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Research and Innovative Technology Administration BTS Data

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February 2007 Passenger Airline Employment Up 0.2 Percent from February 2006

U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed 0.2 percent more workers in February 2007 than in February 2006, the first increase in full-time equivalent employee (FTE) levels for the scheduled passenger carriers from the same month of the previous year since December 2004, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today (Table 2). FTE calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), reported that only the network carrier group reported fewer FTE employees in February than in the prior year with a 2.2 percent decrease, while all other carriers combined employed 5.0 percent more FTEs than a year earlier (Table 1).

Adding FTEs from February 2006 to February 2007 were network carriers Continental Airlines and Alaska Airlines (Table 9), all of the low-cost carriers except for ATA Airlines (Table 12), and regional carriers SkyWest Airlines, ExpressJet Airlines, Comair Airlines, Atlantic Southeast Airlines, Horizon Airlines, Mesa Airlines, Pinnacle Airlines, Shuttle America Airlines, Republic Airlines and GoJet Airlines (Table 15).

Scheduled passenger airlines include network, low-cost, regional and other airlines. 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.

The seven network carriers employed 262,400 FTEs in February, 64.7 percent of the passenger airline total, while low-cost carriers employed 17.6 percent and regional carriers employed 14.8 percent (Table 4). The network carriers have employed fewer FTEs each February compared to the previous year since 2002, the only carrier group to do so (Table 5).

American Airlines employed the most FTEs in February among the network carriers, Southwest Airlines employed the most among low-cost carriers, and American Eagle Airlines employed the most among regional carriers. Seven of the top 10 employers in the industry are network carriers (Table 6).

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Network Airlines

Network carrier FTEs declined 2.2 percent in February 2007 compared to February 2006, the smallest drop from the same month of the previous year since November 2004 (Table 7).

Two network carriers increased FTEs from February 2006 to February 2007. Continental's workforce grew 5.5 percent while Alaska's rose 3.6 percent. The largest FTE decreases were reported by Delta Air Lines, 5.0 percent, and Northwest Airlines, 5.9 percent (Table 9).

Collectively, the seven network carriers reduced their FTE headcount by 23.3 percent, or 79,900 FTEs, from February 2003 to February 2007. Network carrier FTEs dropped from 342,300 to 262,400during the four-year period (Table 8).

FTEs at all seven network carriers declined in February 2007 from February 2003. The biggest percentage decline was at Northwest, down 31.3 percent, a reduction of 13,300 FTEs. United Airlines, Delta, American Airlines and US Airways all reported cuts of more than 20 percent in the four years. Continental's FTEs were down 2.2 percent and Alaska's were down 7.8 percent during that time (Table 9).

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.

Data for US Airways and America West Airlines, now in the process of merging operations, are separately reported – US Airways' data are included in the network carriers' category and America West's in the low-cost carriers' category.

Low-Cost Airlines

Low-cost carrier FTEs rose 5.0 percent in February 2007 compared to February 2006, the fifth consecutive increase after 18 consecutive decreases from the previous year. It was the largest increase from the same month of the previous year since February 2004 (Table 10).

All the low-cost carriers had FTE increases from February 2006 to February 2007 except ATA, which reported a 21.7 percent decline. Only AirTran Airways reported an increase of more than 10 percent (Table 12).

Low-cost carrier FTEs were 65,900 in February 2003, 68,000 in February 2006 and 71,400 in February 2007. The rise from 2003 to 2007 was 8.3 percent (Table 11).

Low-cost carriers are those that the industry recognizes as operating under a low-cost business model, with fewer infrastructure costs and greater expectations of productivity.

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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 2004 and 2005 for consistency. The airline discontinued all flights on Jan. 5, 2006.

Regional Airlines

Regional carrier FTEs were up 5.9 percent in February 2007 compared to February 2006, the largest increase in FTEs from the previous year since July 2005 (Table 13).

GoJet and Republic reported the largest increases in the group. GoJet employed 54.6 percent more FTEs in February 2007 than February 2006 while Republic employed 129.9 percent more (Table 15).

Regional carrier FTEs rose from 48,900 in February 2004 to 59,900 in February 2007, an increase of 22.4 percent (Table 14).

The 10 regional carriers reporting employment data in both 2003 and 2007 employed 19.9 percent more FTEs in February 2007 than in February 2003. Of that group, Air Wisconsin, Mesaba Airlines and Executive Airlines were the only carriers to report fewer FTEs in February 2007 than February 2003 (Table 15).

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

Reporting Notes

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.

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

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers as of April 12.

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 March airline employment data for May 15.

