



**For Immediate Release
December 20, 2017**

Statement from Roosevelt Council, Jr., General Manager of Hartsfield-Jackson on Power Outage and Response Efforts

ATLANTA – “A power outage occurred at Hartsfield-Jackson on Sunday afternoon causing thousands of our customers confusion and frustration. For that, we are truly sorry.

The safety and security of our passengers and employees are always our top priorities. We did not do the best job communicating our efforts to restore power to the Airport, and we apologize.

As part of our Airport emergency plan, we train constantly for incidents and emergencies. We have a power outage plan in place to expand and contract with other emergency contingency plans as needed. These plans were implemented and followed, but we acknowledge that we could have done better.

We take pride in being the busiest and most efficient airport in the world, and when that efficiency is compromised our immediate goals are to fix the problem, guarantee the safety of everyone at the Airport and work hard to ensure that it does not happen again.

Shortly after 1 p.m. on Sunday, power went out throughout the entire Airport. Immediately, Airport officials worked with the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, Georgia Power, FAA, TSA, CBP, airline partners and other key Airport stakeholders to stabilize the situation, prevent further damage to the power system and to repair it as quickly as possible. Firefighters with the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department were on scene within minutes of receiving a call from dispatch.

Within 20 minutes of the outage, the Airport tweeted and posted on Facebook, and continued to inform the public throughout the day. As part of our airport emergency plan, the Airport’s Twitter feed was used to disseminate frequent official statements and updates.

Our focus was on providing accurate information as soon as it was available. Once the likely cause of the power outage was identified and our partners at Georgia Power had assessment and repair activities underway, Airport officials issued a press release and then held a press conference with Mayor Reed and other key stakeholders.

With no power, we were unable to access the overhead public address systems. Despite that, hundreds of Airport representatives including security, operations, customer service, airline, and EMT employees and other stakeholders were deployed throughout the Airport’s domestic and

international terminals and concourses to provide information and assistance to passengers. These representatives provided the information that was verifiable and accurate at the time, and received updates to provide to passengers on an ongoing basis. Additionally, the Department of Aviation sent updates via the FAA Tower directly to pilots on aircraft on the airfield.

Georgia Power discovered that a piece of its switchgear located in an underground electrical facility failed and started an electrical fire. This fire was located adjacent to redundant circuit cables and switching mechanisms serving the airport and those cables were damaged, resulting in the outage and loss of power from two separate back-up power substations. The Airport's back-up generators immediately kicked on to power the emergency lights throughout the Airport, although one concourse had intermittent emergency power.

The fire was safely extinguished by Atlanta Fire Rescue Department crews before Georgia Power could enter the area to assess damage and begin repairs. The Atlanta Fire Rescue investigation took approximately one hour and 45 minutes.

In addition to the fire, responding crews faced hazardous fumes and smoke which had to fully clear prior to beginning restoration work. The event impacted not only the underground facilities, but also substations serving the Airport. Georgia Power's system responded properly by isolating areas where equipment wasn't operating correctly to ensure safety and minimize damage. No passengers or employees were in danger at any time.

At 2:30 p.m., Airport senior management, Atlanta Fire and Rescue and Atlanta Police Department commanders, and representatives from the airlines, local and federal partners fully mobilized to the Airport's Emergency Operations Center to coordinate our response and recovery efforts.

Working with hundreds of Airport and partner employees, we were able to distribute food, water and comfort items to passengers across the Airport campus. Thousands of meals were distributed from Chick-fil-A, McDonald's and Wendy's. TSA agents and other employees carried many disabled passengers up and down inoperable escalators.

Airport officials had plans in place for a full-scale evacuation if needed with buses on standby to take passengers to the nearby Georgia International Convention Center, and an overflow center at the Georgia World Congress Center with MARTA rail access. The Airport coordinated with a variety of ground transportation partners, including MARTA, to facilitate passengers leaving the airport. MARTA offered continuous service throughout the incident.

