

SIA on major expansion to meet passenger growth

Montego Bay - December 19, 2023 – Faced with the need to cope with increasing passenger traffic, the Sangster International Airport (SIA) in Montego Bay is undergoing further expansion.

Under the management of MBJ Airports Limited (MBJ), SIA is now in its 20th year of the concession and according to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of National Security, Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, “About US\$500 million has been invested in the Montego Bay Airport to ensure that we have an airport of international standard and can accommodate all visitors coming here and keep the growth of the tourist industry in place.”

The Passport Immigration and Citizenship Agency (PICA) falls under Dr. Chang’s portfolio of responsibility and included in the expansion is further build out of the arrivals section, increasing the size of the Immigration area at a cost of US\$18 million for more circulation space.

Accompanied by a ribbon cutting ceremony, ground was broken for the Immigration and Outbound Security expansion by a team of officials that included Hon. Dr. Horace Chang, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of National Security Member of Parliament for North West St. James); Hon Daryl Vaz, Minister of Science, Energy, Telecommunications and Transport; Mr Mark Hart, Chairman of Airports Authority of Jamaica (AAJ); Mr. Audley Deidrick, President and CEO of the AAJ; Councillor Richard Vernon, Deputy Mayor of Montego Bay; Senator Janice Allen, Opposition Spokesperson on Tourism; David Pratt, Principal – PRT Group Inc.; Shane Munroe, CEO – MBJ Airports Limited; and Odette Dyer, Regional Director – Jamaica Tourist Board (representing the Hon. Edmund Bartlett, Minister of Tourism).

Mr. Shane Munroe, CEO of MBJ Airports Limited, outlined a slew of other improvements currently being undertaken at the airport, including a new departures loop separating arriving and departing passengers, expansion of the check-in area, new screening lanes for outbound security. The area at Gates 6 and 7 will be expanded with the addition of a new ramp and renovation of this space with new tiles and ceiling.

Additionally, a new elevator is to be added at Gate 8 to improve passenger facilitation. Mr. Munroe also disclosed that the Air-Sea Lounge for passengers

flying in to board cruises is also being refurbished and will be ready for use during the current winter tourist season.

A passenger experience transformation was taking place and earlier this year MBI launched its MBI CX (Customer Experience) programme which Mr. Munroe described as a major initiative that started with staff but was now moving to include all stakeholders at the airport who will have to do CX training before getting their security pass.

Mr Deidrick disclosed that up to this year, capital injection in the airport amounted to over US\$300 million and MBI “is now embarking on three major capital programmes under its current Master Plan, estimated at over US\$100 million,” excluding the US\$70 million now being spent by the AAJ/Government of Jamaica through the Airport Improvement Fund for the runway extension, which, he said, was practically completed and in operation.

“With projected growth in tourism which will drive airport traffic growth and hence demand capacity for SIA, another master plan is currently being developed to take SIA beyond the current concession term which ends in 2033,” he said.



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About Sangster International Airport:

Sangster International Airport (IATA: MBJ, ICAO: MKJS) is an international airport located 3 mi (4.8 km) east of Montego Bay, Jamaica. The airport is capable of handling nine million passengers per year. It serves as the most popular airport for tourists visiting the north coast of Jamaica. The airport is named after former Jamaican Prime Minister Sir Donald Sangster.

About MBJ Airports Limited:

MBJ Airports Limited, the operator of Sangster International Airport (SIA), connects Jamaica to more than 60 international destinations. A record 4.7m passengers used the airport in 2019. MBJ operates SIA under a 30-year concession awarded in 2003. The airport provides employment to more than 7,500 persons. SIA has been named the Caribbean's Leading Airport by World Travel Awards for 15 years.