

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Special Olympics airlift expected to set new air traffic record at RDU

WHAT: More than 275 business jets will participate in the 4th Cessna Citation Special Olympics Airlift to transport 2,000 Team USA athletes from 28 states to Raleigh-Durham International Airport to compete in the 1999 World Summer Games. Planes will touch down every two-to-three minutes over a 10-to-11 hour period. RDU averages about 850 take-offs and landings per day. That number is expected to exceed 1,400 during the airlift setting a new air traffic record at the airport. The current air traffic record was set last Friday, June 18, with 950 take-offs and landings.

WHEN: Beginning Friday, June 25, at approximately 8:30 a.m., the first six aircraft from Washington, D.C. will land. A brief press conference will be held at 9 a.m. with Cessna Chairman and CEO Russ Meyer, Special Olympics Chairman Sarge Shriver and N.C. Governor James Hunt to officially launch the 4th airlift.

WHO: More than 260 companies from 40 states have donated their aircraft, pilots and fuel for the airlift. Thirty-one North Carolina companies have donated the use of their aircraft. Officials with the Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority, Cessna, the Federal Aviation Administration and Special Olympics World Summer Games will be available for interviews about this event.

WHERE: The Cessna Citation Special Olympics Airlift will take place in front of the Piedmont West Hangar, which has been converted into an athlete welcome center. The hangar, athlete credentialing tent and media office trailer are located across from RDU's Observation Park just south of the UPS Cargo facility.

HOW: As Citation jets land, athletes will be escorted into the Delegate Welcome Center for refreshments and entertainment while their luggage is off-loaded and sorted by volunteers and personnel with UPS. After receiving their credentials, athletes will then board buses for transportation to the East and West Villages.

MEDIA SHOOTING LOCATIONS AND STORY RECOMMENDATIONS

*An air-conditioned media office trailer complete with telephone, fax and data transmission capabilities has been installed to support media for this event. The media office trailer is located next to the large, 60 by 120-foot credentialing tent. Press information, requests for interviews, media registration and requests for escorts to the Delegate Welcome Center and onto the airside ramp will be handled from the media office. Reserved parking is available for media next to the office. Media must first register at the Media Office.

*A 40-foot flatbed trailer shooting platform is available for still and video photographers on the airside for unobstructed views of the arriving aircraft and athletes.

*A 40-foot high shooting scaffold has been installed for aerial type shots.

*Interviews with athletes, pilots, volunteers, airport officials, Cessna and FAA representatives will be available.

Related Story Ideas

*Cessna Aircraft Company and its support of the Special Olympics World Games. Logistics associated with organizing the airlift. N.C. Companies participating in the airlift. History of the airlift.

*How the Federal Aviation Administration is handling increased air traffic. An opportunity to see on

radar and shoot footage of all the incoming Cessnas will be available.

*Raleigh-Durham International Airport's involvement in the World Games and airlift. How the event has impacted overall airport operations and travel.

*Host Marriott Services is providing thousands of snacks and meals for athletes and volunteers throughout both the in-bound and out-bound airport operations.

*How United Parcel Service (UPS) is handling thousands of pieces of luggage for athletes participating in the World Games. UPS has also converted one of its Boeing 727 cargo planes into a passenger plane to transport Team USA athletes from Kentucky and Louisiana.

Information and contacts for these and other stories will be available in the Media Office Trailer at RDU.

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