

Because of the unusual quantity of internal space available in the cabin of the **COBUS**, one current airport user of the bus has determined that it would also make an ideal Central Command Vehicle for use in accident or incident management. There is adequate room for Command Coordinators from Fire, Police, Airport Operations and other services to each have their own desk and communications equipment on board. In addition an on-board conference area enables direct communication and collaboration between all of these groups without the requirement of having to resort to radio or phone usage to coordinate activities. Please contact us for additional information about this exciting new development.

The recent international health concern over the spread of the A/H1N1 flu virus illustrated yet another special attribute of the **COBUS** Airport People Moving Bus fleet: because the driver's compartment is physically separated from the passenger compartment, local airport personnel can be segregated from passengers and flight crews arriving on international flights without concern for possible contamination. In essence, the bus becomes a mobile quarantine unit which can deliver the occupants of an arriving flight to the local health offices for examination before being admitted to customs and immigration areas. Internal ventilation systems assure that air and heat in each compartment can be separately and individually processed if desired thus minimizing potential for exposure to bus operators.

These are just some of the specialized uses that utilize the unique properties of the **COBUS 3000** and its siblings. If there is a requirement for a vehicle with an extraordinary amount of clear internal space (approximately 240 square feet) in an all-aluminum body, please contact **COBUS** Industries LP. We'll be glad to work together to meet your needs.

**Cobus Chatter** is published infrequently for the operators, owners and friends of the **COBUS** fleet in North America. Please send your comments and questions to Don Frassetto, President at 203 380 9575, or Erwin Zimmermann, Vice President at 207 483 2595, or by e-mail: don@cobus.us; erwin@cobus.us; or just direct an inquiry to info@cobus.us.



**COBUS INDUSTRIES, LP**

40 Robinwood Road  
Trumbull, CT 06611



## CHALLENGING TIMES REQUIRE ENTERPRISING SOLUTIONS!

### The news media headlines confirm what we all suspected:

- Airlines reduce schedules both domestically and on international routes.
- Orders for new aircraft predicted to fall by at least 10%
- Bookings down for summer and rest of the year
- More and more older aircraft make last flight to long term storage lots
- Fares were never lower in effort to attract passengers
- Airline consolidations result in fewer total flights – but load factors still fall
- Legacy airlines predicted to enter into bankruptcy – again

It doesn't sound very good, does it?

It puts additional pressure on the airport management community to determine how best to keep their airports solvent and yet still be ready for the inevitable rebound – as has happened several times before. After all, we all agree that the business of commercial aviation is highly cyclical – only the length and breadth of each cycle varies.

Because of the current financial challenges, many airports that had plans for constructing new terminals or concourses, or who planned to add additional gates to accommodate more aircraft and passengers (thus contributing to their revenues) are now taking another look at those plans and asking serious questions: "Do we really want to commit to major – or even modest – expansion projects at this time?" "Will the bond market support our efforts to raise adequate funds for these projects?" "If we postpone actual construction, how will we be ready for the increase in traffic once it returns?"

And perhaps the most searching question of all: "Is there another way, hopefully less costly and with the ability of rapid implementation, that we can accomplish our goal of handling more aircraft and more passengers without committing to "bricks and mortar" expansion programs?"

Whether on a temporary or permanent basis, the answer to the last question is a resounding YES WE CAN! (with apologies to the president!)

The solution is to employ the use of hardstands – parking aircraft "off-gate" and providing the equipment to safely and comfortably deplane and subsequently load passengers as well as transporting them to and from the terminal. The equipment necessary to accomplish this includes a set of passenger stairs (either truck mounted or towed into position with a baggage tractor) and a **COBUS Airport People Moving Bus**. Many airports in North America (BOS, JFK, ATL, FLL, IAH, LAX, PDX, DIA, CVG, YYZ and YEG) are already using this method of providing handling capabilities for more flights and passengers.

