

Keating leaving IFP

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BULLHEAD CITY — Jeremy Keating, executive director at Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport since 2014, will be leaving early next month to become assistant director at Palm Springs International Airport in California.

His last day at Laughlin/Bullhead, known by its International Air Transport Association code as IFP, for International Fun Place, will be Dec. 2.

"The decision to leave the airport and the area was not easy, but my family and I have decided to relocate for a number of reasons," Keating said.

Those reasons included "being closer to extended family in the Southern California area, having more amenities that we'd like to be closer to and taking on a new challenge of a larger airport."

Palm Springs Airport, known as PSP, is a municipal airport owned and operated by the City of Palm Springs and ranked as the 62nd busiest airport in the country.

The airport provides the only commercial service in the Coachella Valley with 12 carriers providing service to 30 destinations. Some service operates seasonally while other carriers operate year-round.

Keating has been leading efforts to return scheduled commercial service to IFP, which is operated by the Mohave County Airport Authority, a nonprofit corporation formed to develop, promote and improve air transportation in the county.

The airport originally began as a landing strip to support construction of nearby Davis Dam in the 1940s. Mohave County leased the facility from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management in 1968 and the lease was transferred to the MCAA in 1979.

Keating joined IFP as assistant director in 2011 and became director in 2014 upon the retirement of director David Gaines.

"I had have a great run here at Laughlin/Bullhead International Airport but I think it's time to bring in some new ideas," Keating said. "I have truly grown as a person and as a leader and I have gained invaluable experiences here in Bullhead City that I will never forget.

"I have thoroughly enjoyed assisting the airport grow and improve, and hope my commitment, dedication and passion to the organization have been beneficial to the community and the Airport Authority."

Ardie Lauxman, president of the MCAA board of directors, said Keating's efforts have been extremely beneficial.

"Jeremy is the type of manager that any airport facility would want and he's done everything asked of him and so much more," Lauxman said. "Further, he has initiated and maintained relationships within this community and this area that are solid and perpetual."

"While I hate to see him leave, we should all understand that only the best are selected for bigger and better career moves and Jeremy certainly fits that bill and we wish him only the best," Lauxman said.

Lauxman said he knew a day would come when Keating would leave. That day has arrived — or will within the next month.

"We have now been presented with that concern in real time and we will now begin a very diligent search for a new director," Lauxman said. "The process will take longer than Jeremy's notice but he leaves the airport complex in good hands with the existing staff."

Kellen Shireman, assistant director, likely will take over interim control of day-to-day operations.

"For all who take interest in our local airport and the air complex, know that we will search out the finest candidates available that would find interest in coming into leadership at our facilities and being part of our community as Jeremy Keating has," Lauxman said. "The bar has been set high."

Lauxman gave no timeframe for naming a new director.

Keating has been in airport operations for more than 25 years, with positions at Midland (Texas) International Airport, Gillespie Field in El Cajon, California, John Wayne Airport in Santa Ana, California, and San Jose (California) International Airport.

He came to Laughlin/Bullhead after briefly serving as director of the Davenport, Iowa, airport.

Keating said the success of IFP has been a direct result of cooperation with "the exceptional staff, stakeholders and board members."

"This community and the folks who live here are truly very special and you never know, I may be back some day," he said.