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September 2005 Passenger Airline Employment Down 5.5 Percent from September 2004

U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed 436,350 workers in September 2005, 5.5 percent fewer than in September 2004, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today (Table 1).

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), reported that the seven network carriers employed 293,767 total full-time and part-time workers – 8.6 percent fewer workers in September 2005 than a year earlier (Table 2). The low-cost carriers reported 74,425 total employees, 0.5 percent fewer than September 2004 (Table 3); and the regional carriers reported 54,608 total employees, 3.3 percent more than the previous year (Table 4).

September was the ninth consecutive month of year-over-year declines in airline employment levels for the scheduled passenger carriers since BTS began tracking the numbers. For the first time in 2005, part-time employee numbers declined with a 0.5 percent decrease in September 2005 from September 2004 (Table 1).

Many regional carriers were not required to report employment numbers before 2003, so year-to-year comparisons involving regional carriers, or the total industry, are not available for the years before 2003. BTS is providing pre-2003 comparisons for network and low-cost carriers, as well as pre-2003 numbers for individual regional carriers that were required to report in earlier years.

Airlines that operate at least one aircraft with the capacity to carry combined passengers, cargo and fuel of 18,000 pounds – the payload factor – must report monthly employment statistics.

Employment data for Independence Air, which changed its business model from a regional to low-cost carrier in mid-2004, have been included with low-cost carriers for 2003, 2004 and 2005. This change reflects that carrier's current business model as a low-cost operator.

Due to its recent purchase by Sky West Airlines, Atlantic Southeast Airlines was granted an extension for the filing of September employment numbers. As a result, its employment numbers are not included in any of the year-to-year totals for regional airlines in Tables 1, 4, 7 and 8.

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AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE
ADD ONE

Using Full-Time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations, employment at network carriers in September dropped 34.4 percent from 2001 to 2005. The biggest declines were at US Airways, down 51.8 percent; and United Airlines, down 43.7 percent (Table 5). In FTE calculations, two part-time employees are counted as one full-time employee.

The seven low-cost carriers, excluding Independence, that were required to report employment data in 2001 and 2005 employed 12.8 percent more FTEs in September 2005 than in September 2001 (Table 6).

The seven regional carriers that were required to report employment data in 2001 and 2005 employed 2.9 percent more FTEs in September 2005 than in September 2001. Of that group, Horizon Air and Air Wisconsin reported fewer FTE employees in September 2005 than September 2001 (Table 7).

In this release, Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4 use totals for full-time and part-time employees, while employee numbers in Tables 5, 6, 7 and 8 show FTEs.

The 5.8 percent drop in FTEs from September 2004 to September 2005 was the ninth consecutive month of year-over-year declines in airline employment levels for the scheduled passenger carriers. It was the largest decrease for that period. It was also the second consecutive month with a decline of more than 5 percent from the same month of the previous year (Table 8).

Network carriers operate a significant portion of their flights using at least one hub where connections are made for flights to down-line destinations or spoke cities. Low-cost carriers are those that the industry generally recognizes as operating under a low-cost business model with fewer infrastructure costs.

Regional carriers provide service from small cities, using primarily regional jets to support the network carriers' hub and spoke systems.

The Other Carrier category generally reflects those airlines that operate within specific niche markets such as Aloha and Hawaiian Airlines in serving the Hawaiian Islands.

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers as of Nov. 8.

Additional airline employment data can be found on the BTS website at http://www.bts.gov/programs/airline_information/number_of_employees/. BTS has scheduled release of October airline employment data for Dec. 20.

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Table 1: Passenger Airline Employment, September 2004-2005

	September 2004	September 2005	Pct. Change 2004- 2005
Total (39)			
Total	461,628	436,350	-5.5%
Full-time	406,304	381,306	-6.2%
Part-time	55,324	55,044	-0.5%
Network Carriers (7)			
Total	321,449	293,767	-8.6%
Full-time	283,301	257,009	-9.3%
Part-time	38,148	36,758	-3.6%
Low Cost Carriers (8)*			
Total	74,778	74,425	-0.5%
Full-time	67,737	66,722	-1.5%
Part-time	7,041	7,703	9.4%
Regional Carriers (13)**			
Total	52,848	54,608	3.3%
Full-time	46,084	47,639	3.4%
Part-time	6,764	6,969	3.0%
Other Carriers (11)***			
Total	12,553	13,550	7.9%
Full-time	9,182	9,936	8.2%
Part-time	3,371	3,614	7.2%

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Independence Air (formerly known as Atlantic Coast Airlines) data have been included in 2004 and 2005 totals for low-cost carriers, reflecting the current change in its business model from its prior designation of regional carrier.

