

General Description



FAA Building and
Encounter restaurant

Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) is the world's busiest origin and destination (O & D) airport. O&D passengers are those beginning or ending their trips in Southern California rather than using the airport for connecting flights. In total traffic, LAX is the sixth busiest airport in the world for passengers and ranks 13th in the world in air cargo tonnage handled.

In 2008, the airlines of LAX served 59.8 million passengers and handled 1.8 million tons of freight and mail. LAX handled 70 percent of the passengers, 75 percent of the air cargo, and 95 percent of the international passengers and cargo traffic in the five-county Southern California region.

Brief History

Originally known as Mines Field, the LAX site has been used as a general aviation field since 1928. During World War II, it was used for military flights. Commercial airline service started in December 1946. The present terminal complex was constructed in 1961. In the early 1980s, LAX added domestic and international terminals and a second-level roadway.

Economic Impact

LAX is a dynamic airport which creates, attracts and supports economic activity throughout Southern California. LAX has an annual economic impact of \$60 billion. This is generated by aviation activity on or near the airport, by off-airport expenditures related to the use of aviation services, and by money that is again spent and circulated throughout the local economy. An estimated \$21 billion of this total is generated within the City of Los Angeles.

LAX creates jobs. An estimated 59,000 jobs, directly attributable to LAX, are located on or near the airport. Approximately 408,000 jobs, spread throughout the region, are attributable to LAX. The employment in the City of Los Angeles due to the airport is estimated to be 158,000 jobs. One in 20 jobs in Southern California is attributed to LAX operations.

Central Terminal Area

The central complex features nine passenger terminals connected by a U-shaped two-level roadway. Curbside baggage check-in is available on the upper departure level. Baggage claim is on the lower level. Brand-named and ethnic-styled restaurants, cocktail lounges, gift shops, newsstands, duty free shops for international flights, restrooms, public telephones and business centers offer convenient services for the traveling public.

Other amenities include a first aid station in the Tom Bradley International Terminal and special telephones connected to area hotels/motels, bus/limousine services and car rental firms serving

most Southland communities. Free shuttle service is provided between all terminals and remote parking lots.

The Encounter Restaurant is located 70 ft. above the ground in the center of the historic Theme Building complex. The restaurant, topped by an observation deck, features a space-age interior design. The Observation Deck offers spectacular views and is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays.

Air Traffic Control

The 277-foot control tower is uniquely designed to service LAX's four parallel runways. Individual local control and ground controllers handle their duties for each of the four runways. Clearance delivery, flight data and gate-hold positions are operated from the central position of the tower cab.

Coast Guard Facilities

The U.S. Coast Guard Air Station, the only one of its kind in the country, provides around-the-clock vigilance on search/rescue missions. Its personnel conduct maritime law enforcement on oil pollution in coastal waters. The station is located adjacent to the north runway complex.

Public Parking

Nearly 8,000 parking stalls are available in eight parking structures located opposite the roadways from the passenger terminals. In addition to the central terminal area parking, LAX has a capacity of over 4,500 parking stalls available in Parking Lot C.

Free shuttle service to airline terminals is provided around the clock from Lot C. Perimeter parking Lot C, northeast of the airport, also contains the Metropolitan Transportation Authority Bus Center, which connects public bus systems with the courtesy LAX shuttle bus service provided by the airport.

Public Transportation

Among the modes of transportation available at LAX are airport bus service, door-to-door shuttle van service, local bus lines, light rail, rental cars, and taxicabs. A free, frequent shuttle bus connects LAX with METRO's Green Line Light Rail. Shuttle service is provided at no charge for passengers making connecting flights between terminal buildings.

The LAX FlyAway bus service provides frequent nonstop transportation between LAX and Van Nuys Bus Terminal, Union Station in downtown Los Angeles and Westwood/UCLA.

Services for the Disabled

LAX provides many services to assist passengers or visitors with disability. Along with special parking spaces, rampways and elevators, a free shuttle equipped with a lift for disabled persons in wheelchairs operates between Lot C and airline terminals. Telecommunications Devices for the Deaf (TDD) or speech-impaired are available in all terminals.

Cargo Facilities

Fast becoming a major cargo distribution center, LAX has 1,000 cargo flights each day linking Los Angeles with the world. Its handling facilities are the 98-acre Century Cargo Complex, the 57.4-acre Imperial Complex, the Imperial Cargo Center and a number of terminals on the south side of the airport. For more information, see the Los Angeles World Airports Air Cargo Fact Sheet.