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January 2009 Airline Traffic Data: January 2009 System Traffic Down 10.9 Percent from January 2008

U.S. airlines carried 51.5 million scheduled domestic and international passengers in January 2009, 10.9 percent less than they did in January 2008, 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, reported that the decline was the 11th consecutive monthly decrease in system passengers from the same month of the previous year (Table 2).

U.S. airlines carried 11.5 percent fewer domestic passengers and 7.2 percent fewer international passengers in January 2009 than in January 2008 (Tables 5, 9). These passengers traveled on planes with average load factors of 73.0 percent (Table 1).

Top Airlines in January

Southwest Airlines carried more total system and domestic passengers in January 2009 than any other airline (Tables 3, 7); and American Airlines carried more international passengers (Table 11).

Top Airports in January

More total system and domestic passengers boarded planes in January 2009 at Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International than at any other U.S. airport (Tables 4 and 8); more international passengers boarded U.S. carriers at Miami International than at any other U.S. airport (Table 12).

Flights Operated

U.S. carriers operated 769,500 domestic and international flights in January 2009, 11.2 percent fewer than in January 2008 (Table 1). Domestic flights were down 11.6 percent from January of the previous year while international flights fell 7.5 percent (Tables 5, 9).

System Comparisons (Tables 1-4)

In other total system comparisons from January 2008 to January 2009 (Table 1):

Revenue passenger miles (RPMs), a measure of the number of passengers and the distance flown, were down 9.9 percent in January 2009.

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Available seat-miles (ASMs), a measure of airline capacity using the number of seats and the distance flown, were down 8.8 percent in January 2009.

Passenger load factor, passenger miles as a proportion of available seat-miles, was down 0.9 load factor points at 73.0 percent in January 2009.

Flight stage length, the average non-stop distance flown per departure, was up 0.4 percent in January 2009.

Passenger trip length, the average distance flown per passenger, was up 1.1 percent in January 2009.

Among U.S. airlines, Southwest Airlines carried 7.0 million passengers on its system in January 2009, the most of any airline (Table 3).

Among airports, Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International was the busiest U.S. airport in January 2009, with 3.1 million domestic and international passenger boardings on U. S. carriers (Table 4).

Domestic Air Travel (Tables 5-8)

U.S. airlines carried 44.5 million scheduled domestic passengers in January 2009, down 11.5 percent from the 50.3 million carried in January 2008 (Table 6). The passengers were carried on 702,200 flights, down 11.6 percent from the 794,200 flights operated in January 2008 (Table 5).

In other domestic comparisons from January 2008 to January 2009 (Table 5):

Domestic revenue passenger miles (RPMs), a measure of the number of passengers and the distance flown, were down 11.6 percent in January 2009.

Domestic available seat-miles (ASMs), a measure of airline capacity using the number of seats and the distance flown, were down 11.5 percent in January 2009.

Domestic passenger load factor, passenger miles as a proportion of available seat-miles, was down 0.2 load factor points to 72.8 percent in January 2009.

Domestic flight stage length, the average non-stop distance flown per departure, was down 1.3 percent in January 2009.

Domestic passenger trip length, the average distance flown per passenger, was down 0.1 percent in January 2009.

Southwest Airlines carried 7.0 million domestic passengers in January 2009, the most of any airline (Table 7).

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Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International was the busiest domestic airport in January 2009, with 2.8 million domestic passenger boardings (Table 8).

International Air Travel (Tables 9-12)

U.S. airlines carried 6.9 million scheduled international passengers in January 2009, down 7.2 percent from the 7.5 million carried in January 2008 (Table 9). The passengers were carried on 67,300 flights, down 7.5 percent from the 72,800 flights operated in January 2008 (Table 9).

In other international comparisons from January 2008 to January 2009 (Table 9):

International revenue passenger miles (RPMs), a measure of the number of passengers and the distance flown, were down 6.2 percent in January 2009.

International available seat-miles (ASMs), a measure of airline capacity using the number of seats and the distance flown, were down 2.1 percent in January 2009.

International passenger load factor, passenger miles as a proportion of available seat-miles, was down 3.3 load factor points to 73.3 in January 2009.