Whether used on an "ad hoc" basis or in scheduled operations, the **COBUS**, which is designed specifically for these operations, provides the passengers with the same confidence and comfort while being transported on the airport ramp that a rail-mounted People Mover offers – with the added flexibility of being able to revise its route instantly on an almost infinite basis. The **COBUS** is being used at many of the world's airports – over 275 of them – as a primary method of serving airlines. Airport planners at most of the world's airports include hardstands as a fairly large percentage of all aircraft parking places. Hardstands save money and also time. No need to construct additional contact gates with boarding bridges. Airlines also save money – generally using a hardstand eliminates the requirement for push-back tugs thus making the airport stop shorter and keeping the aircraft flying longer.

The **COBUS** is unique – designed specifically for the transport of large groups of people over relatively short



Typical view of aircraft on hardstand being served by **COBUS**.

(cont' on next page)

distances, primarily on airports – and contains a number of features that contribute to its wide acceptance around the world. It is a true low floor bus (a step-in height of only 11 inches) without any internal “step-up” areas. When measured by IATA standards for apron buses, it can carry 111 passengers, 10 of whom can be seated. Powered by a fuel-singy Mercedes 4-cylinder clean diesel engine of only 150 horsepower, it sips fuel at the rate of only 1.2 US gallons (4 litres) per operating hour. Equally efficient CNG power is also available.

The bus is constructed of aluminum (no rust) which provides a suggested life span of some 25 years! Fitted with extra large passenger doors – 3 on each side – the loading and unloading times are extremely quick – thus cycle times are reduced significantly. In addition the **COBUS** has many passenger-friendly features designed right into it – such as an engine exhaust system which

automatically diverts the exhaust to the opposite side of the bus from where the passenger doors are open.

The airport management community has really begun to evaluate the use of hardstand operations and has recognized their positive attributes: very low cost of implementation compared to construction projects; very favorable implementation times – just a few months compared to several years; a highly flexible system requiring little or no modification to existing terminal structures measured against significant passenger inconvenience when terminal/concourse projects are being constructed.

Perhaps it is time for your airport to consider the option of hardstand operations and how they may provide a large benefit. We at **COBUS** Industries would be glad to discuss it with you!

## NATIONAL TASK FORCE

**recommends contingency plans for airline on-board ground delays to include buses.**

The National Task Force to Develop Model Contingency Plans to Deal with Lengthy On-Board Ground Delays, which was established under the auspices of the U. S. Secretary of Transportation and which included airlines, airports, the F.A.A., the Department of Homeland Security, and consumer groups, was responsible for

- Reviewing incidents involving long, onboard ground delays and their causes;
- Identifying trends and patterns of such events;
- Recommending workable solutions for mitigating the onboard consumer impact of such events; and
- Drafting model contingency plans.

In a report issued in November of 2008, the Task Force found that among the causal factors resulting in such lengthy onboard ground delays were extreme weather, large scale unpredicted events (airport outages, ATC system outages, natural disasters, etc.), gate management and gate availability, shortage of available gates, facility related problems including availability (or lack) of compatible passenger loading bridges, and a lack or shortage of equipment including buses, airstairs, and snow removal equipment. Many other factors also contributed to these delays.

The very thorough report determined that “...airports may need to work with other aviation service providers during a response effort. The actions of multiple aviation service responders should be coordinated to ensure an effective response. . . . the local airport will need to establish in the preplanning effort the range of response

efforts that will require a coordinated response.”

In addition, when deplaning of passengers from remote locations is required, the airport should coordinate with airlines and other aviation service providers for the use of, buses, portable stairs and vertical lift equipment to support the deplaning of passengers with mobility impairments.

Airports currently having the availability of **COBUS Airport People Moving Buses** – and more than 275 of the world’s airports have almost 3,000 of these very special buses - have found that these buses are the ideal tool to transport passengers from disabled aircraft and from aircraft involved in lengthy on-board ground delays. When an Airbus A-340 skidded off the end of a runway in Toronto three **COBUS** were dispatched immediately to the scene and were able to bring all of the passengers and crew to a terminal in a matter of minutes. Similarly a flight that landed at Los Angeles with a nosewheel cocked out of position was able to discharge its passengers into a **COBUS** which then transported them to the airport terminal. Many other similar instances are a matter of record – with its extraordinary passenger capacity, the **COBUS** is the ideal unit for “irregular” operations and situations at today’s airports.

Is your airport adequately equipped for these unique situations?

