



U.S. Department of Transportation
Bureau of Transportation Statistics
Washington, D.C.
www.bts.gov
BTS DATA

BTS 5-04
Thursday, March 11, 2004

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**BTS Releases December Airline Traffic Data;
December 2003 Domestic Traffic Down 1.2 Percent From December 2002**

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) today reported, in a release of preliminary data, that U.S. airlines carried 49.3 million domestic passengers in December, 1.2 percent less than in December 2002 (Table 1).

These passengers were carried on 779,837 flights, down 1.2 percent from the flights operated in December 2002.

In other domestic comparisons from December 2002 to December 2003:

Revenue passenger miles, a measure of the number of passengers and the distance flown, were up 0.5 percent.

Available seat-miles, a measure of airline capacity, were up 3.6 percent.

Load factor, a measure of how many seats are sold and used, was down 2.2 percentage points.

Flight stage length, the average non-stop distance, was up 6.0 percent.

Passenger trip length, the average distance passengers travel, was up 1.8 percent.

In the fourth quarter of 2003, airlines carried 2.8 percent more passengers on 1.3 percent fewer flights than in 2002. (Table 2A)

Among airlines, Delta Airlines carried 6.5 million domestic passengers in December, the most of any airline (Table 3).

Among airports, Hartsfield-Jackson International in Atlanta continued in December to be the busiest domestic airport, with 3.1 million passenger boardings (Table 4).

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Table 1: Domestic Airline Travel in December

	December 2002	December 2003
Passengers	49,943,623	49,333,847
Flights	789,099	779,837
Revenue Passenger Miles(000)	41,720,737	41,940,583
Available Seat-Miles(000)	57,257,280	59,292,201
Load factor	72.9%	70.7%
Flight stage length	577	611
Passenger trip length	835	850

Source: T-100 Domestic Market and Segment

Table 2. Total Industry Domestic Enplanements

Month	2002	2003
January	*	43,436,159
February	*	41,529,612
March	*	50,475,121
April	*	47,559,030
May	*	49,582,440
June	*	52,699,681
July	*	56,215,894
August	*	54,387,522
September	*	44,362,041
October	48,322,274	50,192,395
November	44,270,732	46,947,616
December	49,943,623	49,333,847

Source: T-100 Domestic Market

* Commuter and small certificated carriers began reporting traffic data in October 2002. Comparable numbers are not available for earlier months.

Table 2A: Domestic Airline Travel in the 4th Quarter

	4th Quarter2002	4th Quarter2003
Passengers	142,536,629	146,473,858
Flights	2,383,605	2,352,574
Revenue Passenger Miles (000)	116,950,649	123,263,932
Available Seat-Miles (000)	168,992,935	173,807,245
Load factor	69.2%	70.9%
Flight stage length	567	597
Passenger trip length	821	842

Source: T-100 Domestic Market and Segment

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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.”

Table 3. Top 10 Airlines, ranked by December 2003 Domestic Enplanements

Rank	Airline Name	December 2002	November 2003	December 2003	Dec. 2002 Rank
1	Delta Airlines	7,233,741	6,240,097	6,503,916	1
2	Southwest Airlines	6,109,854	6,013,106	6,119,147	3
3	American Airlines	6,477,632	5,449,401	5,449,401	2
4	United Airlines	5,074,698	4,391,521	4,742,188	4
5	Northwest Airlines	3,746,283	3,393,827	3,723,150	5
6	US Airways	3,264,567	3,088,498	3,128,235	6
7	Continental Airlines	2,667,298	2,493,280	2,672,575	7
8	America West Airlines	1,579,566	1,499,507	1,569,945	8
9	Alaska Airlines	1,082,705	1,042,001	1,133,722	9
10	American Eagle Airlines	927,208	1,014,337	1,059,268	10

Source: T-100 Domestic Market

Table 4. Top 10 Airports ranked by December 2003 Domestic Enplanements

Rank	Airport Name	December 2002	November 2003	December 2003	Dec. 2002 Rank
1	Hartsfield-Jackson International	3,088,839	2,929,038	3,077,887	1
2	O’Hare International	2,402,166	2,318,863	2,406,496	2
3	Dallas-Ft Worth International	1,993,161	1,942,290	2,006,637	3
4	Los Angeles International	1,707,000	1,551,266	1,668,936	4
5	Denver International	1,440,118	1,284,380	1,493,820	6
6	Phoenix Sky Harbor International	1,478,807	1,337,713	1,462,861	5
7	Las Vegas McCarran International	1,209,454	1,372,095	1,305,447	9
8	Minneapolis-St. Paul International	1,244,717	1,143,194	1,282,399	7
9	Detroit Metro Wayne International	1,227,307	1,142,559	1,242,975	8
10	George Bush Intercontinental	1,150,807	1,100,066	1,198,414	10

Source: T-100 Domestic Market

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics by commercial air carriers detailing operations, passenger traffic and freight traffic. December 2003 traffic data are preliminary and include data received by BTS from 100 airlines as of Mar. 9. Data are subject to revision.

Revised data from November and previous months are posted on the BTS website at <http://transtats.bts.gov>. BTS will release January traffic data on Apr. 15.

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