Memorandum

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Date:	February 2, 2016
To:	Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime and Members, Board of County Commissioners
From:	Carlos A. Gimenez Mayor
Subject:	Customs and Border Patrol Operations at Miami International Airport – Directive 151751

February 17, 2016
Agenda Item No. 2B2

This memorandum is in response to a request by Commissioner Rebeca Sosa at the September 1, 2015 Board of County Commissioners (Board) meeting for a report on the Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) operations at Miami International Airport (MIA).

MIA enjoys a strong level of cooperation and partnership amongst the airport, airlines, community businesses, and federal government agencies. Stakeholders have taken significant steps to improve the international arrivals process such as upgrading signage, promoting trusted traveler programs, improving facilities, utilizing Ambassadors to assist passengers, and adopting innovative technologies like the Automated Passport Control (APC) kiosks. While much has been accomplished, the Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD) recognizes the need to continue its collaborative relationships with stakeholders to effectively manage increasing passenger volume with finite resources and limited budgets. Daily operational meetings, weekly planning meetings, and monthly international arrivals-specific discussions reinforce the commitment among all stakeholders.

During this summer's peak season (June to August 2015), international arriving passengers at MIA grew by nearly eight (8) percent to more than 2 million. During peak hours, from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., 2,500 to 3,500 passengers were processed per hour in the "D" Federal Inspection Services (D-FIS) area alone. MDAD planned to unveil a new signage package in mid-December 2015 aimed at improving the flow in these areas. Working collaboratively with CBP, MDAD has since maximized use of APC kiosks by all eligible travelers using queue management techniques in the D-FIS area. The combination of improved signage, ambassador engagement, and queue management should increase APC usage, particularly among returning Visa Waiver travelers.

Approximately 50 percent of MIA's passengers still require a full interview process by a CBP officer at an inspection booth. This is higher than other major U.S. international gateways due to the demographics of MIA passengers. The use of automated processing for international arriving passengers has and will be the main strategy used to improve the international arrival experience at MIA. In addition to these automated means of passenger processing, MDAD spent $1.528 million in operational funds in FY 2014 - 15 to pay for CBP overtime under a joint program with CBP called the 560 Reimbursable Program. MDAD has allocated $6 million to reduce long wait times.

The five (5) initiatives listed below expedite the handling of international passengers:

Global Entry
Today, almost six (6) percent of all arriving passengers use one (1) of the 16 Global Entry kiosks. The Global Entry program requires passengers to register and undergo a rigorous background check to expedite CBP entry into the United States.

Automated Passport Control
MIA also has 108 APC kiosks serving 7,000 to 12,000 non-registered passengers daily. Instead of filling out a paper Customs declaration form, eligible passengers not requiring visas can proceed directly to the APC kiosks in the passport control area. Travelers are prompted to scan their passport, take a photograph using the kiosk, and answer a series of questions verifying biographic and flight information. Once passengers have completed the series of questions and submitted their Customs declaration form, a receipt is issued. Travelers then bring their passport and receipt to a CBP officer to finalize their inspection for entry into the United States. MDAD is currently processing approximately 41 percent of all arriving passengers using APC kiosks.

Mobile Passport Control
In February 2015, MIA became the second U.S. airport to roll out Mobile Passport Control (MPC). Today, MIA processes 400 to 700 passengers daily with MPC. Under this program, eligible travelers with a smartphone or tablet download the MPC app from the Apple App Store or Google Play Store. Travelers are then prompted to create a profile via the app with their passport information, including the traveler's name, gender, date of birth, and country of citizenship. Upon landing in the United States, travelers complete the "New Trip" section by selecting their arrival airport and airline, taking a self-photo, and answering a series of Customs declaration questions. Once the traveler submits the Customs declaration form through the app, an electronic receipt is issued with an encrypted Quick Response (QR) code. This receipt expires four (4) hours after being issued. Travelers then bring their passport and mobile device with their digital bar-coded receipt to a CBP officer to finalize their inspection for entry into the United States.

International to International Baggage
This summer the Department worked with CBP and the airlines to implement an International to International (ITI) baggage program to allow passengers arriving from an international destination with a connecting flight to another international destination to exit CBP without claiming their baggage and having to re-check it with the airline. On a daily basis, 1,000 to 2,500 ITI bags are transferred without having to be picked up in the baggage area, reducing overall congestion. Approximately 40 to 45 percent of the international arriving passengers in the D-FIS area need to make connecting flights within 90 minutes.

Quick-Connect Service
Working with CBP and the airlines, MDAD implemented in August 2015 a quick-connect service at peak times and expedited more than 3,000 connecting passengers through the CBP process. In these instances, airlines identify passengers who have short connection windows and direct them to an express lane.

There are two (2) initiatives scheduled to be implemented in FY 2016 that will substantially expedite the CBP process for arrivals.

(1) The modified egress from baggage control is expected to eliminate the checkpoint bottleneck and allow passengers to exit with their bags without having to pass through a checkpoint unless they are identified by a CBP officer and referred for a secondary examination.

(2) The B1 (traveling for business) and B2 (traveling for pleasure) visa processing at APC kiosks is used for passengers travelling for business and/or tourist purposes. This process allows passengers arriving on tourist and business visas to process at one of the 108 APC kiosks. This initiative will increase the number of passengers using an automated process from 70 to 80 percent.

Through its professionalism campaign in FY 2015, CBP has worked to ensure all employees understand and maintain the highest level of professional, moral, and ethical standards in their interactions with each other and the traveling public. CBP has placed great emphasis on integrity and professionalism, taking allegations of employee misconduct very seriously and instituting policies to address it. Complaints of unprofessional conduct are recorded and investigated, and the appropriate action is taken against CBP officers who are found to have violated policy. Since 2008, when MIA became one of 20 model ports in the U.S., CBP has maintained a dedicated team of Professionalism Service Managers at MIA to provide an additional layer of accountability, and to address verbal and written complaints not resolved at the front-line supervisory level.

If you have further questions regarding this information, please contact MDAD Director Emilio T. González at (305) 876-7077.

Pursuant to Ordinance 14-65, this memorandum will be placed on the next available Board meeting agenda.

c: Abigail Price-Williams, County Attorney
Jack Osterholt, Deputy Mayor, Office of the Mayor
Emilio González, Director, Aviation Department
Charles Anderson, Commission Auditor
Eugene Love, Agenda Coordinator