International flight stage length, the average non-stop distance flown per departure, was up 4.4 percent in January 2009.

International passenger trip length, the average distance flown per passenger was up 1.1 percent in January 2009.

American Airlines carried 1.6 million international passengers in January 2009, the most of any U.S. airline (Table 11).

Miami International was the busiest U.S. airport for international travel on U.S. carriers in January 2009, with 430,100 international passenger boardings (Table 12).

Reporting Notes

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial U.S. air carriers detailing operations, passenger traffic and freight traffic. This release includes data received by BTS from 82 carriers as of April 7 for U.S. carrier **scheduled** civilian operations. Go to <http://www.transtats.bts.gov/releaseinfo.asp> for the complete list of reporting and non-reporting carriers. U.S. carriers' foreign point-to-point flights are included in system and international totals. To create a customized table for passengers, flights, RPMs, ASMs and other data, including non-scheduled service, go to http://www.bts.gov/programs/airline_information/air_carrier_traffic_statistics/.

Additional traffic numbers can be found on the [BTS website](#) in the Airline Industry box. Click on a link in the column on the right.

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Traffic numbers are also available at TranStats, the Intermodal Transportation Database, at <http://transtats.bts.gov>. Click on “Aviation.” For system passengers, RPMs and ASMs by carrier through December, click on “Air Carrier Summary Data (Form 41 and 298C Summary Data),” and then click on “Schedule T-1.” Use crosstabs to find scheduled service.

For domestic numbers through January and international numbers through October by origin as well as by carrier, after clicking on “Aviation,” click on “Air Carrier Statistics (Form 41 Traffic).” Click on “T-100 Market” for system passenger numbers, “T-100 Domestic Market” for domestic or “T-100 International Market” for international. For flights, stage length and trip length, use the appropriate T-100 Segment database. Use crosstabs to find scheduled service.

TranStats system and international totals do not include U.S. carriers’ foreign point-to-point flights. For January, U.S. carriers reported 248,926 foreign point-to-point passengers.

Data are subject to revision. BTS has scheduled May 14 for the release of February traffic data.

Table 1: Scheduled System (Domestic and International) Airline Travel on U.S. Carriers

| | Monthly | | Change % | Previous Calendar Years | | Change % |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|--------------|-------------------------|----------|-------------|
| | Jan 2008 | Jan 2009 | | 2007 | 2008 | |
| Passengers (in millions) | 57.8 | 51.5 | -10.9 | 769.6 | 741.4 | -3.7 |
| Flights (in thousands) | 867.0 | 769.5 | -11.2 | 10,698.6 | 10,168.1 | -5.0 |
| Revenue Passenger Miles (in billions) | 63.5 | 57.2 | -9.9 | 829.4 | 811.4 | -2.2 |
| Available Seat-Miles (in billions) | 85.9 | 78.4 | -8.8 | 1,037.7 | 1,020.1 | -1.7 |
| Load Factor* | 73.9 | 73.0 | -0.9 | 79.9 | 79.5 | -0.4 |
| Flight Stage Length** | 719.2 | 722.0 | 0.4 | 706.0 | 720.3 | 2.0 |
| Passenger Trip Length*** | 1,099.9 | 1,111.8 | 1.1 | 1,077.7 | 1,094.4 | 1.6 |

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

*Change in load factor points

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

*** The average distance flown per passenger in miles

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 2. Total System (Domestic and International) Scheduled Enplanements on U.S. Carriers

Passenger numbers in millions (000,000)

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007-2008 Pct. Change | 2009 | 2008-2009 Pct. Change |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| January | 57.1 | 57.8 | 1.1 | 51.5 | -10.9 |
| February | 54.1 | 56.6 | 4.6 | | |
| March | 67.2 | 67.1 | -0.1 | | |
| April | 64.9 | 63.1 | -2.8 | | |
| May | 66.8 | 65.9 | -1.3 | | |
| June | 69.7 | 67.8 | -2.7 | | |
| July | 72.4 | 70.3 | -2.9 | | |
| August | 71.3 | 67.7 | -5.1 | | |
| September | 59.2 | 54.2 | -8.4 | | |
| October | 64.2 | 59.6 | -7.1 | | |
| November | 61.9 | 54.0 | -12.8 | | |
| December | 60.8 | 57.4 | -5.7 | | |
| 1 Mo. Total | 57.1 | 57.8 | 1.1 | 51.5 | -10.9 |
| Yr. Total | 769.6 | 741.4 | -3.7 | | |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Market

