

**PORT OF SEATTLE**  
**MEMORANDUM**

**COMMISSION AGENDA**

**Item No.** 4a

**Date of Meeting** October 4, 2011

**DATE:** September 27, 2011

**TO:** Tay Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

**FROM:** Jane Kilburn, Director, Public Affairs

**SUBJECT:** Special Order of Business: The Port Centennial 1911-2011

Boeing Field was King County's only airport before World War II, but, after the United States entered the war, the Port of Seattle Commission voted in March 1942 to build a new airport on 907 acres of mostly undeveloped, uninhabited farm land at Bow Lake midway between Seattle and Tacoma. In addition to \$1 million of federal funding available for building the new regional airport, the City of Tacoma, the Port of Tacoma and Pierce County contributed \$100,000 based on an agreement that the airport would also be convenient to Tacoma and also named for it – hence Seattle-Tacoma Airport, which quickly became known as Sea-Tac. The Airport was dedicated with the landing of a United Airlines DC-3 flight, on October 31, 1944, but continued to be used primarily for military flights until 1946 when it was restored to civilian use. A modern new terminal was opened on July 9, 1949, and the airport officially became Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.

Two of the four original runways at the Airport, commonly referred to as "crosswind" runways, formed an "X". The airport's original layout was a classic configuration designed for landings and takeoffs with almost any wind direction. As newer, more capable commercial aircraft were introduced, the Airport moved to a purely north-south configuration for the runways. The "X" and the other east-west crosswind runway remained until 1970 when a second north-south parallel runway opened.

Flying Tiger Airlines became the Airport's first permanent freight (cargo) operator in 1952, and Sea-Tac passengers entered the jet age in October 1959 when a Pan Am Boeing 707 took off for Honolulu. Now, three parallel runways provide safe landings for aircraft in all types of weather for the 160,000 flights coming through the Airport each year. In 2010, 31.5 million passengers had their choice of 26 carriers offering flights to 96 non-stop domestic and international destinations.

Approximately, 14,000 people are employed at Sea-Tac, including airline/airport services sector employees, retail concessionaires, service employees, federal government officials and Port staff. The total economic impact of the Airport is estimated at \$13.2 billion in business revenue. The Airport generates \$412.4 million in state and local taxes and \$439 million of federal aviation-specific tax revenue.

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T. Yoshitani, Chief Executive Officer

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**OTHER DOCUMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS SPECIAL ORDER:**

PowerPoint presentation