



**MINISTERIAL STATEMENT
To the House of Assembly**

**by
The Hon. Wayne Furbert JP, MP
Minister of Transport
Update On Air Service Development**

Friday 24th February 2023

Mr Speaker, last year November, following my appointment as the Transport Minister, I stated my three high priorities; they were number one -air service development, number two- air service development and number three- air service development. Based on that I am sure most of you can guess what my number 4 priority is.

Increasing air service and securing airlift during the winter is of significant importance to the residents and visitors alike.

Mr Speaker, today, I am pleased to announce that our long-time airline partner JetBlue will provide direct winter service between Boston's Logan International Airport and Bermuda's LF Wade International Airport.

The announcement today is a direct result of months of discussions led by the Ministry of Transport, with assistance from the Bermuda Airport Authority, our partners, the Bermuda Tourism Authority, and Bermuda Skyport Corporation Ltd.

JetBlue's new winter schedule will include four round-trip flights per week between Boston and Bermuda, commencing November 2023 and running through to March 2024; JetBlue will resume its regular daily summer schedule starting early May. JetBlue's year-round services to Boston will complement its existing services between New York (John F. Kennedy International) and Bermuda, and the recently announced JetBlue's new, daily seasonal service between New York (LaGuardia) and Bermuda starting in May 2023.

Mr Speaker, a sustained year-round service between Boston and Bermuda has been a high priority for this Government, both as a service to Bermudians and our visitors. Many Bermudians benefit from Boston's array of services and amenities, such as medical treatment centres. It also cannot be overstated the importance of Boston as a key Bermuda tourism market, second only to New York City in the number of visitors it brings to Bermuda.

Bermuda will also benefit from increased services from these gateway cities:

- United Airlines' service from Newark is scheduled to start in March 2023.
- British Airways' daily service between Bermuda and Heathrow to commence in April.
- West Jet's increased service to Toronto

Mr Speaker, by no means is our work complete. As I stated recently, we were shocked to learn of American's decision to suspend their Miami route this summer. We understand the challenges airlines are having, and that global air service is down 70%. However, we will not let up, and will not let go to increase even more Air Services to Bermuda. We will continue to pursue meetings with American and other airlines to increase service to Bermuda.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Executive team at Jet Blue for believing in Bermuda. The Team and I had a great meeting, as they invited us into their headquarters.

I am confident that the Minister of Tourism with the Bermuda Tourism Authority will do the appropriate marketing to get the required Tourism numbers for the different seasons.

As I stated, air service development is a priority. We will continue working with our air service development team to engage all our airline partners as we rebuild Bermuda's air service connections.

Mr. Speaker, I will never say it will be an easy task to increase the airline service. But, because it is important to Bermuda, and although the odds may be against us sometimes, but as the good book says, I will continue to walk by faith and not by sight. People who walk by faith don't see obstacles; they see opportunities.

Mr. Speaker

Thank you.