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Table 1: Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* Change from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month the previous year for the most recent 13 months

Month	Network Carriers (Pct. Change) From Table 7	Low-Cost Carriers** (Pct. Change) From Table 10	Regional Carriers (Pct. Change) From Table13	All Passenger Airlines*** (Pct. Change) From Table 2
Feb. 2005-Feb. 2006	-7.8	-4.1	0.7	-5.8
Mar. 2005-Mar. 2006	-7.5	-3.0	0.1	-5.4
Apr. 2005-Apr. 2006	-6.7	-2.2	0.1	-4.7
May 2005-May 2006	-7.0	-2.1	-1.2	-5.0
June 2005-June 2006	-6.9	-2.0	-1.6	-5.0
July 2005-July 2006	-8.1	-2.6	-0.8	-5.9
Aug. 2005-Aug. 2006	-4.7	-0.8	-1.0	-3.1
Sept. 2005-Sept. 2006	-4.1	-0.4	-0.3	-2.7
Oct. 2005-Oct. 2006	-4.0	0.8	0.6	-2.3
Nov. 2005-Nov. 2006	-3.4	0.9	2.4	-1.6
Dec. 2005-Dec. 2006	-2.9	1.4	3.4	-1.0
Jan. 2006-Jan. 2007	-2.6	4.5	3.0	-0.5
Feb. 2006-Feb. 2007	-2.2	5.0	5.9	0.2
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Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

^{**}Employment numbers in 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 airline discontinued flights on Jan. 5, 2006.

^{***} Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers. Other Carriers generally operate within specific niche markets. They are: Allegiant Air, Aloha Airlines, Boston-Maine Airways, Casino Express Airlines, Continental Micronesia, Eos Airlines, Hawaiian Airlines, Midwest Airlines, Sun Country Airlines and USA3000 Airlines. USA3000 is included in previous months but did not report in February 2007, January 2007 and December 2006.

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Table 2: Total Passenger Airline* Full-time Equivalent Employees** Change from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month the previous year

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007
January	-5.6	-0.8	-6.0	-0.5
February	-5.3	-1.4	-5.8	0.2
March	-4.1	-1.9	-5.4	
April	-2.3	-3.1	-4.7	
May	-0.8	-3.5	-5.0	
June	0.5	-3.8	-5.0	
July	2.5	-3.5	-5.9	
August	2.2	-5.8	-3.1	
September	2.4	-5.8	-2.7	
October	2.5	-6.0	-2.3	
November	2.2	-6.5	-1.6	
December	0.9	-5.9	-1.0	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 3: Total Passenger Airline* Full-time Equivalent Employees** by Month

Numbers in thousands (000's)

No. or all	0000	0004	2225	0000	2007	Percent Change		
Month	2003	2004	2005	2006		2003- 2007	2006- 2007	
January	465.7	435.0	431.5	405.7	403.6	-13.3%	-0.5%	
February	459.4	435.0	428.9	404.5	405.4	-11.7%	0.2%	
March	454.3	435.9	427.7	404.6				
April	448.2	437.8	424.1	404.0				
May	443.2	439.6	424.4	403.1				
June	438.9	440.9	424.3	403.0				
July	433.2	444.1	428.5	403.0				
August	433.3	443.0	417.5	404.4				
September	429.6	440.0	414.5	403.4				
October	428.3	439.1	412.7	403.3				
November	429.9	439.5	411.0	404.2				
December	430.2	434.0	408.6	404.7				
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Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Percent changes and averages based on numbers prior to rounding.

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

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

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

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

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Table 4: Total Number of Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Carrier Group, February 2003-2007

FTE Numbers in thousands (000's)

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	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2003	342.3	65.9	41.7	459.4
2004	304.7	70.5	48.9	435.0
2005	290.9	70.9	55.9	428.9
2006	268.2	68.0	56.6	404.5
2007	262.4	71.4	59.9	405.4
Pct. Change 2003-2007***	-23.3	8.3	22.4	-6.8
Percent of Total Passenger Airline Employees in 2007	64.7%	17.6%	14.8%	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 5: Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Carrier Group, Year-to-Year Change, February 2003-2007
Percent Change from the previous year

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional**	All Passenger Airlines***
2003	-6.0	3.6	70.3	-0.5
2004	-11.0	6.9	17.3	-5.3
2005	-4.6	0.6	14.3	-1.4
2006	-7.8	-4.1	1.1	-5.7
2007	-2.2	5.0	5.9	0.2

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

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

^{***} Percent change comparison for regional airlines and for all passenger airlines is for 2004 to 2007 because of the number of airlines in these categories that did not meet the standard for reporting monthly employment numbers.

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

^{**} 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 appropriate for the years before 2003. *** Includes network, low-cost, regional and other carriers.