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 3. Top 10 U.S. Airlines, ranked by January 2009 System* Scheduled Enplanements

Passenger numbers in millions (000,000)

| Jan 2009 Rank | Carrier | Jan 2009 Enplaned Passengers | Jan 2008 Rank | Jan 2008 Enplaned Passengers | Pct. Change 2008- 2009 |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Southwest | 6.994 | 2 | 7.654 | -8.6 |
| 2 | American | 6.697 | 1 | 7.670 | -12.7 |
| 3 | Delta | 5.262 | 3 | 5.344 | -1.5 |
| 4 | United | 4.212 | 4 | 4.776 | -11.8 |
| 5 | US Airways | 4.048 | 5 | 4.317 | -6.2 |
| 6 | Continental | 3.249 | 7 | 3.731 | -12.9 |
| 7 | Northwest | 3.132 | 6 | 3.896 | -19.6 |
| 8 | AirTran | 1.667 | 9 | 1.630 | 2.2 |
| 9 | JetBlue | 1.660 | 8 | 1.727 | -3.9 |
| 10 | SkyWest | 1.495 | 10 | 1.588 | -5.8 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Market

* System equals domestic plus international

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 4. Top 10 U.S. Airports ranked by January 2009 System* Scheduled Enplanements on U.S. Airlines
Passenger numbers in millions (000,000)

| Jan 2009 Rank | Airport | Jan 2009 Enplaned Passengers | Jan 2008 Rank | Jan 2008 Enplaned Passengers | Pct. Change 2008-2009 |
|---------------|------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Atlanta | 3.113 | 1 | 3.133 | -0.6 |
| 2 | Chicago O'Hare | 1.944 | 2 | 2.300 | -15.5 |
| 3 | Dallas/Ft. Worth | 1.932 | 3 | 2.133 | -9.4 |
| 4 | Denver | 1.701 | 4 | 1.804 | -5.7 |
| 5 | Los Angeles | 1.554 | 5 | 1.755 | -11.4 |
| 6 | Phoenix | 1.437 | 8 | 1.558 | -7.8 |
| 7 | Houston Bush | 1.398 | 7 | 1.572 | -11.0 |
| 8 | Las Vegas | 1.362 | 6 | 1.613 | -15.5 |
| 9 | Charlotte | 1.302 | 10 | 1.300 | 0.2 |
| 10 | Orlando | 1.225 | 9 | 1.389 | -11.8 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Market

* System equals domestic plus international

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 5: Domestic Scheduled Airline Travel on U.S. Carriers

| | Monthly | | | Previous Calendar Years | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------------|---------|----------|
| | Jan 2008 | Jan 2009 | Change % | 2007 | 2008 | Change % |
| Passengers (in millions) | 50.3 | 44.5 | -11.5 | 679.2 | 649.9 | -4.3 |
| Flights (in thousands) | 794.2 | 702.2 | -11.6 | 9,835.7 | 9,319.8 | -5.2 |
| Revenue Passenger Miles (in billions) | 44.3 | 39.1 | -11.6 | 592.3 | 567.3 | -4.2 |
| Available Seat-Miles (in billions) | 60.7 | 53.7 | -11.5 | 741.2 | 711.2 | -4.1 |
| Load Factor* | 73.0 | 72.8 | -0.2 | 79.9 | 79.8 | -0.1 |
| Flight Stage Length** | 627.9 | 619.4 | -1.3 | 618.5 | 623.4 | 0.8 |
| Passenger Trip Length*** | 880.0 | 878.8 | -0.1 | 872.1 | 873.0 | 0.1 |

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

*Change in load factor points

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

*** The average distance flown per passenger in miles

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 6. Domestic Scheduled Enplanements on U.S. Carriers
 Passenger numbers in millions (000,000)

