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FAA Issues Single Operating Certificate to Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways

Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways Meet Another Important Milestone in Their Integration of the Carriers. Customer Travel Plans Unaffected.

DALLAS, March 1, 2012 /PRNewswire/ -- Southwest Airlines (NYSE: LUV) and its wholly owned subsidiary AirTran Airways announced today the carriers received approval by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) for a Single Operating Certificate (SOC), marking a key milestone in the integration of the two airlines. The process of a full integration of the AirTran Airways fleet into the Southwest Airlines fleet (i.e., paint scheme and interior configuration) is not complete and the transition to a single ticketing system is a large and complex process that will take several years to complete.

"While this is an important milestone and one that we are extremely proud to achieve, as a practical matter, most Employees and Customers will see little or no immediate difference in the two airlines' flight operations, as allowed by having both carriers named on the Single Operating Certificate," said Mike Van de Ven, Chief Operating Officer at Southwest Airlines. "This will enable us to continue our integration in a coordinated and thoughtful manner while our Customers will continue to receive the highest level of service and Safety they have come to expect from both carriers."

The FAA, Southwest Airlines, and AirTran Airways will address the following regulatory changes today:

- The Southwest Airlines Air Carrier Operating Certificate will be amended to read "Southwest Airlines Co. and/or AirTran Airways Inc."
- The two airlines will conduct operations under a single set of FAA Operations Specifications.

Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways Customers will continue to experience the same great service from each airline. Customers flying on AirTran will continue to make reservations or check in at airtran.com or by calling 800-247-8726, and visit AirTran kiosks and airport ticket counters. AirTran Employees will still work on scheduled AirTran flights. Customers flying on Southwest can continue to find low fares or check in at southwest.com or by calling 800-435-9792, or at Southwest kiosks and airport ticket counters. Southwest Employees will still work on scheduled Southwest flights. Customers will continue to earn and redeem currency through the respective frequent flier loyalty programs, as they do today. These programs will be integrated over time.

"We cannot overstate the significance of having received our Single Operating Certificate—it is a monumental step in the regulatory process—and achieving it enables us to move forward with the integration of the two airlines into a single carrier. I would like to thank the Employees of Southwest and AirTran, the FAA, and the Department of Transportation for the

countless hours of work they have dedicated to achieve the Single Operating Certificate," said Van de Ven.

Southwest Airlines announced plans to acquire AirTran Airways on September 27, 2010, an acquisition that significantly expanded Southwest Airlines' low-fare service to more Customers in more domestic markets, creating hundreds of additional low-fare itineraries for the traveling public. Since Southwest Airlines closed the deal to purchase AirTran Airways on May 2, 2011, both carriers have worked hard to guarantee a thoughtful and smooth integration process while providing the same high level of Customer Service that Customers have come to expect. Throughout the next several years, Southwest Airlines will continue the process of welcoming AirTran Employees to the Southwest Family, converting AirTran Airways aircraft to the Southwest paint scheme and interior configuration, and transitioning AirTran Airways gates to Southwest Airlines gates (beginning with Seattle in August of 2012).

ABOUT SOUTHWEST

Southwest Airlines continues to differentiate itself from other low-fare carriers—offering a reliable product with exemplary Customer Service. Southwest Airlines is the nation's largest carrier in terms of originating domestic passengers boarded and has acquired AirTran Airways, now a wholly owned subsidiary of Southwest Airlines Co. Southwest serves 73 cities in 38 states and remains one of the most honored airlines in the world known for its commitment to the triple bottom line of Performance, People, and Planet. To read more about how Southwest is doing its part to be a good citizen, visit southwest.com/cares to read the Southwest Airlines One Report(TM). Based in Dallas, Southwest currently operates more than 3,200 flights a day and has more than 37,000 Employees.

ABOUT AIRTRAN

AirTran Airways, a wholly owned subsidiary of Southwest Airlines Co., has been ranked the top airline in the Airline Quality Rating study twice in the past four years. AirTran offers Gogo Inflight Internet Connectivity and coast-to-coast service on North America's newest all-Boeing fleet. The airline's low-cost, high-quality product also includes assigned seating and Business Class. To book a flight, visit airtran.com.

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