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Table 6: Top 10 Airlines, February 2007
Ranked by Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees*

Rank	Airline	Total FTE Employees (000)	Carrier Group	Jan 2006 Rank	Jan 2005 Rank
1	American	72.5	Network	1	1
2	United	51.9	Network	2	2
3	Delta	45.0	Network	3	3
4	Continental	34.9	Network	4	5
5	Southwest	32.8	Low Cost	5	6
6	Northwest	29.2	Network	6	4
7	US Airways	19.5	Network	7	7
8	America West	12.4	Low Cost	8	8
9	JetBlue	9.5	Low Cost	11	12
10	Alaska	9.3	Network	10	10

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Table 7: Network Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* Change from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month the previous year

Month	2004	2005	2006	2007
January	-12.5	-4.1	-8.1	-2.6
February	-11.0	-4.6	-7.8	-2.2
March	-8.7	-5.0	-7.5	
April	-6.6	-6.5	-6.7	
May	-4.9	-6.6	-7.0	
June	-3.6	-7.0	-6.9	
July	-2.0	-5.9	-8.1	
August	-1.7	-9.0	-4.7	
September	-1.7	-8.9	-4.1	
October	-1.4	-8.9	-4.0	
November	-1.8	-9.3	-3.4	
December	-3.5	-8.5	-2.9	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

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

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Table 8: Network Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month Numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	2002 2004	2005	2006	2007	Percent Change		
Kank	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2003- 2007	2006- 2007
January	348.7	305.1	292.7	269.1	262.0	-24.9	-2.6
February	342.3	304.7	290.9	268.2	262.4	-23.3	-2.2
March	333.8	304.6	289.3	267.8			
April	327.2	305.6	285.8	266.6			
May	321.9	306.0	285.8	265.8			
June	317.5	306.1	284.8	265.0			
July	312.5	306.3	288.2	264.9			
August	310.6	305.3	277.8	264.8			
September	307.6	302.4	275.4	264.0			
October	305.3	300.9	274.1	263.0			
November	305.7	300.2	272.4	263.0			
December	306.2	295.7	270.6	262.9			
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Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Table 9: Network Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees*, February 2003-2007 (Ranked by February 2007 FTE Employees)
Numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank							Percent Change	
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2003- 2007	2006- 2007
1	American	95.2	79.2	76.0	74.6	72.5	-23.8	-2.8
2	United	69.2	58.6	56.9	53.4	51.9	-24.9	-2.7
3	Delta	61.9	58.1	54.5	47.4	45.0	-27.3	-5.0
4	Continental	35.7	34.3	31.8	33.1	34.9	-2.2	5.5
5	Northwest	42.4	38.3	38.4	31.0	29.2	-31.3	-5.9
6	US Airways	27.7	26.3	24.0	19.8	19.5	-29.4	-1.1
7	Alaska	10.1	9.9	9.2	9.0	9.3	-7.8	3.6
	Total	342.3	304.7	290.9	268.2	262.4	-23.3	-2.2

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. Note: Percent changes and averages based on numbers prior to rounding.

^{*} Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee. Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 10: Change in Low-Cost Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month the previous year

2004	2005	2006	2007
8.4	0.5	-5.3	4.5
6.9	0.6	-4.1	5.0
0.5	0.0	-3.0	
0.6	-0.7	-2.2	
0.8	-1.0	-2.1	
1.5	-1.2	-2.1	
2.3	-1.5	-2.0	
1.1	-0.7	-0.8	
0.7	-1.0	-0.4	
-0.2	-1.2	0.8	
0.5	-2.5	0.9	
0.5	-1.4	1.4	
	8.4 6.9 0.5 0.6 0.8 1.5 2.3 1.1 0.7 -0.2	8.4 0.5 6.9 0.6 0.5 0.0 0.6 -0.7 0.8 -1.0 1.5 -1.2 2.3 -1.5 1.1 -0.7 0.7 -1.0 -0.2 -1.2 0.5 -2.5	8.4 0.5 -5.3 6.9 0.6 -4.1 0.5 0.0 -3.0 0.6 -0.7 -2.2 0.8 -1.0 -2.1 1.5 -1.2 -2.1 2.3 -1.5 -2.0 1.1 -0.7 -0.8 0.7 -1.0 -0.4 -0.2 -1.2 0.8 0.5 -2.5 0.9

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

^{*} Full-time Equivalent Employee (FTE) calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee. Note: Employment numbers in 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 airline discontinued flights on Jan. 5, 2006.

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Table 11: Low-Cost Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month Numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	2003**	2004**	2005**	2006	2,007	Percent Change		
					_,	2003- 2007	2006- 2007	
January	65.7	71.2	71.6	67.8	70.8	7.8	4.5	
February	65.9	70.5	70.9	68.0	71.4	8.3	5.0	
March	70.5	70.8	70.8	68.7				
April	70.6	71.0	70.4	68.9				
May	70.7	71.3	70.5	69.1				
June	70.6	71.7	70.8	69.4				
July	70.7	72.3	71.3	69.4				
August	70.8	71.3	71.1	70.5				
September	70.7	71.3	70.6	70.3				
October	71.3	71.2	70.4	70.9				
November	71.9	72.3	70.5	71.1				
December	71.3	71.6	70.6	71.6				
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Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Percent changes and averages based on numbers prior to rounding.

