



City of New Bedford
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

City of New Bedford
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P R E S S R E L E A S E

International Flights Coming to New Bedford Airport

U.S. Customs OKs Direct Flights Arriving From Abroad

New Bedford, Massachusetts- New Bedford Regional Airport has been approved by the United States Customs and Border Protection and the United States Department of Agriculture to accept flights that originate outside of the United States. Aircraft service providers including NorEast Aviation and Colonial Air have already been approved to handle international traffic. And in the near future, Sandpiper Air is also expected to receive the certification.

“Today’s news is just one item in a longer list of positive developments at the New Bedford Airport. It shows what we can achieve when we put in place professional management, develop sound fiscal policies, invest wisely in infrastructure, and work to ensure strong board and community support for a thoughtful agenda,” said Mayor Jon Mitchell.

With the assistance and coordination of the United States Customs and Border Protection, flights to and from Canada, Italy, United Kingdom and Portugal already utilized the New Bedford Regional Airport in recent months. New Bedford Regional Airport Director Erick D’Leon said, “Now, because of the recent certification, these international flights can occur in a much more streamlined manner as aircraft operators can coordinate directly with the businesses located at the airport. This more efficient process creates a more attractive aviation environment for business aviation users.”

Business aviation traffic at the New Bedford Regional Airport has been on a steady increase since the 2014 completion of the airport’s primary runway reconstruction project. Several other safety projects are also underway with the goal of attracting additional airline services that would fly to new destinations including New York and Florida.

In the month of July 2016, the New Bedford Regional Airport saw one hundred and seventy corporate jet operations. This year, total aircraft operations at the airport have increased by 12% and jet operations have increased by 25%. The increase in air traffic and improved accessibility helps to grow New Bedford’s reputation as a destination to do business in New England.

The New Bedford Regional Airport makes a major contribution to the area economy. A 2015 MassDOT study that tracked measures of economic success at all 39 public-use airports in Massachusetts found that economic impact of the New Bedford Regional Airport grew by 23% in four years, generating \$32.4 million in local economic activity.

Presently, Cape Air provides frequently scheduled service for passengers and cargo to Martha's Vineyard and Nantucket. Additionally, the airport and based businesses cater to a wide variety of general aviation operations; from small, single-engine, private aircraft up to the most advanced, large corporate jets capable of international operations. The Airport is also home to the Bridgewater State University Aviation Training Center, an accredited collegiate aviation program, the largest of its kind in New England.

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