

UPS Expanding Kansas City Air Operations

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It takes plenty of space to park a wide-body cargo jet, and UPS's facility at Kansas City International Airport is getting a lot more of it. The facility, known as an air gateway, is being renovated and expanded. The most visible part of the work is expanding the ramp from two aircraft parking spots to five. The new ramp will be 534,000 square feet, more than nine football fields in size.

Even with all that space, parking a UPS 767, an aircraft with a wingspan of 167 feet, requires close coordination between the pilots and ground crew.

"Unlike a car, pilots can't see all around the aircraft, so we rely on a marshaller with illuminated wands to direct us into parking positions," UPS 767 Captain Ken Hoke said. "A 'wing walker' also walks alongside each wing tip to keep us clear of obstacles like vehicles and pallets of cargo. If necessary, the marshaller will give us an emergency stop by crossing the wands over her head."

Sharp turns also are tricky because a 767 is more than 180 feet long, and pilots sit several feet in front of the nose wheel. So pilots have to oversteer to properly line up the aircraft on the centerline of a parking spot.

"For a 90-degree turn, I usually wait to start

the turn until the line and marshaller are over my shoulder. Those side windows in the cockpit are really important for making tight turns. The delayed turn allows the plane to line up nicely on the centerline," Hoke said. The marshaller uses the wands to signal small corrections so the plane is perfectly positioned when it comes to stop.

A flight ends when the aircraft "blocks in": the pilot sets a parking brake, the wheels are chocked and engines shut down.

In addition to the new ramp, UPS also will install new sorting equipment at the gateway, more than tripling package handling capacity to 5,000 packages per hour.

Construction in Kansas City is planned to begin in late October with completion in the fall of 2021.

Source: [UPS](#)