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News Release

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Hartsfield-Jackson encourages passengers to arrive early

ATLANTA – In light of TSA staffing shortages and long lines at the domestic security checkpoint, Department of Aviation officials at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport advise passengers to arrive 90 minutes to two hours prior to their scheduled departure time.

Wait times were as long as 70 minutes on Friday, as passengers experienced what appears to be the effects of sequestration on TSA staffing. The Airport has 22 checkpoint lanes at the main checkpoint in the domestic terminal. However, only 13 lanes were open when lines were at their longest.

“It is unacceptable to have so few lanes open during peak passenger traffic,” said Louis Miller, Aviation general manager. “It’s obvious TSA has a staffing shortage. And, it is affecting our ability to offer the level of customer service we’re committed to.”

Airport officials have stationed extra customer service representatives along the checkpoint lines to direct passengers to the shortest lines within the checkpoint areas. Additionally, the representatives monitor all three domestic checkpoints to determine when passengers should be directed to other least congested areas.

“We’re doing everything we can do to keep the lines moving,” said Louis Miller, Aviation general manager. “ But we will continue to meet with TSA to stress the importance of providing enough staff. Hopefully Congress will take the appropriate action to rectify the problem.”

Hartsfield-Jackson , the world’s busiest airport, sees about 45,000 passengers pass through it domestic checkpoints on an average day. Officials estimate that approximately 55,000 passed through on Friday, the start of a busy Mother’s Day weekend.

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Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Hartsfield-Jackson is the world’s busiest airport, serving more than 95 million passengers annually with nonstop service to 160 U.S. destinations and nearly 70 international destinations in more than 45 countries. The Airport is a frequent recipient of awards of excellence for concessions, operations, architectural engineering and construction - including the 2011 Global and North American Airport Efficiency Excellence Award from the Air Transport Research Society (for more information, go to www.atrsworld.org). It is undergoing \$6 billion-plus in capital improvements, which include a new, energy-efficient rental car center; a new, 12-gate international terminal (for more information, go to www.atlanta-airport.com/internationalterminal/); and aesthetic and functional upgrades to its concourses, people movers and parking services. For more information, go to www.atlanta-airport.com. Check out the Airport’s YouTube channel by visiting <http://www.youtube.com/AtlantaHartsfield>, and become a fan on Facebook.