



**COMMISSION
AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

Item No. 7b

BRIEFING ITEM

Date of Meeting June 11, 2019

DATE: June 5, 2019
TO: Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director
FROM: Lance Lyttle, Managing Director Aviation
Kathy Roeder, External Relations Communications Director
SUBJECT: Airport Passenger Travel Awareness Summer 2019 Briefing

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (SEA) is projected to continue record-setting passenger volumes this summer with several days of record breaking travelers using the airport access roads, passing through the main terminal checkpoints and being processed through the international arrivals facility. The purpose of this briefing is to provide information to the public about what the Port of Seattle is doing to prepare for the peak season and how travelers can get the best possible experience at the airport this summer.

ACTION SUMMARY

The Port has developed and will execute an integrated plan of operational efficiencies, strategic communication and direct customer assistance to provide the safest and best customer travel experience possible during an anticipated busy summer season.

Operational Efficiencies

1. Access Roads/Parking

The highest operational priority this summer for providing a smooth travel experience begins on the access roads and in the parking facility. Port staff has been monitoring and providing mitigation relief during peak periods of the day to assist travelers with a smooth transition from vehicle to terminal. Staff messaging to the traveling public includes:

- a. **Use alternatives for driving** to the airport. Take light rail, public transit, taxis, airport shuttles or ride-share vehicles. Public transportation is by far the best option if you want to stay out of a traffic jam. Use Link Light Rail to travel all the way to the airport or meet your party at one of the nearby stations. Tukwila and Angle Lake stations offer free parking one stop away to avoid airport traffic headaches. Electric

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carts are also available for those who may need the extra help from the station to the airport terminal.

- b. **Arrive early!** Travelers are encouraged to leave plenty of time to get to the airport, check in for their flight, and clear security. Screening lanes experience unpredictable spikes in congestion. ***Plan on arriving at the airport at least two hours in advance for a domestic flight, and three hours for international travel.***

2. Main Terminal

- a. The Port of Seattle and Sea-Tac Airline Consortium are committing resources toward additional staffing to enable the TSA to prioritize its staffing for dedicated screening functions. The Port has invested almost \$3.62 million to provide more efficient screening equipment with the use of nine Automated Screening Lanes, with two of these lanes being completed on May 18. Construction is also underway for two additional security lanes; one at Checkpoint #4 to be completed by June 14, and one at Checkpoint #1 to be completed by July 3. Other operational improvements include a better distribution of passengers throughout the terminal and improved passenger queue wait times for Pre-Check (#1 and #4) and General Screening (#2, #3 and #5).
- b. Key performance metrics include: a general screening *average* wait time less than 20 minutes and a Pre-Check screening wait time less than 15 minutes.

3. Federal Inspection Services (FIS)

- a. During peak periods, we continue to focus on reducing stress and physical discomfort for passengers with enhanced information tools, more personal assistance to customers and an improved waiting environment (e.g., cooler, cleaner, water).
- b. CBP and the Port have been utilizing the Reimbursable Services Program (RSP) agreement funding monthly to provide additional staff during the peak period of the day. Improvements have been noticeable with reduced “hold on board” events and reduced wait times for passengers holding in the international corridor.
- c. Additional contract customer service staff have been hired and deployed to assist passengers and baggage through the federal processing requirements.
- d. Key performance metrics include: a maximum connection time (MCT) of 90 minutes between the FIS and a connecting flight.

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Communications/Direct Customer Assistance

Sea-Tac will employ numerous communication channels to create clear customer expectations in advance of and during the travel journey about conditions at the Airport, including in the terminal and with roadways/parking. In addition to the communications plan, significant resources are dedicated to direct assistance for customers navigating the terminal provided by customer service staff representatives, short-term and contracted customer service staff support, and with Airport Volunteers.

Throughout the terminal passengers will see customer service videos and slide shows reinforcing tips for efficient travel, highlighting the latest Sea-Tac amenities, and building excitement for projects coming soon.

At the current Federal Inspections Services (FIS) passengers will see newly installed large screen kiosks with customer service instructions about how to clear customs, retrieve baggage, and transfer or exit the airport in multiple languages. The screens will also show renderings of the new IAF, coming in summer 2020.

At the current FIS baggage claim area, new large video screens installed over baggage claim carousels will show similar customer service messages to assist transferring and arriving passengers, and show renderings of the new IAF, coming in summer 2020.

The Port's External Relations Communications team will run a summer campaign with three goals:

1. Build excitement for new amenities and services at Sea-Tac
2. Provide tips for airport users to have the most rewarding travel experience possible
3. Educate the public on Port actions to make travel more efficient, sustainable, and personally rewardable, while expanding economic opportunities
4. Provide information in several languages using the various ethnic media channels under contract and add new ones, as appropriate.

