March 13, 2012

News Release

For Immediate Release

Airport: Strong Growth in First Two Months of 2012

The number of people using the Springfield-Branson National Airport grew 10% in the first two months of 2012, compared to 2011. 103,752 total passengers used the airport in January and February, up from 94,311 total passengers during the same period in 2011. February passenger numbers alone increased 16%.

All four airlines serving the airport (Allegiant, American, Delta and United) saw an increase in passenger numbers. "We are very pleased," says Brian Weiler, airport director of aviation. "It shows that even in a constantly changing and challenging airline environment, there is strong passenger demand in Springfield."

The airport saw an 8% decrease in passengers in 2011, due mainly to airlines providing fewer seats in the Springfield market — the number of available seats was down 21.5% in 2011. "Last year the airlines cut costs by shrinking their route systems to respond to the recession and high fuel prices. Airlines cannot afford to fly around empty seats and many airports across the country saw a decline in available seats," says Weiler. "But these recent growth numbers may be a sign we’ve bottomed out and growth will continue."

The airlines seem to agree. Allegiant added seven flights to its March schedule in Springfield and is now using larger 166-seat MD80 aircraft on its Phoenix and Los Angeles routes. Delta added a fourth daily flight to Atlanta in February, and United adds a fourth daily Denver flight in April.

"We think the airlines are probably done cutting in Springfield," says Kent Boyd, airport marketing director. "But that could change if fuel prices spike later this year."

What’s driving the growth so far this year? "The improvements we’re seeing in the regional economy have a lot to do with it," says Boyd. "In December the Springfield unemployment rate was less than 7%. That's very good compared to the rest of the country. Employment is a key driver in passenger demand: if more people have a job, more people will fly."

Boyd says another reason for the growth is the airport’s marketing efforts. "We’ve made a concerted effort to raise public awareness about what the airport offers: ten non-stop destinations and four airlines, including low-cost airline Allegiant, which often has round trip fares to places like Los Angeles and Florida for less than $200. As more people find fares like that, passenger numbers are bound to grow."

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Total Seats and Total Passengers 2010 — 2011
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of seats</td>
<td>589,667</td>
<td>463,049</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total passengers</td>
<td>796,251</td>
<td>731,395</td>
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