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2005 Domestic Airline Passenger Traffic Up 4.1 Percent From 2004

U.S. airlines carried 4.1 percent more domestic passengers in 2005 on almost the same number of domestic flights as they operated in 2004, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) today reported in a release of preliminary data (Table 1).

BTS, a part of DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), reported that the airlines carried 660 million domestic passengers during 2005, up from the 635 million carried in 2004. The rise in passengers slowed during the final three months of 2005 when only 379,000 more passengers flew than during the same three months of 2004, an increase of 0.2 percent (Table 2). The passengers were carried on 10 million flights in each year (Table 1).

In other domestic comparisons from 2004 to 2005:

Revenue passenger miles, a measure of the number of passengers and the distance flown, were up 4.5 percent.

Available seat-miles, a measure of airline capacity using the number of seats and the distance flown, were up less than 1 percent.

Passenger load factor, passengers carried as a proportion of available seats, was up 2.7 load factor points.

Flight stage length, the average non-stop distance flown per departure, was up less than 2 percent.

Passenger trip length, the average distance flown per passenger, was 867 miles per trip, up only slightly from 864 miles in 2004.

Among airlines, Southwest Airlines carried 88 million domestic passengers during 2005, the most of any airline (Table 3).

Among airports, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport was the busiest U.S. airport for domestic travel during 2005, with 39 million passenger boardings (Table 4).

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December 2005 Airline Traffic

For the month of December 2005, U.S. airlines carried 53 million domestic passengers, 0.2 percent more than in December 2004 (Table 5).

These passengers were carried on 805,000 flights, down 4 percent from the 843,000 flights operated in December 2004.

In other month-to-month domestic comparisons from December 2004 to December 2005:

Revenue passenger miles, a measure of the number of passengers and the distance flown, were up 2 percent.

Available seat-miles, a measure of airline capacity, were down 2 percent.

Passenger load factor, passengers carried as a proportion of available seats, was up 3.0 load factor points.

Flight stage length, the average non-stop distance flown per departure, was up 3 percent.

Passenger trip length, the average distance flown per passenger, was up 2 percent.

Among airlines, Southwest Airlines carried 7 million domestic passengers during December, the most of any airline (Table 6).

Among airports, Hartsfield-Jackson International in Atlanta was the busiest U.S. airport for domestic travel in December with 3 million passenger boardings (Table 7).

Additional airline traffic data can be found on the BTS website at TranStats, the Intermodal Transportation Database at <http://transtats.bts.gov>. Click on "Aviation," then on "Air Carrier Statistics (Form 41 Traffic)," then click on "T-100 Domestic Market."

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers detailing operations, passenger traffic and freight traffic. December traffic data are preliminary and include data received by BTS from 128 airlines as of March 14. Data are subject to revision.

Revised data from November 2005 and previous months are posted on the BTS website at <http://transtats.bts.gov>. BTS will release January traffic data and revised data from December and previous months on April 13.

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Table 1: Domestic Airline Travel in 2005 and 2004

	2004	2005	Change
Passengers	634,545,438	660,480,345	4.1%
Flights	10,090,680	10,090,274	0.0%
Revenue Passenger Miles(000)	547,958,502	572,885,732	4.5%
Available Seat Miles(000)	735,476,938	742,273,242	0.9%
Load Factor	74.5	77.2	2.7 points
Flight Stage Length*	594	605	1.8%
Passenger Trip Length**	864	867	0.4%

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market and Segment

* The average non-stop distance flown per departure in miles

** The average distance flown per passenger in miles

Table 2. Total Industry Domestic Enplanements

Month	2003	2004	2005	2004-2005 Pct. Change
January	43,365,042	44,223,065	48,220,892	9.0%
February	41,465,866	45,712,118	47,344,117	3.6%
March	50,404,158	54,649,236	59,178,294	8.3%
April	47,380,661	53,740,731	55,248,870	2.8%
May	49,413,200	53,421,459	57,587,754	7.8%
June	52,562,332	57,381,300	60,007,322	4.6%
July	56,167,980	60,067,644	62,746,539	4.5%
August	54,347,183	57,793,104	59,431,824	2.8%
September	44,605,229	47,996,736	50,775,534	5.8%
October	50,372,738	54,582,605	53,970,706	-1.1%
November	47,478,546	52,054,399	52,961,934	1.7%
December	50,146,795	52,923,041	53,006,559	0.2%
Annual Total	587,709,730	634,545,438	660,480,345	4.1%

