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Wednesday, January 14, 2009 - 9:52 ET



Phase I Of Chicago Rockford Airport Cargo Center Completed

Jan 13, 2009 05:45 PM

Chicago Rockford International Airport (RFD) announced that the first phase of the new Chicago Rockford International Cargo Center has been completed.

Leopardo Construction in late December placed the finishing touches on the exterior shell of Tandem Development Group's 72,000-square-foot building.

RFD Executive Director Bob O'Brien, A.A.E., said that the completion of Phase I is a major event because the airport now has available building space to lease and showcase to international cargo operators interested in serving the Chicago/Milwaukee corridor.

"We are confident it will be only a matter of time before another cargo operator calls RFD home. The recent surge in fuel prices, followed by the economic downturn, coupled with the recent increase in doing business at O'Hare is causing many international operators to understand that they must permanently reduce their operating expenses while simultaneously gaining sustainable operational efficiencies. The cost of doing business at O'Hare is clearly only increasing," said O'Brien.

The airport's new International Cargo Center is adjacent to UPS's second largest sort facility in the U.S., which O'Brien said "is an easy four minutes from touchdown to shutdown." The adjacent ramp is nearly eight acres with three 747-400 parking positions within 40 feet of the cargo facility's doors. O'Brien said that this provides "immediate and tremendous logistical savings" for a cargo operator.

RFD Deputy Director of Operations & Facilities Franz Olson said that one immediate advantage to all users is that they will not have to transport cargo off-airport to be temporarily held and/or sorted at a satellite warehouse. "Semis will be able to deliver freight for storage directly to airside, reducing the number of handlings required in processing air cargo," said Olson. "And with our own RFD-based U.S. Customs staff, everything can be virtually cleared within minutes verses days, which is often the challenge of operating through Chicago O'Hare."

Phase I of the project included construction of a 72,000 building with three 747-400 parking positions. O'Brien said that as various prospective cargo operators and freightforwarders finalize their interest in the facility, the interior build-out will be completed this spring to clients' specifications.

"When all phases are completed the cargo facility will have 10 747-800 positions built out with as much as 350,000 additional square footage of cargo related buildings," O'Brien said.



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