



Durango-La Plata County Airport Newsletter – Winter 2016

New Service to Los Angeles

We are excited to announce that beginning on June 2nd, American Airlines will begin new nonstop Saturday air service from the Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) to Los Angeles International Airport (LAX).



A nonstop flight from DRO to the west coast, especially Los Angeles, has been one of the top requests for Durango flyers. This new route will provide travelers with improved access to Southern California, the west coast, Hawaii, Asia, and Australia.

American Airlines will operate this route through August 22nd, and will be utilizing CRJ-700 jets, with seating for 70 passengers.

The flight will leave LAX at 8:01 am and arrive at DRO at 11:42 am. It will subsequently leave DRO at 12:20 pm and arrive at LAX at 2:07 pm.

2016 Aviation Celebration

The 2016 Aviation Celebration has been scheduled for Saturday, September 17th. Please mark this date on your calendar and plan for a fun day at the airport with the whole family!

This year's event will include static aircraft displays, activities for children, live music, prize giveaways, aircraft snow removal and firefighting equipment tours, and an exciting performance by the US Army's Golden Knights Parachute Team.



The 2015 Aviation Celebration was a great success with over 1,700 in attendance, and we hope that even more will join us in 2016. Attendees of all ages will enjoy seeing aircraft up close, learning about the airport, and watching the parachute jump team.

The best part is that your family and friends can come experience this fun and unique event with no admission or parking costs!



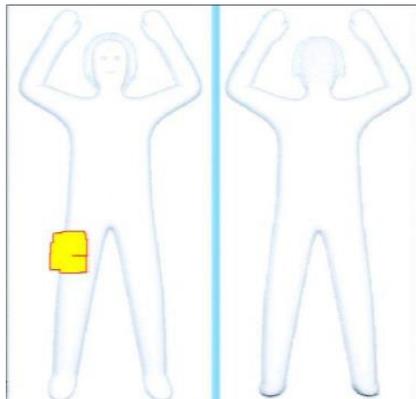
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New TSA Full Body Scanner

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) at the Durango-La Plata County Airport installed a new Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) full body scanner in December.

The AIT full body scanner helps the TSA to better detect non-metallic threats such as weapons and explosives. This technology also allows the TSA to process passengers more quickly and efficiently, thus leading to shorter waits for the flying public.

The millimeter wave AIT in place at DRO uses non-ionizing radio frequency energy to generate a three-dimensional image based on the energy reflected from a body. The energy projected by this technology is thousands of times less than a cell phone transmission.



AIT screening is optional for all passengers. Passengers who do not wish to utilize this technology will receive alternative screening, including a physical pat-down.

2015/2016 Airport Snow Removal Operations

This winter season has been a busy one for the airport's snow removal staff. Reportable snow and ice conditions have existed at DRO on a total of 33 days so far this season. That's over a month's worth of snow removal operations, and we're only just into February.



The airport staff continues to work carefully to ensure that all winter flight operations at DRO are conducted in a safe environment. Unlike a vehicular roadway, an airport runway must be maintained to nearly bare pavement in order for aircraft to take off and land safely.

Airport staff utilize a wide variety of broom, plow, and blower trucks to clear the airfield of snow. Once snow has been removed, friction tests are conducted to determine what braking action a pilot can anticipate.



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Go Where Your Bags Go Tours

As a reminder, the airport conducts “Go Where Your Bags Go” tours on the first Thursday of every month.

While on the tour, you will see first-hand how the airport’s facilities are struggling to keep pace with the growing airline operations at DRO. Additionally you will get a behind-the-scenes look at how the airlines process a commercial flight.



To sign up for a tour, go to the airport website (flydurango.com) and click the link shown above.

On a related note, if you know of any school or community groups that might be interested in either the “Go Where Your Bags Go” tour or a separate tour of the airport’s snow removal and firefighting equipment, please have them contact us at 970-382-6051 or airport@durangogov.org.

2015 Passenger Statistics

Total passengers at DRO totaled 375,493 in 2015. This marks a 2.6% decrease from 2014, but there are many encouraging factors behind this number.

2015 was an adjustment year for DRO as Frontier Airline’s route network restructure led to their departure from the Durango market, along with many others in the west. This surprise April announcement left DRO’s incumbent air carriers with little time to react, and yet 68% of the seat capacity vacated by Frontier was replaced by the combination of American Airlines and United Airlines. This quick reaction highlights the demand for air service that our existing airlines continue to see in our regional market.

Despite the small correction seen in 2015, the year-end enplanement total still represents a 16% increase from just 5 years ago and an 86% increase from 10 years ago, highlighting the strong overall upward trajectory of passenger activity at DRO.

Load factors, or the percentage of seats filled, finished 2015 at 78.3%, an increase from 77.7% the year prior. This is reflective of a strong demand for available seats at DRO.