(for a complete copy of the Task Force report, please send an e-mail request to [erwin@cobus.us](mailto:erwin@cobus.us))

## DFW DESIGNATES COBUS FOR IRREGULAR OPERATIONS

**Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport** has determined that the **COBUS 3000 Airport People Moving Bus** is the right unit to be positioned at the airport as part of its equipment fleet dedicated to Irregular Operations. The **COBUS** will be utilized to transport passengers back to the terminals from aircraft that are disabled on runways and taxiways or which have been immobilized away from a boarding gate due to air traffic control delays, extreme weather conditions, mechanical failures or other reasons.

**DFW** ordered the **COBUS** after evaluating several other makes and determined that only the **COBUS** met their stringent demands for this critical assignment. The requirements included compliance with the International Air Transport Association’s specifications for airfield operations as well as large passenger capacity and operational criteria.

We welcome **Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport** to the **COBUS** family!

## LATEST MEMBERS OF THE COBUS FAMILY IN NORTH AMERICA

We are very delighted that the airport directorates of both Edmonton, Alberta and Fort Lauderdale, Florida have determined that acquisition of **COBUS** buses would be in the best interests of their airports. Each one received two brand new Model 3000 buses in the last few months. Furthermore one additional **COBUS** has been added to the fleet at Houston International. They now join all of the other airports that are using these buses on a daily basis: BOS, JFK, ATL, IAH, LAX, PDX, DIA, CVG and YYZ.

### Where in North America?

**First three correct answers will receive a prize!**

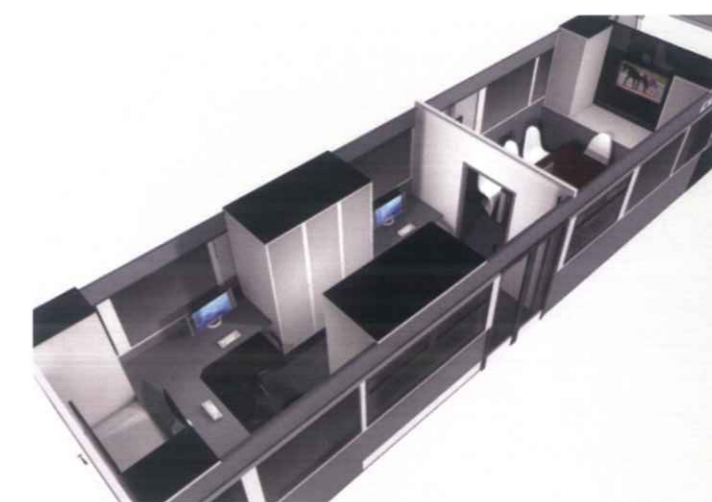


## SO WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO WITH A COBUS?

We have always stressed that the **COBUS** has been designed with a single purpose – to move large groups of people over relatively short distances. It is not an adaptation of a multi-purpose bus that was brought to an airport and pressed into use. The airports of this world are the primary places where these unique buses can be found in daily service; moving airline passengers between terminals, to and from aircraft parked on hardstands and as shuttle vehicles around an airport ramp.

There are also a few of these very special purpose-designed and built vehicles being utilized at venues which also have the same requirements: ski resorts, for example, where skiers are transported from car parks to the lift bases. Because of the large internal volume of the **COBUS**, these winter sports fans can bring their skis, backpacks and snow boards right into the bus for the short ride to the ski lifts. Similarly, cruise ship terminals use them to carry passengers between the terminal and the ships at dockside. Large amusement parks and sports facilities can also benefit from the significant carrying capacity offered by this bus.

Even more interesting is a version called **COBUS SCAN 3000** – a Mobile Security Screening facility which provides airports the ability to screen anyone, anywhere and at any time. Equipped with typical screening equipment found at any airport terminal, the **SCAN 3000** can be deployed to any site and commence security screening of airport workers, contractors and their employees, taxi drivers and their passengers, delivery vehicle operators – in fact anyone at all! Now being used at airports in the Middle East and in Europe, this specialized vehicle is being considered for use at major airports throughout North America.



**Main cabin interior plan of COBUS Central Command Bus**

(cont' on next page)