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# NewsRelease

## **Princess Juliana Int'l Airport attends Europe's Business Aviation Convention and Exhibition**

**SIMPSON BAY, St. Maarten (May 13, 2012)**—The Princess Juliana Int'l Airport (PJIAE) will be represented at the 12<sup>th</sup> annual European Business Aviation Convention and Exhibition (EBACE), in Geneva, Switzerland, May 14 – 16, 2012.

PJIAE Operations Manager Michel Hyman and Special Projects Coordinator Robert Brown will have a packed agenda of events that include exhibits, what is being billed as “an incredible Static Display of Aircraft,” education sessions, maintenance and operations sessions (M&Os), and safety workshops.

The events will take place at the Palexpo and Geneva International Airport under the theme, “Flying the Return to Growth.”

Brown explained that the focus would be on growing the “Business Aviation Industry,” “Runway Capacity Planning and Non-scheduled Operations,” as well as “Opportunities in the European Business Aviation.” The future and direction of Business Aviation will also be examined and discussed, he said.

St. Maarten is second only to The Bahamas in the Caribbean in terms of Business Aviation and PJIAE is focused on further developing this market, Brown disclosed.

PJIAE is currently working on developing a new Fixed Based Operation (FBO), in line with its vision and strategy for FBO and Business Aviation Development with the aim of maintaining its leadership position in the region.

FBOs are companies that are generally defined as “primary providers of support services to general aviation operators at a public use airport.”

The vast majority of Business Aviation in St. Maarten comes from the US, and the airport intends to explore the European market to grow this business.

Passenger movement figures for Business Aviation in St. Maarten have increased significantly from 2009, when they stood at 9,140 passengers to a peak of 16,305 passengers in 2011, a jump of more than 78%. Nevertheless, this does not mean, according to Princess Juliana Int'l Airport Managing Director, Regina LaBega, that St. Maarten can remain complacent.

“Competition is increasing all over the region,” LaBega said. This is why it is important for the airport to attend events such as EBACE, which is the premier meeting place for the European business aviation community,” said LaBega.

“We have to stay abreast of the latest developments in this fast-changing sector if we want to remain competitive,” LaBega added.

According to Brown, EBACE is where all the new trends and innovations in Business Aviation are displayed. “One can get a sense of what others are doing and where the industry is going,” he said.

“[At EBACE] contacts will be made and new possibilities will be identified to attract new business to St. Maarten. This is another step in further developing our position in the Caribbean concerning Business Aviation,” said Brown.

**Photo caption:** Princess Juliana International Airport Terminal. (*PJIA photo*)