



News Clip

From: *South Florida Business Journal*, Thursday, September 8, 2011

Subject: **MIA Mover Opens at Miami International Airport**

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<http://www.bizjournals.com/southflorida/news/2011/09/08/mover-opens-miami-international-airport.html?page=all>

MIA Mover Opens at Miami International Airport

By Ashley D. Torres

Miami International Airport on Thursday unveiled its MIA Mover, an elevated people mover that will transport travelers from the airport terminal to the rental car center.

The mover travels 1.25 miles from the third floor of the airport terminal, across LeJeune Road to the MIA Rental Car Center, which opened in July 2010 and houses operations for 16 rental car companies. It can transport up to 3,000 passengers an hour, features eight train cars and will help reduce airport fuel emissions by 15 percent.

The project created 1,000 jobs and was completed on time and under budget by \$5 million, which will be returned to Miami-Dade County, said Gilberto Neves, president and CEO of Odebrecht USA.

The mover was designed and built by Parsons-Odebrecht Joint Venture, which installed the operating system and eight train cars through a subcontract with Japan-based Mitsubishi Heavy Industries. Mitsubishi built the system in three years, the shortest amount of time for a project of its kind, said Yoichi Kujirai, senior VP with Mitsubishi Heavy Industries' machinery and steel infrastructure systems headquarters.

The mover will also connect to the Miami Central Station, a terminal scheduled to open in 2013 with access to various transportation services, including Amtrak and Tri-Rail. Metrorail will also connect to the station via the 2.4-mile AirportLink extension that is to be complete in April 2012.

The MIA Mover, Miami Central Station, rental car center and several highway improvements comprise the Miami Intermodal Center project, Miami-Dade County's first transportation hub, which is being developed by the Florida Department of Transportation.

FDOT began working on intermodal projects in 1989, before it was popular, said José Abreu, director of the Miami-Dade Aviation Department and a former FDOT employee.

The MIA Mover replaces a shuttle bus service that, when stopped, will remove 30 percent of airport curbside traffic and result in a loss of jobs.

In June, Tectrans, a passenger transportation company, announced plans to lay off 163 Miami-based workers related to the end of its short-term contract to operate the temporary shuttle bus service from the airport terminal to the rental car center.

Nonetheless, the MIA Mover has secured national attention.

In August, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration awarded the project with Voluntary Protection Program Star status, the nation's top safety recognition for companies and projects that implement effective safety and health management systems, and maintain below-average injury and illness rates, according to a Parsons-Odebrecht release. The MIA Mover is the first Florida construction project to receive the award.

The MIA Mover is the latest improvement to Miami International Airport, which features renovated terminals and the Skytrain, a light rail system that quickly moves passengers through the mile-long American Airlines /American Eagle Terminal D.

Completion of the MIA Mover means the \$6.4 billion airport capital improvement project is 90 percent complete, Abreu said.

"MIA continues to improve the first impression our visitors have of Miami," Miami-Dade County Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez said.

With 98 percent of Miami-Dade visitors coming by air, the MIA Mover "is the next leg in a stool in terms of [Miami] being a world-class city," said William D. Talbert III, president and CEO of the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau.