

LOUIS ARMSTRONG  
NEW ORLEANS  
INTERNATIONAL  
AIRPORT

October  
2009

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# Airport

## Saving Lives with Construction

By Patricia Malone, Interim Director of Aviation

As I have reported over the last several months, the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport is undergoing a modernization facelift with a \$357 million dollar Capital Improvement Program. Three projects of that program are critical life safety projects. The projects include a \$17 million hardened, flood-resistant utility building, a \$10.3 million new Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Station, and a new \$3.5 million Airfield Lighting Vault. According to New Orleans Aviation Board Chairman Dan Packer, "These three projects are critical to keeping the Airport operational in all circumstances."

The need for a new utility building was made apparent in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, when for three days the Airport was without electricity that is provided by electrical main feeders. Following the hurricane, a post-storm review of the Airport's hazard mitigation plan indicated a need for additional power generation and emergency water service to maintain critical life safety functions at the airport following a disruption in electrical power. The new utility building will provide additional back-up power generators, switchgear and associated systems and will house the Airport's emergency fire water supply system. During those trying first days after the storm, available back-up generators supplied only limited lighting. There was no air conditioning to ease the discomfort of the circumstances. A major feature of the new utility building will be the addition of a new power source – a 2500 KW generator to an existing 800 KW backup generator. During an electrical disruption, this equipment will provide about 1/3 of the normal terminal electrical loading. That amount of power will be sufficient to maintain basic heating-ventilation-air conditioning (HVAC) service thus limiting mold due to humidity and moisture intrusion, while maintaining emergency/crisis response for airport concourse and terminal operations. As would be obvious, it is essential to function with adequate power effectively, no matter what conditions exist.

The next project, a new ARFF Station, will allow Armstrong International to maintain Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) safety standards for an airport of its size. The current station has outlived its useful life and will not accommodate the size of the new ARFF vehicles that have been

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purchased. The new facility will meet post-September 11 emergency response standards for new aircraft and terminal facilities and will have the capacity to be expanded as needs grow. In addition to the housing of emergency response equipment and Fire/EMT personnel, the facility will be used as an ARFF training facility.

The third project, the new Airfield Lighting Vault, is needed to relocate the current airfield lighting vault inside the Airport Operations Area (AOA) and to replace obsolete control system components, while eliminating functional defects that have been attributed in the past to lighting failures. The relocation of the site will also make the facility more secure and flood resistant. Due to a major power failure at the airport following the landfall of Katrina, this key safety element was non-functioning. This resulted in the need to limit flights to day operations and only during clear weather conditions. Airfield lighting is crucial for the operation of aircraft at all times, day and night regardless of the weather or time of day.

Maintaining the highest degree of safety for our passengers and airport employees is our number one priority. ✈



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Watch "Airport Alive", the Armstrong International Airport tv show. Check your local TV listing for day and time in your area or watch it on the web at [www.flymsy.com](http://www.flymsy.com) - click the Airport Alive link on the home page to view the 30 minute program.