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# Miami Intermodal Center



## News Clip

From: *Miami Today*, Thursday, April 15, 2010Subject: **Airport's north terminal, 7 years late, opening piece by piece**Provided by: Jenine Spoliansky, Kommunikatz, Inc.  
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## Airport's north terminal, 7 years late, opening piece by piece

By RISA POLANSKY

The long-delayed north terminal project at Miami International Airport is to wrap up in early 2012 – almost half a year later than recently projected and more than seven years after its original completion date.

Still, the nearly \$3 billion overhaul is coasting ahead, with gate openings on the horizon and an end in sight to issues with the high-tech baggage system, the cause of the latest delays in the terminal, the Latin American and Caribbean hub for American Airlines and American Eagle.

Next month is to bring a new gate opening, and with it a new security checkpoint, Aviation Director José Abreu said.

In August, Concourse A is to reopen, re-branded as gates D1 through D16 – a major chunk of the mile-long terminal's prolonged revamp.

A month later, in late September, the terminal's Sky Train is to begin running, saving passengers lengthy walks.

The rooftop peplemover is

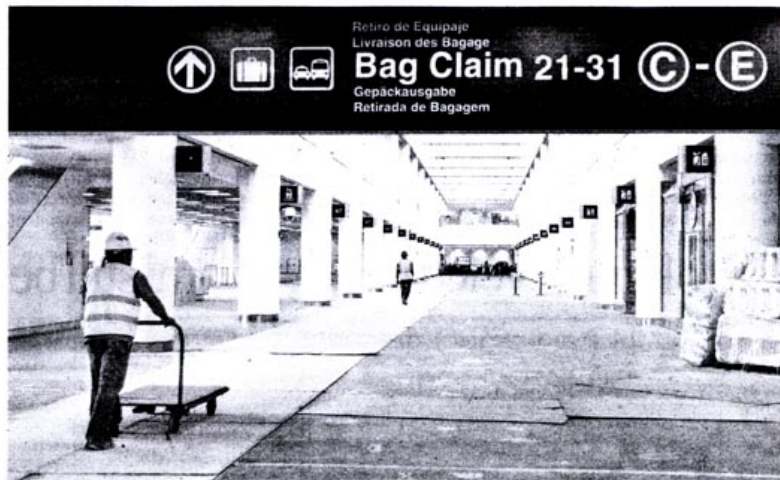


Photo by Maxine Usdan

**Work continues on Concourse A, which is to reopen in August re-branded as gates D1 through D16.**

designed to transport 9,000 passengers an hour.

Mr. Abreu hails the upcoming opening as a major achievement.

For example, he said, a passenger could land at gate D1 and have a connecting flight to catch at D52. The Sky

Train would spare a long hike.

"That's why it's so monumental," Mr. Abreu said.

Also this fall, the new holding area for commuter line American Eagle is to open, doing away with cramped, dark and hectic temporary quarters,

he said.

Temporary busing to the commuter planes is to continue until early next year, Mr. Abreu said, but at least passengers will have a shiny new place to wait.

And by year's end the terminal's troublesome baggage system is to be up and running, missing its expected July completion, he said, but "at the end of the day, this is getting done."

The complex, almost one-of-a-kind luggage system is meant to handle up to 7,200 bags an hour with conveyors totaling about 10 miles.

Much of the delay – and tens of millions in cost overruns – has been tied to changing security requirements for the system, designed before the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks that forever changed airport regulations.

Installation is complete on two of three phases totaling

more than 90% of the system and pre-testing is in progress.

By early 2011, the north terminal will be one step from done, Mr. Abreu said.

"The only thing that will be left is the federal inspection area."

That affects only international arrivals. Domestic travelers and international departures will have benefit of what will appear to be a fully functioning new terminal early.

The inspection area – as big as two football fields – will have 72 booths and be able to process 4,000 people an hour, Mr. Abreu said.

It's to be ready closer to 2012, the same year the last phase of the bag system – that dealing with international luggage – is to be completed.

Within the first quarter of 2012 the north terminal work should be over and done with, Mr. Abreu said, along with the MIA Mover connecting the airport to the intermodal center under construction nearby and a revamp of the airport's Central Boulevard.

In December, he projected a September 2011 north terminal completion.

The overhaul has been in the works for years.

It began in the '90s as an American Airlines project that Miami-Dade County ended up taking over in 2005.

Now, it's set to be done more than seven years after its original end date at about three times the original \$900 million estimate.

The end came within reach late last year, when the mile-long terminal's "front door" opened in the form of curbside check-in space, ticket counters and security checkpoints, part of 290,000 square feet of new construction.

**One of four stations for the Sky Train, which is to begin running in September, a respite from long hikes.**