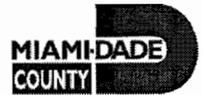


Memorandum



DATE: April 8, 2008

TO: Honorable Chairman Bruno A. Barreiro
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

FROM: George M. Burgess
County Manager 

SUBJECT: Report on the Feasibility and Fiscal Impact of Locating a Mini Police/Fire Station to House the Existing Police and Fire Units Closer to the Terminal at Miami International Airport

Agenda Item No.
12(B)3

This report is provided as directed by the Board of County Commissioners at the Airport and Tourism Committee on January 17, 2008 regarding the feasibility of locating and staffing a Police/Fire Mini Station at Miami International Airport (MIA) closer to the terminal. Additional information is provided on the feasibility of upgrading the K-9 facility at MIA, in response to questions by Commissioner Heyman concerning the existing facility located there.

Since January 17th, Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD), the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue (MDFR), and the Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD) have been collaborating on locating and staffing a Police/Fire Mini Station at MIA. This Mini Station would consist of a workstation for staff within the terminal (at Concourse F) and a docking area to charge the mobile fire rescue cart used by MDFR.

Fiscal Impact

Refurbishing the area in Concourse F for the workstation is estimated to cost \$14,200. Staff costs are substantially higher. If the Mini Station is staffed seven days per week for police and fire services, the estimated cost is \$713,994 (\$449,994 – MDFR; \$264,000 – MDPD). In this scenario, MDFR would provide two response teams with a Fire Lieutenant and a Firefighter per team working four 10-hour days, and MDPD would provide two full-time officers, 12-hours each day.

An alternative scenario would be to provide shorter personnel hours for the rescue cart and use the Mini Station as an in-terminal work area for MDPD staff already assigned to MDAD.

Background on Police/Fire Operations

The Airport Fire Rescue Division has been providing in-terminal rescue service since 1995 using a rescue cart staffed with two personnel, a Fire Lieutenant and a Firefighter in service during peak hours, usually when passenger travel was the busiest, between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. After a few years, the two-person staff was transferred from the rescue cart to a fire suppression Quick Response Vehicle (QRV) unit 24 hours a day because the staff and the vehicle were needed to respond to aircraft incidents on the north side of the airfield, after the new runway was completed, and to respond to fire incidents in the airport garage. At that time, the rescue cart in the terminal was staffed when personnel were available.

In 2006, the rescue cart staging area was displaced due to the installation of a new Transportation Security Agency (TSA) security checkpoint in the same area of the terminal. When the staging area was moved, MDFR had been staffing the station for less than 150 days per year. Due to reducing budgets and a decrease in passenger travel as a result of the terrorist attacks on 9/11, the full-time staffing for this unit was eliminated.

As passenger travel increased, the need to staff the rescue cart during peak hours was reestablished. Up to 87,700 passengers travel daily through MIA on most weekdays and approximately 100,000 passengers on weekends and holidays. In 2007, the fire rescue cart was staffed for approximately 140 days and responded to approximately 320 calls during that period. MDFR's projections indicate that

they would respond to approximately 800 fire rescue calls if staffed every day of the year. Currently, the rescue cart is staffed at 2007 levels.

In 1978, the Airport District (Police District 7) was dedicated. Since then, MDPD has provided uniformed officers and investigative services to MIA. The MDPD currently staffs and patrols the terminals with 113 uniformed officers conducting investigations, providing visible foot, bicycle, canine, traffic and vehicle patrol the airport property, including the triangle area east of LeJeune Road, full-time, 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, and 365 days/year. Officers are assigned to the parking lots, air operations areas (officers are certified and cleared), all concourses, patrol vehicles, and conduct walking patrols throughout the exterior and interiors of terminal facilities. For the last six years, MDPD has operated out of a full service police station located on the Airport property at Building 3033, which is not within the terminal concourse(s). Prior to that there was a Mini Station located in the Flamingo parking garage.

Given the close proximity of the full service station at MIA, the most efficient use of the proposed MDAD terminal Mini Station would be to provide MDPD with a dedicated work space for officers already assigned to the terminal, as opposed to assigning an officer full-time to the workstation. The workstation would provide officers a place to render customer oriented services such as completing reports, giving directions, and promoting a safe and secure environment through visible police presence. If a victim needs to be interviewed, law enforcement assistance is sought, or a subject is temporarily detained, the workstation can be effectively used without having to travel to the full-service police station. Signage would be posted throughout the concourses, instructing travelers to phone for assistance. The phone would connect to the full service police station, where staff is always available to answer. The nearest officer within the terminal would then be dispatched to the Mini Station.

The workstation approach provides administrative efficiency. MDPD anticipates a decrease in response times and increased patrol times, since officers would not have to leave the terminal to complete paperwork as they do now. A centrally located in-terminal staging area for the mobile fire rescue cart would also decrease response times. The workstation would also help to make a good impression on the travelers who see it, and those we serve, emphasizing that MIA considers public safety a priority.

K-9 Unit Kennel Expansion

MDPD and MDAD have discussed establishing a refurbished canine kennel facility at the airport to provide better service. A kennel expansion is currently in design and will be located next to the existing police station (Building 3033). A walk through was conducted by MDPD last month that allowed pre-qualified vendors to develop a scope of work and cost estimates for the project. The expansion of the kennel would not increase the staff costs for MDPD since the number of personnel and police dogs would remain the same.

Police Services at the Miami Intermodal Center (MIC)

The approach to providing police services to the MIC would be similar to the workstation approach at the MIA terminal Mini Station. MDPD staff members currently assigned to the geographical area would be assigned to patrol the inside of the MIC, when completed, and work from a workstation inside the complex. Under this scenario, no increased staff would be needed and MDPD would provide service to this facility from the full-service Airport Police Station. The geographic area outside of the MIC would be assigned to the Midwest Station, unless districts are realigned differently.


Assistant County Manager