing Capital International Airport, Gittens continues, “I am pleased to see that passengers have recognised the considerable efforts that Beijing made in opening a new terminal and enhancing its services during the year and the important role it played in facilitating the very successful Summer Olympic Games. Their success in mobilising the entire airport community in their customer service improvement initiative resulted in significant improvement in passenger satisfaction scores in the ASQ Survey.”

Recognising the central role that airport staff play in the delivery of services to passengers, ACI has established a regional award for the airport which, in the opinion of the passengers, has the most courteous and helpful staff. The Airport People Award winners in 2008 were Southampton (Europe), Incheon (Asia Pacific) and Halifax (North America). In the last special award category, Best Domestic Airport, Central Japan (NGO), Halifax and Ottawa garnered the top places.

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Notes to editors:

(1) Based on the cumulative results of individual ASQ passenger satisfaction surveys, which are completed every month of the year, the programme has been scientifically designed to ensure statistical accuracy. Quarterly reports on performance are provided to the participants during the year. ASQ forums enable the participants to contribute to the on-going enhancement of the programme and to share best practice.

(2) Some of the distinguishing features of the programme include:

- Locally relevant. All airports are able to survey in their own, national language with the choice of over 30 other languages as well.
- On-site airport surveying. Questionnaires are completed with responses from passengers interviewed on the day and at the gate so that their experience is current and immediate.
- Consistent. Every airport uses the same questionnaire.
- Statistically reliable. A minimum of 1,400 passengers per annum are interviewed at each airport.
- Audited. Every year a number of airports are audited by the programme to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the data captured by survey administrators and the ACI management team.
- Impartial. ASQ is not carried out via internet or email, nor is it linked to any kind of prize or other incentive for the interviewees. The survey questionnaire is administered on-site at the departure gate when the full airport experience is still fresh in the passenger's mind.

(3) For full information, please visit the programme website at www.airportservicequality.aero.

(4) Survey results are treated on a confidential basis. The aim of the programme is to allow airports to plan improvements and benchmark their customer services against other airports. It is fair to say that all airports involved in the programme have placed a high priority on customer service, having voluntarily and independently decided to join the programme.

(5) Airports Council International – the ‘voice of the world's airports’ – is the only global trade representative of airports. The 597 members operate 1679 airports in 177 countries and territories, representing 96% of the world's airport traffic.

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ACI 2008 Airport Service Quality Awards

BEST AIRPORTS WORLDWIDE

1) Incheon (ICN) 2) Singapore (SIN) 3) Hong Kong (HKG) 4) Central Japan (NGO) 5) Halifax (YHZ)

BEST AIRPORT BY REGION

Africa

1) George (GRJ)
2) Port Elizabeth (PLZ)
3) Cape Town (CPT)
4) Johannesburg (JNB)
5) Durban (DUR)

Asia-Pacific

1) Incheon (ICN)
2) Singapore (SIN)
3) Hong Kong (HKG)
4) Central Japan (NGO)
5) Taipei (TPE)

Europe

1) Zurich (ZRH)
2) Southampton (SOU)
3) Porto (OPO)
4) Keflavik (KEF)
5) Moscow Domodedovo (DME)

Latin America & Caribbean

1) Guayaquil (GYE)
2) Cancun (CUN)
3) San José (SJO)
4) Mexico City (MEX)
5) Lima (LIM)

Middle East

1) Tel Aviv (TLV)
2) Abu Dhabi (AUH)
3) Doha (DOH)

North America

1) Halifax (YHZ)
2) Ottawa (YOW)
3) Austin (AUS)
4) Houston Hobby (HOU)
5) Jacksonville (JAX)

BEST AIRPORT BY SIZE OF AIRPORT

fewer than 5 million passengers

1) Halifax (YHZ)
2) Ottawa (YOW)
3) Guayaquil (GYE)
4) George (GRJ)
5) Southampton (SOU)

5 – 15 million passengers

1) Central Japan (NGO)
2) Tel Aviv (TLV)
3) Austin (AUS)
4) Houston Hobby (HOU)
5) Jacksonville (JAX)

15 – 25 million passengers

1) Taipei (TPE)
2) Zurich (ZRH)
3) San Diego (SAN)
4) Moscow Domodedovo (DME)
5) Vancouver (YVR)

25 – 40 million passengers

1) Incheon (ICN)
2) Singapore (SIN)
3) Minneapolis St. Paul (MSP)
4) Detroit Metropolitan (DTW)
5) Shanghai Pudong (PVG)

over 40 million

1) Hong Kong (HKG)
2) Dallas Fort Worth (DFW)
3) Beijing (PEK)
4) Denver (DEN)
5) Bangkok Suvarnabhumi (BKK)

BEST DOMESTIC AIRPORT

1) Central Japan (NGO)
2) Halifax (YHZ)
3) Ottawa (YOW)

AIRPORT PEOPLE AWARDS

Europe: Southampton (SOU)
Asia-Pacific: Incheon (ICN)
North America: Halifax (YHZ)

BEST IMPROVEMENT

Beijing Capital International Airport (PEK)

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