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## **Airport Check-in: JFK airport works on cutting flight delays**

*By Roger Yu*

A trial for a new jet-queuing system at New York JFK, designed to cut down on lengthy tarmac delays, has been extended after it showed signs of success, says the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey, which runs the airport.

The "departure management system," which had previously been used only by the airport during winter storms and the recent closure of a runway, will be continued until the end of the year at one of the busiest air traffic choke points in the country.

During normal conditions, planes at JFK form a taxi line to depart on a "first-called, first-served" basis, the airport says. In the new trial, the planes abide by a "reservation" system and are assigned a time window for departure. It limits eight to 12 planes to be in line for takeoff from a runway at any time during peak hours, which prevents idling planes from stacking in lengthy lines. The planes not ready for departure will idle at gates.

The Port Authority says the new system "was in large part responsible for the minimal delays that occurred during the recent closure of JFK's longest runway." The system also saves airlines money in fuel costs and limits pollution, the Port Authority says.

**SUMMER TRAVEL: Booking flights later could cost fliers more**

- Renting a car at Miami International will get a bit more expensive starting this week. The airport will unveil its new consolidated rental car garage Tuesday, a facility that will house 16 rental companies and their 6,500 cars. A fleet of buses will transport travelers to and from the terminals, eliminating the need for rental companies to operate their own shuttles.

Customers will pay a \$4.60-a-day "customer facility charge." The Florida Department of Transportation has been collecting \$3.25 a day since 2004 to finance construction of the building but will raise the fee on Tuesday.

The \$480 million facility is the first phase of a broader construction project by the Florida Department of Transportation to build a major "intermodal center" that will house the county's metro rail and buses, Amtrak and possibly high-speed-rail service.

- The Electronic Privacy Information Center, a privacy advocacy group in Washington, D.C., has sued the Department of Homeland Security in federal court, seeking an emergency stay of the controversial airport body scanner program.

The scanners, deployed at about 19 airports, are whole-body imaging devices used for airport security screening. The scanners reveal the surface of the skin under clothing and prosthetics.

The program is "unlawful, invasive and ineffective," says Marc Rotenberg, president of EPIC. The group's filing says the Transportation Security Administration program violates several federal laws, as well as the Fourth Amendment, because the scanners "are applied to all air travelers without any particular suspicion."

The program's proponents argue that the TSA limits the number of officers who can see the images and separates the officers looking at images from the passengers being screened. The scanners also use software to blur the faces on the images, they say. Travelers who object to the scanners can elect to bypass the machines and receive a pat-down instead.

- Beer and wine carts could soon be hitting the concourses at Chicago's O'Hare and Midway airports.

In a move to generate more non-aviation revenue, Mayor Richard Daley has pitched a proposal that would allow vendors to sell beer and wine from stationary carts at six locations in post-security areas.

He also called for allowing restaurants and bars that now close before midnight to sell hard liquor 24 hours a day. The proposal still requires city council approval.

- Philadelphia International Airport has started offering free Wi-Fi Internet service.

- Dubai International has introduced a "silent airport" project that aims to reduce the number of public announcements. It has asked airlines at all three terminals to limit announcements to two per flight, which resulted in the number of announcements falling to about 700 from more than 2,000 a day.

To ease the transition, the airport says it has improved flight information display screens and asked staffers to "actively remind passengers" to arrive at their gate on time.