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Hillsborough County Commissioner Victor D. Crist *Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer*

*for information*  
Brenda S. Geoghagan *Director of Public Affairs*  
813-870-8707

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## NEWS RELEASE

### **Airport and Strategic Economic Partners Bring Home Nonstop service to Zurich, Switzerland, via Edelweiss Air**

*Starting May 25, 2012, Edelweiss Air will connect Tampa to Zurich twice weekly*

**TAMPA, FL (September 15, 2011)** – Today, Tampa International Airport CEO Joe Lopano announced the Airport and its strategic economic partners were successful at attracting Edelweiss Air to Tampa with new twice-weekly nonstop service to Zurich, Switzerland. The partners that helped convince Edelweiss Air that the Tampa Bay area was the right choice included: Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater, Tampa Bay & Company, Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation, The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce and AAA Auto Club South.

“As the Gateway to the West Coast of Florida and a primary economic engine for the Tampa Bay region, we have a tremendous responsibility and a great opportunity to grow our region,” stated Joe Lopano. “Our success in recruiting Edelweiss is the direct result of our new strategy of bold cooperation with key community partners who are helping us build and deliver compelling business cases to airlines around the world.”

The annual economic impact of Edelweiss’ new service for the Tampa Bay Region is \$31.6 million, and it will create 265 new jobs. Edelweiss Air will use an Airbus A330 with 332 seats on board. It is configured with 36 business class seats and 296 economy seats.

“I applaud Joe Lopano for his leadership and bringing together all of these regional partners. I have said from the beginning, we will win as a community and today proves that fact,” stated Steven Burton, Chairman, Tampa International Airport.

Michael Trestl, Business Development Manager, Edelweiss Air, explained, “We have decided to fully concentrate our efforts in Florida on Tampa. We will launch a year-round service two-weekly flights between Tampa and Zurich on Tuesdays and Fridays during the peak summer months and continue with one-weekly flight in the winter season of 2012/2013.”

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News Release  
Edelweiss Air  
September 15, 2011

Passenger traffic at Tampa International Airport is strong. During the first seven months, the Airport has carried 10.1 million passengers, and it is on target to carry about 17 million passengers for the full year. Year-to-date international arriving passengers have increased by 5.1 percent.

City of Tampa Mayor Bob Buckhorn stated, "We look forward to welcoming visitors from Switzerland and showing them all that our great city has to offer."

"With the incredible strength of the Swiss Franc, we anticipate the new service will be filled with people eager to spend their European currency in our region's resorts, shops, and restaurants," explained Paul Catoe, President and CEO, Tampa Bay & Company.

Edelweiss Air is a code share partner with Swiss International Air Lines. Edelweiss' Tampa service will offer access to 55 markets beyond Zurich. The Tampa flight will open up significant traffic to convenient one-stop connecting markets beyond Zurich including Frankfurt, Paris, Amsterdam, Rome, Munich, Dublin, Barcelona and Madrid.

"I can't tell you how pleased I am to represent the Chamber's 1,400 member companies that employ over 500,000 workers, as I say congratulations to the airport and all the economic partners, on a job well-done," stated Bob Rohrlack, President & CEO, The Greater Tampa Chamber of Commerce.

Keith Norden, President & CEO, Tampa Hillsborough Economic Development Corporation explained, "Currently, Tampa has 30 plus companies doing business with Switzerland. And we look forward to building even greater links between Tampa and Zurich."

D.T. Minich, Executive Director, Visit St. Petersburg / Clearwater stated, "We're thrilled to see Edelweiss come to the Tampa Bay area. When we made the pitch to Edelweiss, we showed them that we're already actively marketing our region's award-winning beaches and world-class art and culture in the Swiss market. Working with Joe and his team, we know this is the first success of many to come."

Bob Sharp, Chairman, AAA Auto South stated, "I am really proud that AAA is part of the team that recruited Edelweiss to Tampa. Our customers tell us we have a great airport but we need more nonstop service."

Edelweiss Air indicated its decision to focus on Tampa was not based just on the advantageous geographic location of Tampa with accessibility to main tourism attractions and the Gulf of Mexico. Moreover, it was the great support offered by the Tampa Bay business community.

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**Joseph W. Lopano**, *Chief Executive Officer*

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Tampa International Airport PO Box 22287 Tampa Florida 33622 phone 813-870-8700 fax 813-875-6670 www.TampaAirport.com  
Peter O. Knight Airport Plant City Airport Tampa Executive Airport