

# Memorandum



**Date:** February 2, 2016

**To:** Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime  
and Members, Board of County Commissioners

**From:** Carlos A. Gimenez  
Mayor 

**Subject:** Baggage Handling System at Miami International Airport – Directive 151751

February 17, 2016  
Agenda Item No. 2B3

The following memorandum is in response to a request by Commissioner Dennis C. Moss during the September 1, 2015 Board of County Commissioners meeting for a report on the Baggage Handling System (BHS) and the efficiency of baggage delivery at Miami International Airport (MIA). This report also addresses the request by Commissioner Jose “Pepe” Diaz for information on the linkage of the BHS among MIA’s three (3) Terminals.

The amount of time it takes for a bag to leave the airplane and reach the pick-up carousel is proprietary airline information that is not shared with the Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD). However, there has been a noticeable improvement in the last six (6) months in baggage delivery based on a decrease in customer complaints, meetings with baggage handlers, and operations personnel observations. MDAD continues to discuss service-related issues in airline forums at the MIA in an attempt to further enhance service. MDAD received only six (6) complaints on delivery of baggage from October 2014 to October 2015.

The North and South Terminal BHS have no direct impact on the delivery of baggage for those customers that choose Miami as their final destination. The BHS is in place to handle outbound flights and, in many cases, the baggage of transferring passengers through MIA. MDAD is currently designing and building the South and Central BHS, which will link the two (2) terminals. At this point, there are no plans to link them to the North Terminal BHS.

The process for incoming baggage delivery for both domestic and international arriving flights is a manual offload of the aircraft by either the airline or the airlines’ General Aeronautical Service Provider (GASP). In a wide-body aircraft configuration, checked baggage is loaded in a container and moved into the plane. When the flight arrives, the baggage is taken in those containers to the baggage carousels for delivery to passengers. In a narrow-body aircraft configuration, each bag is removed separately, placed in a cart, and taken to the carousels for delivery.

Most of the airlines have delivery standards that range from 20 minutes for the first bag to 40 minutes for the last bag. In most cases, those standards are met; however, due to factors that impact the delivery of baggage such as weather, distance from carousel devices, ground equipment, and manpower, there are instances when delivery exceeds these standards.

American Airlines has an automated system to record when bags are offloaded from the aircraft and when they are placed on the carousel for delivery to passengers. All of the other carriers are handled by an airlines’ GASP with limited automation in place to record delivery. In the near future, automation

Honorable Chairman Jean Monestime  
And Members, Board of County Commissioners  
Page 2

solutions will be phased in to provide passengers with real-time information on their bags during every step of their journey.

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

Pursuant to Ordinance 14-65, this memorandum will be placed on the next available Committee 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