



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

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Wilmington Airport – ILG to Host Full-Scale Emergency Exercise *Disaster Drill Set for Saturday, April 26*

NEW CASTLE, Del. – Today, Delaware River and Bay Authority (DRBA) officials announced that an emergency disaster exercise will be held at the Wilmington Airport (ILG) on Saturday, April 26, 2025 starting at 9:00 a.m. The emergency exercise, which is expected to continue through early afternoon, will take place near the former Atlantic Aviation complex off U.S. Route 13 on the north side of the airport. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) required exercise takes place at ILG every three years.

“Airport personnel, first responders, and law enforcement professionals are trained to handle all types of emergency situations, and this drill provides a valuable opportunity to collectively test communication, coordination, and rescue procedures,” said DRBA Director of Airport Operations Ben Clendaniel, referring to the simulated mass casualty incident with more than 30 victims. “Following the drill, the evaluators will offer their assessment and feedback on this training exercise that will help us determine the effectiveness of our response procedures and implement changes, if necessary.”

An emergency preparedness exercise consisting of a coordinated response among Delaware River and Bay Authority, local, state, and federal agencies, as well as fire and emergency medical units from New Castle County. Designated as Operation Cornerback, the exercise will be staged on the north side of the airport near the former Dassault Aviation hangars.

Participating agencies include the Federal Aviation Administration; Delaware Emergency Management Agency; Delaware Department of Forensic Sciences; Delaware Air National Guard Fire Department; New Castle County Emergency Medical Services; New Castle County Office of Emergency Management; American Red Cross; St. Francis Hospital; Wilmington Manor Volunteer Fire Department along with surrounding area departments.

"Official observers" from the DRBA, state and federal agencies along with invited guests will have the opportunity to view the drill. A group of "official evaluators" consisting of emergency responders and aviation professionals will assess the procedures of responding emergency units.

“We will always value and emphasize emergency preparedness and coordination with first responders,” Clendaniel added. “We also hope the situation never arises when we must apply what we learn and practice during these exercises.”

The full-scale emergency exercise will test emergency plans and procedures, communication framework and coordination abilities of the participants. The exercise will serve as the airport's official emergency drill that satisfies the Federal Aviation Administration requirement that all certified airports must conduct a full-scale emergency exercise at a minimum once every three years. In addition, airports must review their emergency plans every year.

The drill typically involves a simulated aircraft accident and tests the response procedures and equipment of fire-rescue units and other emergency personnel that would respond to an actual incident.

About the Delaware River and Bay Authority

The DRBA, a bi-state governmental agency created by Compact in 1962, owns and operates the Delaware Memorial Bridge, the Cape May- Lewes Ferry, and the Forts Ferry Crossing. The DRBA also manages two airports in New Jersey (Millville Executive Airport and Cape May Airport) and three in Delaware (Wilmington Airport, Civil Air Terminal and Delaware Airpark). All DRBA operating revenues are generated through the bridge, ferry and airport facilities. For more information, visit www.drba.net.