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007-2008 Pct. Change | 2009 | 2008-2009 Pct. Change |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------|
| January | 50.0 | 50.3 | 0.5 | 44.5 | -11.5 |
| February | 47.8 | 49.6 | 3.9 | | |
| March | 59.2 | 58.6 | -1.1 | | |
| April | 57.4 | 55.5 | -3.3 | | |
| May | 59.3 | 57.9 | -2.3 | | |
| June | 61.5 | 59.4 | -3.4 | | |
| July | 63.5 | 61.3 | -3.4 | | |
| August | 62.7 | 58.8 | -6.1 | | |
| September | 52.3 | 47.7 | -8.9 | | |
| October | 57.2 | 52.9 | -7.5 | | |
| November | 55.0 | 47.6 | -13.5 | | |
| December | 53.3 | 50.2 | -5.7 | | |
| 1 Mo. Total | 50.0 | 50.3 | 0.5 | 44.5 | -11.5 |
| Yr. Total | 679.2 | 649.9 | -4.3 | | |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market
 Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 7. Top 10 U.S. Airlines, ranked by January 2009 Domestic Scheduled Enplanements
 Passenger numbers in millions (000,000)

| Jan 2009 Rank | Carrier | Jan 2009 Enplaned Passengers | Jan 2008 Rank | Jan 2008 Enplaned Passengers | Pct. Change 2008- 2009 |
|------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Southwest | 6.994 | 1 | 7.654 | -8.6 |
| 2 | American | 5.047 | 2 | 5.851 | -13.7 |
| 3 | Delta | 4.351 | 3 | 4.447 | -2.2 |
| 4 | US Airways | 3.532 | 4 | 3.833 | -7.9 |
| 5 | United | 3.379 | 5 | 3.815 | -11.4 |
| 6 | Northwest | 2.362 | 6 | 3.075 | -23.2 |
| 7 | Continental | 2.325 | 7 | 2.771 | -16.1 |
| 8 | AirTran | 1.657 | 9 | 1.630 | 1.6 |
| 9 | JetBlue | 1.513 | 8 | 1.639 | -7.7 |
| 10 | SkyWest | 1.407 | 10 | 1.503 | -6.4 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 Domestic Market
 Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 8. Top 10 U.S. Airports, ranked by January 2009 Domestic Scheduled Enplanements

Passenger numbers in millions (000,000)

| Jan 2009 Rank | Airport | Jan 2009 Enplaned Passengers | Jan 2008 Rank | Jan 2008 Enplaned Passengers | Pct. Change 2008-2009 |
|---------------|------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Atlanta | 2.802 | 1 | 2.824 | -0.8 |
| 2 | Dallas/Ft. Worth | 1.776 | 3 | 1.957 | -9.2 |
| 3 | Chicago O'Hare | 1.730 | 2 | 2.054 | -15.8 |
| 4 | Denver | 1.647 | 4 | 1.740 | -5.3 |
| 5 | Los Angeles | 1.431 | 6 | 1.593 | -10.2 |
| 6 | Phoenix | 1.368 | 7 | 1.497 | -8.6 |
| 7 | Las Vegas | 1.351 | 5 | 1.599 | -15.5 |
| 8 | Charlotte | 1.217 | 10 | 1.212 | 0.5 |
| 9 | Orlando | 1.217 | 8 | 1.383 | -12.0 |
| 10 | Houston Bush | 1.146 | 9 | 1.318 | -13.1 |

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

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 9: International Scheduled Airline Travel on U.S. Carriers

| | Monthly | | | Previous Calendar Years | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------------------|---------|----------|
| | Jan 2008 | Jan 2009 | Change % | 2007 | 2008 | Change % |
| Passengers (in millions) | 7.5 | 6.9 | -7.2 | 90.5 | 91.5 | 1.2 |
| Flights (in thousands) | 72.8 | 67.3 | -7.5 | 862.9 | 848.2 | -1.7 |
| Revenue Passenger Miles (in billions) | 19.3 | 18.1 | -6.2 | 237.1 | 244.1 | 2.9 |
| Available Seat-Miles (in billions) | 25.2 | 24.7 | -2.1 | 296.4 | 308.9 | 4.2 |
| Load Factor* | 76.6 | 73.3 | -3.3 | 80.0 | 79.0 | -1.0 |
| Flight Stage Length** | 1,715.3 | 1,791.3 | 4.4 | 1,703.5 | 1,785.7 | 4.8 |
| Passenger Trip Length*** | 2,581.4 | 2,609.9 | 1.1 | 2,621.3 | 2,666.5 | 1.7 |

