



## The Evolution of Dulles

### History of the Mobile Lounge

Washington Dulles International Airport was the first airport in the nation specifically designed to accommodate commercial jet aircraft. When Dulles opened in 1962, the concept that made the new Airport outstanding and unique for passengers was the specially designed mobile lounge. These new vehicles were designed by the Chrysler Corporation in association with the Budd Company. The lounges transported passengers from the Main Terminal to the aircraft.

Each mobile lounge was constructed as a 54-foot long, 16-foot wide, 17 1/2-foot high vehicle, and carried up to 102

passengers, 71 of them seated, directly from the terminal to the aircraft on the ramp. This protected the passengers from weather, jet noise and blast, and also eliminated long walking distances. Thanks to the mobile lounge, passengers could walk less than 200 feet once they entered the Main Terminal until they were seated in the lounge for the short trip to their aircraft. The original "Budd" mobile lounges and similar vehicles called "Plane Mates" are still in use today.



Over time, the use of mobile lounges became less efficient as Dulles grew. The increasing number of aircraft required the construction of Midfield Concourses and led to frequent use of the mobile lounges as shuttles, creating more congestion on the apron. With continued airport growth, using mobile lounges would

limit the overall expansion potential of the airport and provide lengthy travel times for passengers to reach their gates. The AeroTrain will alleviate much of this.

### Future of the Mobile Lounge

The continued operation of the mobile lounges is critical to the flexibility of Dulles Airport. The lounges have the ability to transport passengers to or from any location as needed. They can also directly connect to aircraft on the airfield. Mobile lounges will also continue to supplement service provided by AeroTrain. This includes transporting passengers to the International Arrivals Building and to Concourse D.

