



PRPA receives additional grant for Aguadilla Airport

Part of the \$ 100 million five-year runway reconstruction plan

San Juan, September 23, 2020 - The Puerto Rico Ports Authority (PRPA) received an additional grant of \$ 24.2 million, in this case to develop the Rafael Hernandez International Airport in Aguadilla runway reconstruction project, PRPA Executive Director Joel A. Pizá Batiz announced today.

"This new grant joins the historic \$26 million grant announced last week. This is a very important achievement within the PRPA capital improvement plan for our airports, and in this case, for the Aguadilla runway reconstruction project, at an estimated cost of over \$ 100 million over five years," Pizá Batiz said.

Of the \$24.2 million, about \$20 million are part of the Federal Aviation Administration's (FAA) Fiscal Year Supplemental Appropriation, Airport Improvement Program.

Legislation HR 1625 signed in 2018 by President Donald Trump, allocated \$1 billion in additional discretionary funds, which allow the federal Secretary of Transportation to issue grants to projects in airports, with priority to non-primary classified as regional outside of metropolitan areas.

In 2018, the PRPA submitted to the FAA the consideration of the Aguadilla Runway Reconstruction project, which was accepted by the federal agency, conditional on the completion of the Environmental Assessment and a financial plan, among other requirements.

"The PRPA's Planning and Environmental Areas completed all the required studies, obtaining the final approval of these funds. The environmental evaluation process was participatory and publicly shared, in accordance with the National Environmental Protection Act," Pizá Batiz highlighted.

The construction plan approved by the FAA for said runway allows construction activities to be carried out without interrupting the operations of said airport facility. The scope of work includes demolishing buildings south of the airport, converting the Mike taxiway into a new runway parallel to the existing runway, and converting the existing runway into a taxiway.

The development of a new master plan is also contemplated, including the entire development vision of a hub for cargo and passenger transshipment operations, after the delivery last April of the final waiver by the federal Department of Transportation, requested for the international airports Rafael Hernández in Aguadilla, Mercedita in Ponce, and Luis Muñoz Marín in Carolina.

"We are extremely happy with this new grant, since together with the one announced last week, demonstrate the good relationship we have with the FAA, and the great trust the federal agency has in Governor Wanda Vázquez Garced's team. We continue to focus on optimizing our air facilities, in this case the Rafael Hernández International Airport in Aguadilla, to continue contributing to the economic development of the western region and to the entire island," Pizá Batiz concluded.

XXX

Contact: José L. Carmona 787-454-0905