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

*Change in load factor points

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

*** The average distance flown per passenger in miles

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 10 International Scheduled Enplanements on U.S. Carriers
Passenger numbers in millions (000,000)

| | 2007 | 2008 | 2007-2008 Pct. Change | 2009 | 2008-2009 Pct. Change |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|
| January | 7.1 | 7.5 | 4.9 | 6.9 | -7.2 |
| February | 6.3 | 6.9 | 9.3 | | |
| March | 7.9 | 8.5 | 7.2 | | |
| April | 7.5 | 7.6 | 1.2 | | |
| May | 7.5 | 8.0 | 6.5 | | |
| June | 8.2 | 8.4 | 2.4 | | |
| July | 8.9 | 9.1 | 1.3 | | |
| August | 8.7 | 8.9 | 2.0 | | |
| September | 6.9 | 6.6 | -5.0 | | |
| October | 7.0 | 6.7 | -3.6 | | |
| November | 6.9 | 6.4 | -6.8 | | |
| December | 7.5 | 7.1 | -5.6 | | |
| 1 Mo. Total | 7.1 | 7.5 | 4.9 | 6.9 | -7.2 |
| Yr. Total | 90.5 | 91.5 | 1.2 | | |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 International Market
Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 11. Top 10 U.S. Airlines, ranked by January 2009 International Scheduled Enplanements on U.S. Carriers
Passenger numbers in thousands (000)

| Jan 2009 Rank | Carrier | Jan 2009 Enplaned Passengers | Jan 2008 Rank | Jan 2008 Enplaned Passengers | Pct. Change 2008- 2009 |
|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | American | 1,649.8 | 1 | 1,818.8 | -9.3 |
| 2 | Continental | 924.2 | 3 | 959.3 | -3.7 |
| 3 | Delta | 910.8 | 4 | 896.5 | 1.6 |
| 4 | United | 832.6 | 2 | 961.5 | -13.4 |
| 5 | Northwest | 769.5 | 5 | 820.9 | -6.3 |
| 6 | US Airways | 515.8 | 6 | 484.1 | 6.6 |
| 7 | Alaska | 153.5 | 7 | 203.0 | -24.4 |
| 8 | JetBlue | 147.1 | 12 | 87.9 | 67.3 |
| 9 | ExpressJet | 130.2 | 8 | 168.6 | -22.8 |
| 10 | Continental Micronesia | 93.4 | 10 | 112.5 | -17.0 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 International Market
Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 12. Top 10 U.S. Airports, ranked by January 2009 International Scheduled Enplanements on U.S. Airlines
 Passenger numbers in thousands (000)

| Jan 2009 Rank | Airport | Jan 2009 Enplaned Passengers | Jan 2008 Rank | Jan 2008 Enplaned Passengers | Pct. Change 2008-2009 |
|---------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Miami | 430.1 | 1 | 427.5 | 0.6 |
| 2 | Atlanta | 310.5 | 2 | 309.2 | 0.4 |
| 3 | New York JFK | 293.6 | 3 | 302.2 | -2.9 |
| 4 | Newark | 274.9 | 4 | 286.8 | -4.2 |
| 5 | Houston Bush | 252.8 | 5 | 253.6 | -0.3 |
| 6 | Chicago O'Hare | 213.5 | 6 | 245.9 | -13.2 |
| 7 | Dallas/Ft. Worth | 155.9 | 7 | 176.1 | -11.5 |
| 8 | Los Angeles | 123.5 | 8 | 162.1 | -23.8 |
| 9 | San Francisco | 112.5 | 9 | 145.6 | -22.8 |
| 10 | Washington Dulles | 109.9 | 11 | 115.8 | -5.1 |

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, T-100 International Market
 Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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