

The Airports Council International (ACI) announced Wednesday that that Juan Santamaría International Airport in Alajuela, northwest of San José, is the 3rd best airport in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

At Wednesday's annual ACI ceremony to honor the recipients of Airport Service Quality (ASQ) awards, the Juan Santamaría International Airport was recognized as the third best airport in the Latin American and Caribbean region, as well as the region's "best improved" airport. The top two airports in the region went to Cancun, Mexico and Guayaquil, Ecuador.

In 2010, the Juan Santamaría Airport underwent significant expansion, adding an immigration terminal with 28 positions as well as a new security checkpoint.

"The first and last thing a tourist sees in Costa Rica is the airport," Transportation Minister Francisco Jiménez said at a ceremony at the airport in November. "We now have a world class one." (TT Nov. 28, 2010)

The ACI determines its award recipients based on over 300,000 passenger surveys. In 2010, 153 airports were surveyed by ACI.