** Atlantic Southeast Airlines was granted an extension for the filing of September 2005 employment numbers. For year-to-year comparison purposes, its employment data were not included in this table.

*** Other Carriers generally operate within specific niche markets. They are: Allegiant Air, Aloha Airlines, Casino Express Airlines, Continental Micronesia, Hawaiian Airlines, Midwest Airlines, Shuttle America, Sun Country Airlines, TransMeridian Airlines, USA3000 Airlines.

**Table 2: Total Number of Employees: Network Carriers,
September 2001-2005
(number of current carriers in parentheses)**

	Total	Pct. Chge from previous year	Full- time	Pct. Chge from previous year	Part- time	Pct. Chge from previous year
2001 (8)	446,950	N/A	392,836	N/A	54,114	N/A
2002 (7)	392,147	-12.3	346,047	-11.9	46,100	-14.8
2003 (7)	327,209	-16.6	288,174	-16.7	39,035	-15.3
2004 (7)	321,449	-1.8	283,301	-1.7	38,148	-2.3
2005 (7)	293,767	-8.6	257,009	-9.3	36,758	-3.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE
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Table 3: Total Number of Employees: Low-cost Carriers, September 2001-2005
(number of current carriers in parentheses)

	Total	Pct. Chge from previous year	Full-time	Pct. Chge from previous year	Part-time	Pct. Chge from previous year
2001 (11)	65,725	N/A	59,397	N/A	6,328	N/A
2002 (11)	69,530	5.8	63,152	6.3	6,378	0.8
2003 (8)	74,100	6.6	67,379	6.7	6,721	5.4
2004 (8)	74,778	0.9	67,737	0.5	7,041	4.8
2005 (8)	74,425	-0.5	66,722	-1.5	7,703	9.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Table 4: Total Number of Employees: Regional Carriers, September 2003-2005*
(number of current carriers in parentheses)

	Total	Pct. Chge from previous year	Full-time	Pct. Chge from previous year	Part-time	Pct. Chge from previous year
2003 (11)	38,778	N/A	33,962	N/A	4,816	N/A
2004 (13)	52,848	36.3	46,084	35.7	6,764	40.4
2005 (13)	54,608	3.3	47,639	3.4	6,969	3.0

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Atlantic Southeast Airlines was granted an extension for the filing of September 2005 employment numbers. For year-to-year comparison purposes, its employment numbers were not included in this table.

NOTE: Regional group numbers for years before 2003 are not included because of the limited number of regional carriers that met the requirement for filing reports.

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**AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE
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Table 5: Network Carrier FTE Employees, September 2001-2005*
(Ranked by September 2005 FTE Employees)

Rank		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Percentage Full-time Employees	
							2001	2005
1	American**	91,300	99,422	80,665	79,166	75,460	86.4	86.2
2	United	95,836	79,121	59,609	58,447	53,916	90.4	88.8
3	Delta	75,229	65,611	58,466	57,243	50,745	83.0	88.9
4	Northwest	47,132	44,542	38,075	37,528	32,999	96.3	94.1
5	Continental	39,662	36,818	34,580	34,512	32,587	80.0	80.4
6	US Airways	42,909	33,302	26,270	25,672	20,663	90.4	86.0
7	Alaska	10,157	10,283	10,028	9,809	9,018	87.6	89.4
8	TWA	17,670	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	94.3	N/A
	Total	419,895	369,099	307,693	302,377	275,388	87.9	87.5

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Detail may not add to total due to rounding

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

**American Airline's statistics beginning in June 2001 reflect that carrier's absorption of former TWA employees that were retained by AA after its April 2001 acquisition of TWA's assets.