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market

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AIRLINE TRAFFIC PRESS RELEASE
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Table 3. Top 10 Airlines, ranked by 2005 Domestic Enplanements
Ranked by 2005 domestic passenger enplanements
Passengers in millions (000,000)

2005 Rank	Carrier	2005 Passengers	2004 Rank	2004 Passengers
1	Southwest	88	1	81
2	Delta	78	2	79
3	American	77	3	73
4	United	55	4	60
5	Northwest	47	5	46
6	US Airways	37	6	38
7	Continental	33	7	32
8	America West	21	8	20
9	American Eagle	17	9	14
10	AirTran	17	12	13

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market

Table 4. Top 10 Airports ranked by 2005 Domestic Enplanements
Ranked by 2005 domestic passenger enplanements
Passengers in millions (000,000)

2005 Rank	Airport Name	2005 Passengers	2004 Rank	2004 Passengers
1	Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta	39	1	38
2	Chicago O'Hare	31	2	31
3	Dallas-Ft. Worth	26	3	26
4	Los Angeles Int'l	21	4	21
5	Las Vegas McCarran	20	6	19
6	Denver	20	5	20
7	Phoenix Sky Harbor	19	7	19
8	Minneapolis-St. Paul	17	8	16
9	Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County	16	9	15
10	Houston Bush Intercontinental	16	11	14

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market

**AIRLINE TRAFFIC PRESS RELEASE
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Table 5: Domestic Airline Travel in December

	Dec 2004	Dec 2005	Change
Passengers	52,923,041	53,006,559	0.2%
Flights	842,678	805,437	-4.4%
Revenue Passenger Miles(000)	45,501,397	46,426,090	2.0%
Available Seat Miles(000)	62,517,523	61,238,551	-2.0%
Load Factor	72.8	75.8	3.0 points
Flight Stage Length*	604	622	3.0%
Passenger Trip Length**	860	876	1.9%

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market and Segment

* The average non-stop distance flown per departure in miles

** The average distance flown per passenger in miles

Table 6. Top 10 Airlines, ranked by December 2005 Domestic Enplanements

Dec 2005 Rank	Carrier	Dec 2005 Passengers	Dec 2004 Rank	Dec 2004 Passengers
1	Southwest	7,260,803	1	6,628,179
2	American	6,418,518	3	6,122,148
3	Delta	5,516,023	2	6,596,761
4	United	4,618,922	4	4,783,477
5	Northwest	3,552,911	5	3,843,788
6	Continental	2,933,328	7	2,692,307
7	US Airways	2,466,772	6	3,081,361
8	America West	1,683,637	8	1,675,469
9	AirTran	1,495,076	11	1,212,609
10	American Eagle	1,414,947	9	1,245,386

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market

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**AIRLINE TRAFFIC PRESS RELEASE
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Table 7. Top 10 Airports ranked by December 2005 Domestic Enplanements

Dec 2005 Rank	Airport Name	Dec 2005 Passengers	Dec 2004 Rank	Dec 2004 Passengers
1	Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta	3,063,473	1	3,206,105
2	Chicago O'Hare	2,540,092	2	2,504,120
3	Dallas-Ft. Worth	2,150,771	3	2,117,884
4	Los Angeles Int'l	1,721,939	4	1,759,427
5	Denver	1,638,539	5	1,606,829
6	Phoenix Sky Harbor	1,607,197	6	1,556,407
7	Las Vegas McCarran	1,595,068	7	1,504,973
8	Houston Bush Intercontinental	1,379,465	10	1,253,510
9	Minneapolis-St.Paul	1,299,754	8	1,343,021
10	Orlando	1,279,965	11	1,212,242

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market

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