

Contact

Ms. Kalifa Hickinson
Marketing & Communications
PJIA
khickinson@pjiae.com

P.O. Box 460
Philipsburg, St. Martin
Caribbean
Tel (599) 554-7089
E-mail: Offshoreediting@gmail.com

Offshore Editing Services

NewsRelease

Strong smell causes brief evacuation at PJIA

Situation back to normal in less than an hour

SIMPSON BAY, St. Maarten (March 14, 2012)—The Princess Juliana International Airport (PJIA) was evacuated for a period that lasted less than an hour Wednesday evening due to a strong smell, which was causing passengers and staff to cough.

The evacuation, which began at 20:26 hours (8:26 PM), was initiated by the airport's Rescue and Fire Fighting department as a precautionary measure after being called by airport security to investigate the smell.

The security fan-out procedure went into immediate effect, while the St. Maarten Fire Department was notified.

All persons in the terminal were evacuated to a designated assembly point in the bus holding area.

The Fire Department did an assessment of the smell, which was initially reported as an acidic smell. The assessment, however, revealed that there were no chemicals present.

The evacuation was called off at 21:15 (9:15 PM) and the airport resumed normal operation. No bomb threat was reported nor were there any injuries arising from the emergency situation.

As a result of the evacuation, LIAT's flight to Antigua suffered a delay. However, LIAT's inbound passengers who were on board during the evacuation were allowed to deplane once the evacuation was called off.

"We commend our security and Rescue and Fire Fighting personnel for their swift action in ensuring a successful evacuation. We also commend the St. Maarten Fire Department for its immediate action," said PJIAE Managing Director, Regina Labega.

Airport security continues to monitor the situation.