In addition to our recovery efforts,

- Atlanta Police Department:
 - sent additional officers to supplement airport police efforts;
 - evening watch shift was brought in early and no officers went home;
 - worked with Georgia State Patrol and surrounding jurisdictions; and

- closed airport roadways for a brief period of time to ease congestion for arriving customers.
- Atlanta Fire and Rescue:
 - extinguished the electrical fire;
 - conducted multiple sweeps throughout concourses to ensure safety;
 - cleared the scene within 1hr 45minutes so GA Power could begin power restoration;
 - coordinated a mutual aid response from downtown Fire Department and other units from surrounding jurisdictions across metro ATL from Henry County to Cherokee County;
 - dispatched more than 100 firefighters/EMTs across the Airport;
 - distributed food to passengers;
 - checked for life safety measures;
 - responded to hundreds of incident calls; and
 - conducted evacuations from the SkyTrain and the removal of passengers from multiple elevators around the airport.
- Landside/Airside Teams:
 - delivered food and water to passengers in the airport and on airplanes;
 - implemented a crowd control plan;
 - initiated other emergency contingency plans;
 - coordinated with airlines and informed customers in the domestic terminal that flights were cancelled;
 - coordinated with TSA on screening of passengers; and
 - worked with FAA tower to deplane passengers.
- FAA:
 - instituted a ground stop for incoming and departing aircraft shortly after 2 p.m.;
 - diverted inbound flights to other airports;
 - communications sent directly to pilots on airfield via FAA tower with updates;
 - cleared airfield as quickly as possible to deplane passengers

At approximately 7 p.m., power was restored on Concourse F and planes that were still on the airfield were sent to the International Terminal to deplane. Prior to power restoration on Concourse F, regional jets (RJs) and MD88s utilized onboard stairways to deplane passengers while other aircraft utilized mobile stairways to deplane.

Around midnight, full power was restored to all concourses. By Monday, all normal operations had resumed and flights were landing and taking off. Cargo operations had minimal impact during the power outage.

Late Tuesday, the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department (AFRD), in partnership with the Atlanta Police Department, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) and the FBI Joint

Terrorism Task Force (FBI-JTFF) concluded the preliminary investigation into the cause of Sunday's fire which led to the power outage at Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

AFRD with federal and local partners have determined that there is no evidence of foul play at this stage of the investigation. There is no information to suggest there was an insider threat or any connection to terrorism.

We recognize that many of our passengers were impacted by the power outage on Monday and Tuesday, and we again apologize, and thank our passengers for their patience, and for our airline partners for their work to re-book passengers and get them to their destinations as quickly as possible.

We also recognize that the resources we deployed to communicate with passengers were insufficient. Passengers rightfully wanted more frequent information from sources they can trust. We have already identified a number of tools that we can utilize to ensure we do not make the same mistakes again, and we plan on adding these tools to our emergency preparations as quickly as possible.

We are committed to working with our partners to ensure safe, secure and efficient operations. As a result of Sunday's power outage, Airport officials and Georgia Power are working tirelessly to ensure that this kind of occurrence never happens again. In the coming days and weeks we will closely review what happened and determined what needs improvement. We will continue to update the public as new information becomes available."

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Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport

Hartsfield-Jackson (ATL) is the world's busiest and most efficient airport, serving more than 104 million passengers annually with nonstop service to more than 150 U.S. destinations and 70 international destinations in more than 50 countries. ATL boasts a direct economic impact of \$34.8 billion in metro Atlanta and a total direct economic impact of \$70.9 billion in Georgia. The Airport is the largest employer in Georgia, with more than 63,000 employees. The Airport is a frequent recipient of awards of excellence for concessions, operations, sustainability, architectural engineering, and construction. ATL is now in the midst of a \$6 billion capital improvement program, ATLNext, that will modernize the Domestic Terminal and concourses, create new parking decks, construct a 440-room hotel, Class A commercial office space, add a new runway, new concourse and expand cargo facilities. For more information, visit www.atl.com.

NOTE TO NEWS EDITORS

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