



SEPTEMBER 2004

FEATURE ARTICLE

Global Trend in Passenger Traffic mirrored at Hartsfield-Jackson

By Debra Dixon

Air travel continues to rise globally, and there is no exception at the world's busiest passenger airport. From through June 2004, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport served more than 41 million international air passengers, an 8.21 percent increase compared to the same period last year.

While Hartsfield-Jackson accommodated 80 million passengers in 2000, for the first time since 9/11, the airport is to exceed previous levels with 85 million passengers by year-end. "Our original forecast for this year was 80 million passengers, but the first six months of operations made it clear that we would surpass that figure, and we are now forecasting 87.9 million passengers in 2005," said Aviation Deputy General Manager, Mario Diaz.

Hartsfield-Jackson has also seen a 15.77 percent increase in international passenger traffic above 2003 rates. In the 1996 Summer Olympic Games the airport has experienced increases in international passenger traffic by 15 percent.

"The growth of the Hispanic, Brazilian, and Central American community in Atlanta is a major contributing factor to the growth of international travel," said Manuel DeBarros, protocol officer for Hartsfield-Jackson. "When United Airlines moved their Latin American hub in Miami, a lot of travel was redirected to Atlanta."

"After Mexico City, Atlanta is the most important gateway for Aeromexico Airlines," DeBarros continued. "The addition of SkyTeam, a global airline alliance, has directed a significant European market into Hartsfield-Jackson, and passenger traffic has increased dramatically as a result of that change as well."

Hartsfield-Jackson expects to serve more passengers in the future as global air travel continues to thrive.

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