

Jamaica Air Shuttle suspends operations

Jamaica Air Shuttle, a commuter carrier based in Kingston, suspended flight operations on Feb. 18.

Christopher Read, managing director, made the announcement on the company's Facebook page, citing "the rigors of the prevailing toxic global economic climate that has sent the strongest of airlines scrambling for solutions to the challenges of skyrocketing operating costs and contracting margins."

Jamaica Air Shuttle operated domestic flights within Jamaica and regional flights to Santiago, Cuba, and Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

The company will try to "renegotiate a sustainable operating model that will assure viability sufficient to continue to provide service," Read said.

The carrier relaunched commercial passenger operations between Kingston and Montego Bay in December 2009. Commercial service between the destinations had been dormant for five years.

In 2010, the route network expanded to include Port Antonio, Ocho Rios and Negril, and in 2011 to Cuba and Haiti.

Jamaica Air Shuttle's base of operations was the Tinson Pen Aerodrome in Kingston, the city airport used for domestic air travel. Its fleet consisted of three 14-passenger Beech 99 aircraft. Travel weekly