



The Delaware River and Bay Authority

PRESS RELEASE

November 20, 2017
For Immediate Release

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DRBA, DE Congressional Delegation Celebrate Completion of New Runway, Taxiway System at Delaware Airpark

(Cheswold, Delaware) Today, U.S. Senator Tom Carper, U.S. Senator Chris Coons and Congresswoman Lisa Blunt Rochester joined with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) officials and Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) representatives to officially open the new Runway 9-27 at the Delaware Airpark (33N). The second to last phase of the multi-year project, which was just completed last month, involved wetland mitigation, the paving of new Runway 9-27 (4,200' x 75'), connector taxiways (35' wide) and associated infrastructure. This comprehensive development project is the largest and most significant civilian airport improvement program in Delaware or the region in more than 40 years.

"On behalf of the Commissioners and staff, we would like to thank our Congressional Delegation and the FAA for their resolve and effort to make this historic infrastructure improvement project a reality," said Thomas J. Cook, Executive Director for the DRBA. "The importance of this new runway system can't be overstated and it took the cooperation of federal, state and locals leaders who all recognize general aviation's important role in our region's economy to get the job done. These improvements are essential for the future of Delaware Airpark, and the critical air access it provides to central Delaware and the greater Capital region of our state."

The ongoing multi-year project to improve the airport by constructing a new runway, taxiway, and apron system began in 2004. Land acquisition, design, environmental, and construction costs associated with this multi-year project to enhance the airport's infrastructure totaled more than \$33 million. An important first step in making this possible was the State's acquisition of the former privately owned, public-use airport in 2000.

"Smart investments in our nation's infrastructure are important to keep us all moving safely," said Senator Carper. "This is one of the most significant aviation projects in Delaware and the region in over 40 years. This investment isn't just about safety – it will also maintain jobs and attract business. I am proud we are supporting this well-paying, important industry to Delaware."

"This is an exciting day for the Delaware Air Park, Delaware State University aviation students and all others who use this airport," said Senator Coons. "I am grateful for the important federal investment from the FAA and the partnership with DRBA that helped complete the runway and taxiway system that will be the home to many safe takeoffs and landings."

“The unveiling of this project marks the culmination of years of work and partnership between the FAA and the DRBA,” said Congresswoman Blunt Rochester. “The new runway and taxiway system will help accommodate the aviation needs of central Delaware including increasing capacity for important programs such as the Delaware State University Aviation Program. I am proud to be able to unveil this project alongside folks who worked so hard to make it a reality.”

“The FAA is excited to have this new runway project in Delaware opened for flight activity,” said Lori Pagnanelli, FAA Harrisburg Airports District Manager. “This runway is part of an important safety enhancement project that brings Delaware Airpark’s facilities into compliance with FAA design standards.”

“Our DSU aviation students have already benefited greatly from the improvements at Delaware Airpark, especially the longer runway which helped to mitigate a power line obstacle students have had to overcome in landing and take-off,” said Dr. Harry L. Williams. “As the University continues to produce professional pilots whose proficiencies have resulted in a 100% hiring rate, DSU, the Delaware River & Bay Authority, the Delaware Congressional delegation and the federal government can all share in the credit for helping in its success.”

The overall project provides a runway, taxiway and apron system that enhances flight operations and safety for all classes of aviation users. The new system was designed with adequate runway length and apron dimensions to meet current and anticipated future demands of the aviation community. In addition, the facility serves a complementary and relief role for corporate traffic at the Civil Air Terminal at Dover Air Force Base.

In the spring of 2018, the final phase of this project will begin and involves the conversion of the old, existing Runway 9-27 into a parallel taxiway (35’ wide), construction of the final connector taxiway (35’ wide) to the new runway (4,200’ x 75’), and associated infrastructure.

Delaware Airpark serves the general aviation needs of central Delaware and the Capital city of Dover, including the aircraft of the Delaware State University Aviation Program. It is the base for flight training conducted by Delaware State University for the Air Force ROTC program and other clients such as the Department of Interior and NASA.

About the Delaware River and Bay Authority

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages corporate and aviation properties through its economic development powers - two airports in New Jersey (Millville Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (New Castle Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit www.drba.net.