Priority calls to action for the summer campaign are:

1. Download the app for an interactive airport map and real-time checkpoint wait times.
2. Security checkpoint wait times are unpredictable. Get here two hours ahead of time for a domestic flight and three hours for an international flight.
3. Pack carry-ons appropriately to avoid delays with re-screening. Electronics larger than a cell phone must be removed from carry-on luggage and limit carry-on food items for faster screening.

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4. Avoid driving to the airport. Link light rail is by far the best option if you want to stay out of a traffic jam. Public transit, taxis, airport shuttles or ride-share vehicles are other great alternatives for driving to the airport. If you must drive, think opposite. In the morning, drop off passengers on the Arrivals level. In the evenings, arrange to meet your passengers on the Departures level. Going opposite gets you out of the traffic crunch.
5. Heed the pathfinder. The shortest lane is not always the fastest.

The campaign utilizes milestone moments this summer and continues with media tours, Port blog posts, and paid promotions.

Major milestones and media tours:

- May -- Puget Sound Business Journal and KIRO media tour of ongoing capital projects (Completed)
- June 4 -- Launch marketing campaign to “say goodnight” to the old N gates. Includes social media promotion and passenger giveaways.
- June 11 – Kick off to summer travel press release and interviews
- *Date TBD North Satellite grand opening event and media tour*
- July 5 – Kick off to a “ride-the-cart” promotional campaign developed in coordination with Sound Transit. Creative collateral will appear on light rail trains and in Sea-Tac terminal.
- July 9 – Sea-Tac Airport 70th birthday announcement and events (still being developed)
- Late July -- Blogger and food influencer tour featuring Washington food and beverages at the airport
- TBD Blogger and small business influencer tours of women and minority-owned businesses at the airport
- Early September – IAF Passenger bridge installation

Port blogs and paid promotions will highlight traveler tools that can make a trip more efficient and enjoyable. Examples include:

- **Use the Apps!** Check out the new [Sea-Tac Airport App](#) to watch security checkpoint wait times, search for your flight, find yourself on the terminal map, and search for restaurants, lounges, the meditation room or your favorite retail store. The app is available on iPhones and Android. Also, use [multiple other apps](#) to help you navigate and enjoy the airport.
- **Sign up for text alerts.** Get text updates about what's happening at the airport by texting "Update" to 206-347-8045.
- **Sign up for free and paid Trusted Traveler Programs** such as TSA PreCheck, Global Entry and CLEAR to get you through the lines faster. These [expedited security programs](#) help

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for both domestic and international travel, including a faster way through customs with [Automated Passport Control and Mobile Passport Control](#).

- **Blind and low vision travelers** can try [new assistive technology with Aira](#), with the Port providing free connection service while at the airport.
- **Cruise passengers can explore Seattle luggage free.** Passengers sign up for the complimentary Port Valet program while on their cruise, then receive their airline boarding pass before leaving the ship. With a boarding pass in hand, and without their luggage, passenger wait time for elevators is reduced along with congestion at the check-in counters for all Sea-Tac passengers.
- **New options for traveling with pets!** Three new pet relief areas are installed inside the terminal for easier customer access and compliant with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). You can find them in the North and South Satellite and Central Terminal near Concourse B. Check our website for an [up-to-date map and info](#).
- **More amenities for traveling parents!** Sea-Tac has seven [nursing suites](#) throughout the airport.
- **Be sure to check with the City of SeaTac** to see if there are any road construction projects that might hinder your access to the airport.
- **Avoid driving to the airport if you can.** Here's why and [what to expect](#) from the Port of Seattle Police. Port of Seattle Police officers will patrol the Airport Expressway to prevent motorists from parking on the shoulder, and Traffic Support Specialists will be deployed on the Arrivals and Departure drives to assist with traffic flow. If you do drive, park at the [Sea-Tac Airport garage](#) and walk into the terminal.
- **Be ready for security checkpoints.** Once travelers get to the airport, Sea-Tac and its partners in the Transportation Security Administration want to help you move through [security checkpoints](#) as quickly as possible. Enhanced security measures now in effect at Sea-Tac and airports nationwide require travelers to remove electronics larger than a cell phone from their carryon luggage.
- **Be thoughtful with food.** Sea-Tac recommends that unless you plan on eating food at the airport or on your flight, consider packing your holiday treats in your checked luggage. Keeping food or liquids in your carry-on luggage might have to be screened twice.
- **Take pathfinder advice.** The shortest line might not be the fastest line. Checkpoints with more lanes might have longer lines but can process passengers through security more quickly.

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- **Something new every 90 days:** Dramatic improvements are coming soon through the [North Satellite Modernization](#), [International Arrivals Facility](#) and [Central Terminal Renovation Project](#), and one you don't see, the [Baggage System Upgrade](#).

ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING

Presentation slides

PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS

None