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DCA COMMISSIONER MINTZ ANNOUNCES RESULTS OF NEW YORK CITY AIRLINE SCALES ENFORCEMENT SWEEP TO PROTECT HOLIDAY TRAVELLERS FROM OVERCHARGES

DCA Inspects Every Airline Luggage Scale in New York City; Finds Initial 90 Percent Compliance and Issues 80 Stop-Use Orders for Failing Scales

Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Commissioner Jonathan Mintz today announced results of the Department's three-week enforcement sweep of every airline luggage scale used at John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK) and LaGuardia Airport (LGA) to protect holiday travelers from luggage overcharges. DCA found 90 percent compliance in its initial inspections and issued 80 Stop-Use Orders to airlines for failing scales. Upon re-inspection of failing scales after their recalibration by the airlines, overall compliance rose to over 98 percent.

"This holiday season, travelers can rest assured that they won't be overcharged for incorrectly weighed luggage," said Consumer Affairs Commissioner Jonathan Mintz. "Our inspectors have checked each and every scale in New York City's airports, failing faulty scales on the spot, and conducting re-inspections to make sure they've been fixed. We'd like to thank the Port Authority, as well as the staff at both JFK and La Guardia Airports, for their cooperation and assistance with our investigation."

The Department of Consumer Affairs conducted an investigation of all 766 scales used by airlines operating in New York City airports to ensure that airlines are not wrongly charging holiday travelers for excess baggage weight. In the first round of inspections, 89 percent of 629 luggage scales at JFK passed the Department's inspections, leading DCA to issue Stop-Use Orders for 69 faulty scales. At LGA, 92 percent of the 137 luggage scales passed the Department's accuracy test. DCA issued an additional 11 Stop-Use Orders to airlines for failing scales at LGA.

According to the New York City Weights and Measures Law, airport scales cannot read inaccurately by more than one pound. When scales do not read accurately, DCA issues Stop-Use Orders and a certificate of failed inspection for each failed scale, and requires the airlines to recalibrate the broken scales within five business days. Upon re-inspection, all but eight faulty scales at JFK were properly recalibrated. Three of the nine faulty scales at LGA were still reading inaccurately and were condemned. The overall compliance after re-inspection was 98.6 percent. No airline was found to have illegally operated a condemned scale.

Thanks to the cooperation of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, DCA also inspected 138 stores in the terminal areas beyond security checkpoints. Inspectors focused on refund policy disclosure, electronic store licensing compliance, and general price labeling requirements, issuing 109 violations.

DCA enforces the City's Weights and Measures Laws and inspects more than 19,000 scales each year in grocery stores, bodegas, laundries, delis, the City's airports, and other businesses across the five boroughs. Overall, DCA inspectors report that all scales across the City have achieved a 98 percent rate of accuracy.

DCA enforces the Consumer Protection Law and other related business laws throughout New York City. Empowering consumers and businesses to ensure a fair and vibrant marketplace, DCA licenses more than 78,000 businesses in 55 different industries. Through targeted outreach, partnerships with community and trade organizations, and informational materials, DCA educates consumers and businesses alike about their rights and responsibilities. DCA's Office of Financial Empowerment (OFE) is the first local government initiative in the nation with a mission to educate, empower, and protect New Yorkers with low incomes so they can build assets and make the most of their financial resources. Toward that end, OFE seeks to increase access to high-quality, low-cost financial education and counseling; improve access to income-boosting tax credits; connect households to safe and affordable banking and asset-building products and

services; and enforce and improve consumer protections to enhance financial stability. For more information, call 311 or visit DCA online at nyc.gov/consumers.