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 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 airline discontinued flights on Jan. 5, 2006.

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Table 12: Low-Cost Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees,* February 2003-2007 (Ranked by February 2007 FTE Employees)

Numbers in thousands (000's)

Percent Change

Rank		2003**	2004**	2005**	2006	2007	2003- 2007	2006- 2007
1	Southwest	33.5	31.6	30.9	31.5	32.8	-2.1	4.3
2	America West	11.5	11.4	11.6	11.4	12.4	7.5	8.4
3	JetBlue	3.9	5.3	6.9	9.0	9.5	145.2	5.7
4	AirTran	4.9	5.3	5.9	6.8	7.5	54.9	11.5
5	Frontier	2.8	3.6	4.1	4.3	4.6	65.0	8.4
6	ATA	7.0	7.0	5.4	3.1	2.4	-65.4	-21.7
7	Spirit	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.1	-10.8	3.7
8	Independence	N/A	3.9	3.7	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	65.9	70.5	70.9	68.0	71.4	8.3	5.0

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Note: Detail may not add to total due to rounding

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

Table 13: Change in Regional Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month the previous year

	2004**	2005***	2006	2007	
January	16.3	15.5	2.5	3.0	
February	17.3	14.3	1.1	5.9	
March	21.6	13.7	0.1		
April	21.7	12.6	0.1		
May	23.3	11.1	-1.2		
June	24.9	11.0	-1.6		
July	33.0	6.0	-0.8		
August	31.6	5.1	-1.0		
September	32.4	4.3	-0.3		
October	33.0	2.7	0.6		
November	31.0	2.1	2.4		
December	29.3	1.8	3.4		

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

^{**}Employment numbers in 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. The airline discontinued flights on Jan. 5, 2006.

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

^{**} Mesa, Pinnacle and PSA began reporting employment numbers in 2004.

^{***} Republic, Shuttle America and GoJet began reporting in 2005.

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Table 14: Regional Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month Numbers in thousands (000's)

					Percent Change		
	2004**	2005***	2006	2007	2004- 2007	2006- 2007	
January	48.3	55.8	57.2	58.9	22.0	3.0	
February	48.9	55.9	56.6	59.9	22.4	5.9	
March	49.6	56.4	56.4				
April	50.3	56.6	56.6				
May	51.2	56.9	56.2				
June	51.9	57.6	56.7				
July	54.3	57.6	57.1				
August	55.0	57.8	57.2				
September	55.2	57.6	57.4				
October	55.8	57.4	57.7				
November	55.6	56.8	58.1				
December	55.3	56.3	58.2				

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

^{**} Mesa, Pinnacle and PSA began reporting employment numbers in 2004.

^{***} Republic, Shuttle America and GoJet began reporting in 2005.

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Table 15: Regional Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees*, February 2003-2007 (Ranked by February 2007 FTE Employees)

							Percent	
Rank		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Change**	
							2003-	2006-
							2007	2007
1	American Eagle	7,781	7,794	9,373	9,345	9,343	20.1	0.0
2	Sky West	5,224	5,895	7,329	8,147	9,277	77.6	13.9
3	Express Jet	5,418	5,898	6,456	6,429	7,357	35.8	14.4
4	Comair	5,191	5,790	6,174	6,087	6,149	18.5	1.0
5	Atlantic Southeast	5,198	5,449	5,415	5,294	6,015	15.7	13.6
6	Horizon	3,390	3,376	3,341	3,508	3,711	9.5	5.8
7	Pinnacle	N/A	1,991	2,753	2,991	3,324	N/A	11.1
8	Mesa	N/A	3,378	3,178	3,222	3,244	N/A	0.7
9	Mesaba	3,159	2,904	3,288	3,065	2,620	-17.1	-14.5
10	Air Wisconsin	2,974	3,315	3,644	2,358	2,285	-23.2	-3.1
11	Executive	1,964	1,876	1,786	1,778	1,697	-13.6	-4.6
12	PSA	N/A	N/A	1,758	1,595	1,442	N/A	-9.6
13	Trans States	1,176	1,270	1,436	1,452	1,280	8.8	-11.8
14	Shuttle America	N/A	N/A	N/A	740	1,014	N/A	37.0
15	Republic	N/A	N/A	N/A	341	784	N/A	129.9
16	GoJet	N/A	N/A	N/A	218	337	N/A	54.6
	Total	41,475	48,936	55,931	56,570	59,879	19.9	5.9

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

Note: Detail may not add to total due to rounding

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

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

^{**} 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 appropriate for the years before 2003. The Percent Change 2003-2007 is based on the 10 carriers reporting in both years.