Table 6: Low-Cost Carrier FTE Employees, September 2001-2005*
(Ranked by September 2005 FTE Employees)

Rank		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Percentage Full-time Employees	
							2001	2005
1	Southwest	30,947	33,609	32,563	30,657	31,382	97.7	98.4
2	America West	12,263	11,691	10,907	11,456	11,769	79.9	76.8
3	JetBlue	1,787	3,249	4,800	6,256	7,885	73.1	82.1
4	AirTran	3,797	4,501	5,231	5,637	6,302	90.7	92.4
5	ATA	6,893	6,443	7,580	6,545	4,097	88.3	91.1
6	Frontier	2,282	2,637	3,173	4,068	4,097	81.9	79.3
7	Independence**	N/A	N/A	4,187	4,310	3,020	N/A	84.7
8	Spirit	1,944	2,300	2,299	2,330	2,023	86.6	89.0
	Total***	59,913	64,430	70,740	71,258	70,574	90.5	89.6

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Detail may not add to total due to rounding

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

**Employment numbers in 2003, 2004 and 2005 for Independence Air, which changed its business model from a regional to low-cost carrier in mid-2004, are included with low-cost carriers. The carrier did not meet the standard for filing in previous years.

*** Total numbers for carriers operating in 2005.

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Table 7: Regional Carrier FTE Employees, September 2000-2004*
(Ranked by September 2005 FTE Employees)

Rank		2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Percentage Full-time Employees	
							2001	2005
1	American Eagle	9,222	8,616	7,478	8,942	9,448	87.2	88.5
2	Sky West	N/A	N/A	5,343	6,716	8,132	N/A	86.5
3	Comair	N/A	N/A	5,648	5,907	6,589	N/A	91.9
4	Express Jet	N/A	4,694	5,653	6,223	6,492	N/A	91.7
5	Horizon	3,636	3,436	3,329	3,318	3,450	83.9	87.2
6	Mesaba	3,107	3,150	3,001	3,130	3,371	76.4	74.5
7	Mesa	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,866	3,343	N/A	98.8
8	Pinnacle	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,418	3,080	N/A	70.9
9	Air Wisconsin	2,964	2,769	2,634	3,766	2,388	89.7	92.1
10	Executive	1,202	1,141	1,808	1,864	1,746	78.7	78.1
11	PSA	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,797	1,660	N/A	84.9
12	Trans States	1,093	1,050	1,176	1,436	1,428	91.3	95.1
13	Atlantic Southeast**	4,130	4,901	5,365	5,857	*	92.6	*
	Total***	21,224	24,856	36,070	49,383	51,127	85.0	87.2

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Many regional carriers were not required to report employment numbers before 2003 so year-to-year comparisons involving regional carriers as a group, or the full industry, are not appropriate for earlier years.

Note: Detail may not add to total due to rounding

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

** Atlantic Southeast Airlines was granted an extension for the filing of September 2005 employment numbers.

*** Totals exclude Atlantic Southeast Airlines and include only carriers operating and reporting in 2005.

N/A: Not applicable because carriers did not meet the standard for filing.

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Table 8: Change in FTE Employees from the Previous Year*

Percentage change compared to same month the previous year

Month	Network Carriers (Pct. Change)	Low-Cost Carriers** (Pct. Change)	Regional Carriers (Pct. Change)	All Passenger Airlines*** (Pct. Change)
Dec. 2003-Dec. 2004	-3.5	0.5	29.4	0.7
Jan. 2004-Jan. 2005	-4.3	0.4	15.8	-1.0
Feb. 2004-Feb. 2005	-4.6	0.6	13.8	-1.4
Mar. 2004-Mar. 2005	-5.0	0.0	13.3	-1.9
Apr. 2004-Apr. 2005	-6.5	-0.7	12.2	-3.1
May 2004-May 2005	-6.7	-1.0	10.9	-3.4
June 2004-June 2005	-7.0	-1.1	10.0	-3.7
July 2004-July 2005	-5.6	-1.5	4.9	-3.3
Aug. 2004-Aug. 2005	-9.0	-0.7	3.9	-5.7
Sept. 2004-Sept. 2005****	-8.9	-1.0	3.5	-5.8

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

**Employment numbers in 2003, 2004 and 2005 for Independence Air, which changed its business model from a regional to low-cost carrier in mid-2004, are included with low-cost carriers.

*** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

**** Atlantic Southeast Airlines was granted an extension for the filing of September 2005 employment numbers. For year-to-year comparison purposes, its numbers are not included in September 2004.

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