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September 2005 Airline Traffic Data: Nine-Month Domestic Traffic Up 5.3 Percent From 2004

U.S. airlines carried 5.3 percent more domestic passengers and flew 1.2 percent more domestic flights during the first nine months of 2005 than they did during the same period 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 500.4 million domestic passengers during the first nine months of 2005, up from the 475.0 million carried between January and September 2004 (Table 2). The passengers were carried on 7.65 million flights, up 1.2 percent from the 7.55 million flights operated in 2004 (Table 1).

In other domestic comparisons from the first nine months of 2004 to the first nine months of 2005:

Revenue passenger miles, a measure of the number of passengers and the distance flown, were up 5.5 percent.

Available seat-miles, a measure of airline capacity, were up 1.8 percent.

Passenger load factor, passengers carried as a proportion of available seats, was up 2.6 load factor points.

Flight stage length, the average non-stop distance flown per departure, was up 1.7 percent.

Passenger trip length, the average distance flown per passenger, was 869 miles per trip, up only slightly from 868 the first nine months of 2004.

Among airlines, Southwest Airlines carried 66.2 million domestic passengers during the first nine months of 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 the first nine months of 2005, with 29.6 million passenger boardings (Table 4).

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September 2005 Airline Traffic

For the month of September 2005, U.S. airlines carried 50.7 million domestic passengers, 5.7 percent more than in September 2004 (Table 5).

These passengers were carried on 806,598 flights, down 2.8 percent from the 829,591 flights operated in September 2004.

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

Revenue passenger miles, a measure of the number of passengers and the distance flown, were up 6.7 percent.

Available seat-miles, a measure of airline capacity, were up 1.4 percent.

Passenger load factor, passengers carried as a proportion of available seats, was up 3.7 load factor points.

Flight stage length, the average non-stop distance flown per departure, was up 4.4 percent.

Passenger trip length, the average distance flown per passenger, was up 0.9 percent.

Among airlines, Southwest Airlines carried 7.0 million domestic passengers during September, the most of any airline (Table 6).

Among airports, Hartsfield-Jackson International in Atlanta was the busiest U.S. airport for domestic travel during September, with 2.9 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. September traffic data are preliminary and include data received by BTS from 130 airlines as of Dec. 13. Data are subject to revision.

Revised data from August 2005 and previous months are posted on the BTS website at <http://transtats.bts.gov>. BTS will release October traffic data and revised data from September and previous months on Jan. 12.

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Table 1: Domestic Airline Travel January to September

	Jan-Sept. 2004	Jan-Sept. 2005	Change
Passengers	474,999,570	500,366,248	5.3%
Flights	7,551,311	7,645,055	1.2%
Revenue Passenger Miles(000)	412,394,705	434,904,869	5.5%
Available Seat Miles(000)	550,843,960	560,971,299	1.8%
Load Factor	74.9	77.5	2.6 points
Flight Stage Length*	593	603	1.7%
Passenger Trip Length**	868	869	0.1%

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	48,204,617	9.0%
February	41,480,320	45,726,295	47,327,802	3.5%
March	50,404,158	54,649,236	59,145,660	8.2%
April	47,380,661	53,740,731	55,244,677	2.8%
May	49,430,970	53,421,459	57,583,259	7.8%
June	52,562,332	57,381,300	60,001,374	4.6%
July	56,167,980	60,067,644	62,739,860	4.4%
August	54,347,183	57,793,104	59,387,946	2.8%
September	44,605,229	47,996,736	50,731,053	5.7%
October	50,372,738	54,582,605		
November	47,478,546	52,054,399		
December	50,146,795	52,923,041		
Annual Total	587,743,957	634,561,619		
Jan.-Sept. Total	439,743,875	474,999,570	500,366,248	5.3%

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 January-September 2005 Domestic Enplanements

Jan-Sept 2005 Rank	Carrier	Jan-Sept 2005 Passengers	Jan-Sept 2004 Rank	Jan-Sept 2004 Passengers
1	Southwest	66,191,678	1	60,954,558
2	Delta	60,512,266	2	59,493,659
3	American	58,326,385	3	54,663,177
4	United	41,473,808	4	45,590,457
5	Northwest	36,052,931	5	34,453,224
6	US Airways	29,042,430	6	28,203,578
7	Continental	24,463,264	7	23,547,756
8	America West	15,784,275	8	15,069,456
9	American Eagle	12,475,450	10	10,565,247
10	AirTran	12,156,299	11	9,634,028

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

Table 4. Top 10 Airports ranked by January-September 2005 Domestic Enplanements

Jan-Sept 2005 Rank	Airport Name	Jan-Sept 2005 Passengers	Jan-Sept 2004 Rank	Jan-Sept 2004 Passengers
1	Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta	29,565,661	1	28,144,620
2	Chicago O'Hare	23,483,818	2	23,337,238
3	Dallas-Ft. Worth	19,081,974	3	19,306,887
4	Los Angeles Int'l	16,086,044	4	16,082,157
5	Las Vegas McCarran	15,425,684	6	14,468,966
6	Denver	15,170,362	5	14,944,810
7	Phoenix Sky Harbor	14,607,535	7	13,900,898
8	Minneapolis-St.Paul	12,786,266	8	12,236,689
9	Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County	11,921,295	9	11,377,793
10	Orlando	11,749,327	10	10,664,262

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

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

	Sept 2004	Sept 2005	Change
Passengers	47,996,736	50,731,053	5.7%
Flights	829,591	806,598	-2.8%
Revenue Passenger Miles(000)	40,985,292	43,740,864	6.7%
Available Seat Miles(000)	58,243,443	59,031,203	1.4%
Load Factor	70.4	74.1	3.7 points
Flight Stage Length*	579	605	4.5%
Passenger Trip Length**	854	862	0.9%

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 September 2005 Domestic Enplanements

Sept 2005 Rank	Carrier	Sept 2005 Passengers	Sept 2004 Rank	Sept 2004 Passengers
1	Southwest	6,991,028	1	6,128,380
2	American	5,906,868	3	5,326,779
3	Delta	5,611,032	2	5,609,903
4	United	4,340,049	4	4,805,982
5	Northwest	3,557,022	5	3,455,637
6	US Airways	2,643,120	6	2,732,847
7	Continental	2,366,756	7	2,267,568
8	America West	1,646,390	8	1,625,499
9	American Eagle	1,410,142	9	1,228,603
10	SkyWest	1,332,311	10	1,190,535

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 September 2005 Domestic Enplanements

Sept 2005 Rank	Airport Name	Sept 2005 Passengers	Sept 2004 Rank	Sept 2004 Passengers
1	Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta	2,871,463	1	2,657,899
2	Chicago O'Hare	2,548,247	2	2,561,656
3	Dallas-Ft. Worth	2,001,639	3	1,990,584
4	Los Angeles Int'l	1,654,880	4	1,617,954
5	Las Vegas McCarran	1,644,724	5	1,566,456
6	Denver	1,613,489	6	1,553,272
7	Phoenix Sky Harbor	1,481,238	7	1,417,462
8	Minneapolis-St.Paul	1,307,466	8	1,244,026
9	Detroit Metropolitan Wayne County	1,236,799	9	1,194,433
10	Seattle-Tacoma	1,139,243	10	1,100,135

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

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