



**M O V I N G T H E**  
**AMERICAN**  
**ECONOMY**

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**News**

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## **Airline On-Time Performance Improves in May 2005**

The nation's largest airlines experienced improved on-time performance and canceled fewer flights in May 2005 compared to both the previous month and May of last year, according to the Air Travel Consumer Report released today by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

According to information filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), a part of DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, the 20 carriers reporting on-time performance recorded an overall on-time arrival rate of 83.7 percent in May, well above May 2004's 77.6 percent and a slight improvement over April 2005's 83.4 percent. Also in May, the carriers canceled 0.9 percent of their scheduled domestic flights, fewer than both May 2004's 1.7 percent and April 2005's 1.3 percent. Starting this month, Frontier Airlines is reporting flight data on a voluntary basis.

The monthly report also includes data on causes of flight delays, as well as information on reports of mishandled baggage filed with the carriers, and consumer service, disability and discrimination complaints received by DOT's Aviation Consumer Protection Division. The report also includes, for the first time, reports required to be filed by U.S. carriers of incidents involving pets traveling by air.

### **Causes of Flight Delays**

The carriers filing on-time performance data reported that 5.65 percent of their May flights were delayed by aviation system delays, compared to 5.76 percent in April 2005; 4.53 percent by late-arriving aircraft, compared to 4.35 percent in April; 4.41 percent by factors within the airline's control, such as maintenance or crew problems, compared to 4.44 percent in April; 0.61 percent by extreme weather, compared to 0.57 percent in April; and 0.03 percent for security reasons, compared to 0.04 percent in April. Weather is a factor in both the extreme-weather category and the aviation-system category. This includes delays due to the re-routing of flights by DOT's Federal Aviation Administration in consultation with the carriers involved. Weather is also a factor in delays attributed to late-arriving aircraft, although airlines do not report specific causes in that category. Airlines first began reporting causes of delays in June 2003.

Data collected by BTS also show the percentage of overall flights delayed by weather, including those reported in either the category of extreme weather or included in National Aviation System delays. In May, 3.34 percent of flights were delayed by weather, down 54.56 percent from May 2004, when 7.35 percent of flights were delayed by weather, and up 1.52 percent from April when 3.29 percent of flights were delayed by weather.

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## **AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT ADD ONE**

Detailed information on flight delays and their causes is available on the BTS site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.bts.gov>.

### **Mishandled Baggage**

The U.S. carriers reporting flight delay and mishandled baggage data posted a mishandled baggage rate of 5.12 reports per 1,000 passengers in May, higher than May 2004's 4.08 rate but below April 2005's 5.18 mark.

### **Incidents Involving Pets**

In May, carriers reported 10 incidents involving pets while traveling by air. These include four reports of deaths, five reports of injuries and one loss of a pet.

### **Complaints About Airline Service**

In May, the Department received 608 complaints from consumers about airline service, up 36.3 percent from the total of 446 received in May 2004 but 5.9 percent fewer than the 646 filed in April 2005.

### **Complaints About Treatment of Disabled Passengers**

The report also contains a tabulation of complaints filed with DOT in May against specific airlines regarding the treatment of passengers with disabilities. The Department received a total of 48 disability-related complaints in May, identical to the total received in May 2004 and 37.1 percent above the 35 complaints filed in April 2005.

### **Complaints About Discrimination**

In May, the Department received 11 complaints alleging discrimination by airlines due to factors other than disability – such as race, religion, national origin or sex – identical to the total received in May 2004 but more than double the total of five received in April 2005.

Consumers may file their complaints in writing with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, C-75, Room 4107, 400 7<sup>th</sup> St. SW, Washington, DC 20590; by e-mail at [airconsumer@dot.gov](mailto:airconsumer@dot.gov); by voice mail at (202) 366-2220 or by TTY at (202) 366-0511.

Consumers who want on-time performance data for specific flights should call their airline ticket offices or their travel agents. This information is available on the computerized reservation systems used by these agents.

The Air Travel Consumer Report can be found on DOT's World Wide Web site at <http://airconsumer.ost.dot.gov>. It is available in "pdf" and Microsoft Word format.

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**AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT**  
**May 2005**

**KEY ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND FLIGHT CANCELLATION STATISTICS**  
**Based on Data Filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics**  
**by the 20 Reporting Carriers**

**Overall**

83.7 percent on-time arrivals

**Highest On-Time Arrival Rates**

1. Hawaiian Airlines – 95.9 percent
2. ATA Airlines – 89.6 percent
3. Comair – 88.3 percent

**Lowest On-Time Arrival Rates**

1. Alaska Airlines – 59.0 percent
2. Independence Air – 78.7 percent
3. Atlantic Southeast Airlines – 79.0 percent

**Most Frequently Delayed Flights**

1. AirTran Airways flight 41 from Atlanta to Los Angeles – late 100 percent of the time
2. Independence Air flight 805 from Los Angeles to Washington Dulles – late 88.89 percent of the time
3. Alaska Airlines flight 519 from Los Angeles to Seattle – late 87.10 percent of the time
4. ExpressJet Airlines flight 2165 from Newark, NJ to Manchester, NH – late 85.71 percent of the time
5. Southwest Airlines flight 1660 from Las Vegas to Phoenix – late 81.48 percent of the time

**Highest Rates of Canceled Flights**

1. Atlantic Southeast Airlines – 2.8 percent
2. American Eagle Airlines – 2.4 percent
3. Alaska Airlines – 2.4 percent

**Lowest Rates of Canceled Flights**

1. JetBlue Airways – 0.0 percent
2. Hawaiian Airlines – 0.1 percent
3. Frontier Airlines – 0.2 percent

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