

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

One Year Post-Melissa, Sangster International Cops Caribbean's Leading Airport Again

MBJ extends its winning streak to 18 consecutive years and 19 titles overall

MONTEGO BAY, JAMAICA - OCTOBER 12, 2026: Less than a year after Hurricane Melissa forced its closure, Sangster International Airport (SIA) has been named the Caribbean's Leading Airport 2026 by the World Travel Awards (WTA). The award, presented at the WTA Caribbean & The Americas Gala Ceremony at Princess Grand Jamaica, on Sunday, October 11, 2026, extends the airport's winning streak to 18 consecutive years and brings its total to 19 titles.

The recognition comes weeks before the first anniversary of the Category 5 hurricane - the strongest ever to make landfall in Jamaica on October 28, 2025.



SIA Again! - Hon. Edmund Bartlett (c), Minister of Tourism, Graham Cooke (4th right), Founder of the World Travel Awards (WTA), Shane Munroe (3rd right), CEO of MBI and members of the MBI Leadership Team (l-r) Natawah Dixon, Manager - Security; Sherifia Powell, Chief Financial Officer; Benton Allen, Manager - Emergency Response Service; Camille Royes, Legal Counsel; Sharon Hislop-Holt, Manager - Commercial Business Development and Marketing, and Peter Hall, Chief Operations Officer pause for a photo op after MBI copped their 19th Caribbean's Leading Airport award at the WTA Caribbean & The Americas Gala Ceremony at Princess Grand Jamaica, on Sunday, October 11, 2026.



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“Last October, we were navigating a very challenging, life-changing period in the aftermath of the hurricane. This October, we are accepting the region's leading airport award,” said Shane Munroe, Chief Executive Officer of MBJ Airports Limited (MBJ). “We accept this unprecedented honour with great humility, especially after being able to quickly restore the facilities and experience for passengers after Hurricane Mellissa. This is a result of the incredible collaborative work done by all members of our Team Sangster family - our team, our airlines, government agencies and the partners who stood with us.”

Restoring Airlift to Western Jamaica

SIA handles over 70 percent of Jamaica's passengers, and its reopening was central to restarting the tourism economy in Montego Bay and surrounding parishes. Since the storm, MBJ has worked with airline partners to restore and grow service, with 26 airlines now serving 47 destinations.

Over the past year, MBJ's commitment to growing air service connectivity has been reflected in several key route developments, including Wingo Airlines' services from Bogotá and Medellín, Colombia; Flair Airlines from Toronto; and WestJet from Québec City and Montréal, Canada. These additions strengthen Jamaica's air connectivity with Canada and South America, creating new opportunities for tourism, trade and regional travel.

Additional services are scheduled to commence before the end of 2026 further strengthening SIA's route network. These include Porter Airlines' services from Hamilton, Ottawa, and London, Canada; and Breeze Airways from Tampa, Florida. These new connections will broaden travel options between Jamaica, Canada and the United States while supporting continued market diversification and growth.

Through strategic collaboration with airline partners and tourism stakeholders, MBJ remains committed to expanding airlift, strengthening international access and positioning Sangster International Airport as a leading gateway to Jamaica and a vital link to the wider world.

“Visitors can't return without airlift, and every flight we brought back was crucial for hotels, attractions, transport operators and small businesses,” Munroe highlighted. “SIA is the main gateway to Jamaica, so reconnecting Jamaica to its markets was our first priority.”

Investing in the Next Phase

Before the storm, MBJ outlined several transformation projects including the expansion of the check-in area, Immigration Hall, East Concourse, parking and outbound security, alongside the implementation of full biometric processing on departures. Munroe stated that all projects were back on track with the Caribbean's Leading Airport looking to deliver the next level of excellence to its users.





Coming Soon - Rendering of future Departures Promenade at Sangster International Airport

Caring for Passengers and Community

Sharon Hislop-Holt, Manager, Commercial Business Development and Marketing at MBJ, said the award reflects Team Sangster's steady commitment to supporting their passengers and one another.

“We have very dedicated team members who take a lot of pride in serving our passengers. This was demonstrated throughout the year and came to the fore after the hurricane. Even as staff dealt with loss or damage to their own homes, they showed up for work and made certain that every passenger who walked through our doors was cared for,” said Hislop-Holt.

That support also reached neighbouring communities. The MBJ Foundation presented J\$30 million in grants from its 2025 Charity Run/Walk to 184 secondary and tertiary students from western Jamaica and three institutions. J\$15 million of the proceeds was earmarked for rebuilding hurricane-damaged schools, supported by additional funds from MBJ's shareholders, Grupo Aeroportuario del Pacífico (GAP) and Vantage Airport Group.

Munroe said the airport's responsibility now is to “continue living up to the recognition while enhancing the Caribbean's leading gateway. To every member of our airport community, thank you.”

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Link to Photos: [WTA - SIA Cops Caribbean's Leading Airport Award](#)

Photo Captions:

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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. Named after former Jamaican Prime Minister Sir Donald Sangster, the Airport is capable of handling nine million passengers per year and serves as the most popular airport for tourists visiting Jamaica. SIA has been named the Caribbean's Leading Airport by World Travel Awards for the 19th year.

About MBJ Airports:

MBJ Airports Limited, the operator of Sangster International Airport, connects Jamaica to more than 60 international destinations. A record 5.267m passengers used the Airport in 2024. MBJ operates SIA under a 30-year concession awarded in 2003 and the Airport provides employment to more than 7,500 persons.



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