



## Ministerial Statement to the House of Assembly

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### Management and Modernisation of Bermuda Airspace

By

The Hon. Shawn G. Crockwell, JP, MP  
Minister of Tourism Development and Transport  
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#### **Mr. Speaker**

The Department of Airport Operations (DAO) has entered into an agreement with Boeing Digital Aviation, a business division of aviation giant, Boeing, to study the management and further modernisation of Bermuda's Airspace. The study will outline a multi-year plan that would see Bermuda collaborating with the Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) to become a certified Air Navigation Service Provider (ANSP). This certification will allow Bermuda to expand its area of airspace for Air Traffic Control management services from its present 5-mile radius, out to 40 miles and potentially out to a greater distance at a later stage.

The study will seek opportunities to accelerate the fast pace Bermuda already has taken in modernising its air traffic management system by developing Performance Based Navigation (PBN) procedures for arriving, departing and en-route traffic.

This enhanced modernisation shall enable airlines to realize greater efficiencies and improved operational safety.

**Mr. Speaker**

In December of last year, I, along with the Airport General Manager, Mr. Aaron Adderley, travelled to Atlanta to formally sign the agreement at Boeing's office for Airspace Services. We met with part of the team of engineers and professionals that Boeing has assembled to work on this very exciting project. I was afforded the opportunity to spend time in one of their state-of-the-art, 737 flight simulators in order to get an up-close demonstration of the aircraft's on-board navigational system. The Boeing 737 is the most widely used commercial aircraft in the world. This and other aircraft like it, stand to optimise its in-flight navigational performance capabilities when traversing through Bermuda's advanced airspace.

**Mr. Speaker**

This collaboration with Boeing represents the latest example of a continuous commitment to enhancing and modernising the airspace surrounding the L.F. Wade International Airport. In 2011, the Airport introduced Global Positioning System (GPS) technology to create more precise, safer, and fuel efficient landing approaches for aircraft arriving in Bermuda, which at the time, placed it ahead of a comprehensive overhaul initiative by the FAA to modernise America's aging and congested national airspace.

The initiative, known as NextGen, is designed to make air travel to, and within the United States, more convenient and dependable, while ensuring flights are as safe, secure and hassle-free as possible. The plan ensures better air traffic control,

greater fuel savings, and enhanced operational safety. These are factors that are all paramount in today's aviation environment.

**Mr. Speaker**

The 2011 project was followed by the first-phase completion in November of last year, of a multi-million dollar project that required the adjustment of the approach angle over Ferry Reach to Runway 1-2. This was necessary in order to comply with newly-introduced regulatory safety requirements as specified by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). You will recall Mr. Speaker that the project also included the installation of enhanced taxiway and runway signage; and high intensity, L-E-D runway centerline lighting.

**Mr. Speaker**

These recent capital investments have laid the foundation for us to move forward with this collaborative undertaking with Boeing to further modernise our airspace and increase the area over which Bermuda-based Air Traffic Controllers will manage. This latest initiative will usher in the introduction of PBN procedures for both arriving and departing Bermuda traffic as well as those flights traveling through our airspace to other destinations. Once again, GPS navigation technology will be used to ensure that aircraft utilising Bermuda's airspace fly more efficiently, more economically, more precisely and with greater operational safety.

**Mr. Speaker**

Bermuda's airspace is of strategic and operational importance to the United States National Airspace System (NAS) and is presently controlled by the FAA. For Bermuda to assume control of our airspace, we must move from the basic Air

Traffic Control Tower function currently in place to a more dynamic operation. There are significant costs in doing so that involve planning and execution of several projects related to the installation of automation systems, equipment and infrastructure upgrades, management, staffing, training and the expansion of existing facilities.

Concurrently, by providing certified Air Traffic Management services for users of our airspace, Bermuda is entitled to recoup those costs via user charges and implement a continuous improvement plan for its air navigation infrastructure. This ensures that the operation of the L.F. Wade International Airport, which already generates more annual revenue than expenditure when one takes into account Airport Departure Tax, remains financially self sustainable moving forward.

**Mr. Speaker**

By assuming management of our airspace and expanding its modernisation, we are able to create more career paths and job opportunities for Bermudians in what is an exciting and fast-paced industry.

**Thank you Mr. Speaker.**