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GERALD R. FORD INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

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Ford International Announces New Hearing Loop System

Facility becomes the only U.S. airport to offer assistive listening system

Gerald R. Ford International Airport officials are pleased to announce the installation of a hearing loop system on both airport concourses. This system enables individuals with telecoil (T-coil)-equipped hearing devices to have public address system announcements transmitted directly to their hearing aids. This assistive listening service is available at all airline gates and holdroom areas.

"The Aeronautics Board is delighted to offer this new service to our customers who use assistive hearing devices," said Aeronautics Board chairman John Van Laar. "By the direct transmission of gate and flight announcements to T-coil-equipped hearing aids, this hearing loop system will significantly enhance the airport experience for people with hearing loss."

Hope College psychologist and hearing assistance advocate David Myers noted that "this is a pioneering and model installation – the only airport in America to broadcast announcements throughout its concourses via people's own hearing aids. It puts the airport loudspeakers right in our ears!" Moreover, said Myers, "with hearing loops now in some 250 area worship places and public facilities, West Michigan has become the leading edge of a national movement to provide hearing aid-compatible assistive listening to people with hearing loss."

Vic Krause, former president of the Hearing Loss Association of America Grand Rapids Area Chapter, and Myers were invited to make a presentation on hearing loops to the Kent County Aeronautics Board in December 2006. "On behalf of HLA-GR, I want to thank the Aeronautics Board for making an investment in the hearing loop system that will benefit thousands of airport passengers with a hearing loss," Krause said. "For a person with a hearing loss to be able to hear gate and flight announcements with T-coil-equipped hearing aids will eliminate frustration and confusion and possibly even a missed flight."

Additional information about hearing loop systems is available at www.hearingloop.org.

Gerald R. Ford International is the second busiest airport in Michigan, and ranks among the top 15% of busiest airports in the U.S. The airport currently serves approximately 2 million passengers annually.

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