



**October 24, 2014**

## **Virgin Atlantic Lands at Hartsfield-Jackson**

**ATLANTA** – Virgin Atlantic will begin operating its first ever flights into the world’s busiest airport starting on Sunday, October 26, having received one of Delta Air Lines’ three daily services to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. In celebration, Virgin Atlantic flew its first Boeing 787 aircraft, Birthday Girl, from London to Atlanta on a special celebration flight.

“We are thrilled to welcome Virgin Atlantic to the world’s busiest and most efficient airport,” said Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed. “With Virgin Atlantic choosing to bring their service to Atlanta, we are able to offer additional choices to travelers and increased service to London Heathrow. As an iconic global brand with exemplary service, I am confident that customers will embrace this new airline and our partnership will continue to grow for years to come.”

“The arrival of Virgin Atlantic is a significant milestone for Atlanta’s airport,” said Hartsfield-Jackson General Manager Miguel Southwell. “One of my top priorities is to increase international routes for both passengers and cargo. With the addition of such a globally respected leader in the airline industry, Hartsfield-Jackson is sending a strong signal that we are committed to serving our customers and offering additional options for passengers.”

Virgin Atlantic expects to fly around 160,000 passengers annually to Atlanta and beyond on its new service providing convenient connections to Delta flights across the U.S., Mexico and the Caribbean. Virgin Atlantic recently announced plans to add a second daily seasonal flight to Atlanta in summer 2015 as part of a package of investments into North American routes.

“Today marks another exciting step in our partnership with Delta Air Lines. It has been a busy first year for our joint venture and it is already delivering for our customers. From aligned schedules to reciprocal lounge access and the ability for frequent fliers to earn and burn across both carriers, we are showing how a partnership should be operated to benefit passengers,” said Craig Kreeger, Chief Executive of Virgin Atlantic. “Our new flights to Atlanta will give Virgin Atlantic’s customers unprecedented access to 160 points throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean and we look forward to adding a second daily service from March 2015 to improve connection convenience even more.”

Since the start of the Delta and Virgin Atlantic trans-Atlantic joint venture, 3.5 million passengers have experienced the benefits of the partnership. The two airlines also have a codeshare agreement in place, maximizing the customer appeal of the joint schedule. The partnership enables the airlines to offer more flight choices for travelers on both sides of the Atlantic by improving their travel options.

Note to editors: For b-roll video of today’s press conference, please click here: [vimeo.com/109972826](http://vimeo.com/109972826).

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### **Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport**

Hartsfield-Jackson (ATL) is the world's busiest and most efficient airport, serving more than 94.4 million passengers annually with nonstop service to more than 150 U.S. destinations and nearly 70 international destinations in more than 45 countries. ATL boasts a direct economic impact of \$32.5 billion in metro Atlanta and \$68.3 billion in Georgia. The Airport is the largest employer in Georgia, with more than 58,000 employees. The Airport is a frequent recipient of awards of excellence for concessions, operations, architectural engineering and construction – including the 2013 Global Efficiency Excellence Award from the Air Transport Research Society, 2013 Project of the Year, Architectural Category for the Maynard H. Jackson Jr. International Terminal from the American Association of Airport Executives Southeast chapter and the 2012 Best Airport in North America, Business Travel Award from the Business Traveler Magazine. ATL has completed more than \$6 billion worth of capital improvements, including a new, energy-efficient rental car center, a gold LEED-certified international terminal and aesthetic and functional upgrades to its concourses, people movers and parking services. For more information, go to [www.atlanta-airport.com](http://www.atlanta-airport.com). Check out the Airport's YouTube channel by visiting [www.youtube.com/AtlantaHartsfield](http://www.youtube.com/AtlantaHartsfield), follow us on Twitter (@Atlanta\_Airport) and become a fan on Facebook (Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport).

### **About Virgin Atlantic**

Virgin Atlantic was founded by entrepreneur Sir Richard Branson 30 years ago after he decided the UK aviation industry needed shaking up and style injected back into it. On 22nd June 1984, Virgin Atlantic's inaugural flight to Newark took place, on an aircraft filled with personal friends, celebrities and the media. Today, Virgin Atlantic flies to 33 destinations worldwide, including locations across North America, the Caribbean, Africa and the Far East. In the winter of 2012, Virgin Atlantic announced a joint venture with Delta Air Lines, creating an expanded trans-Atlantic route network and enhancing competition between the UK and North America. The two airlines now codeshare across 108 routes, offering passengers seamless connections to 66 destinations.