



M O V I N G T H E
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Contact: Bill Mosley
Tel.: (202) 366-4570

Airlines Post Higher Rate of On-Time Flights, Lower Rate of Cancellations in August

The nation's largest airlines recorded a higher rate of on-time flights and a lower rate of cancellations this past August than in either the previous month or August 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 (RITA), the 20 carriers reporting on-time performance recorded an overall on-time arrival rate of 75.8 percent in August, an improvement over both August 2005's 75.2 percent and July 2006's 73.7 percent. The carriers also canceled 1.6 percent of their scheduled domestic flights in August, a lower rate than both the 2.1 percent recorded in August 2005 and the 1.7 rate of July 2006.

The monthly report also includes data on the causes of flight delays, as well as reports of mishandled baggage filed with the carriers, and consumer service, disability and discrimination complaints received by DOT's Aviation Consumer Protection Division. This report also includes 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 7.04 percent of their August flights were delayed by aviation system delays, compared to 7.16 percent in July 2006; 7.51 percent by late-arriving aircraft, compared to 8.37 percent in July; 6.58 percent by factors within the airline's control, such as maintenance or crew problems, compared to 7.53 percent in July; 0.99 percent by extreme weather, compared to 1.15 percent in July; and 0.27 percent for security reasons, compared to 0.05 percent in July. 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.

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 August, 40.96 percent of flights were delayed by weather, down 14.02 percent from August 2005, when 47.64 percent of flights were delayed by weather, and down 2.57 percent from July when 42.04 percent of flights were delayed by weather.

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

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Mishandled Baggage

The U.S. carriers reporting flight delay and mishandled baggage data posted a mishandled baggage rate of 8.08 reports per 1,000 passengers in August, up from both August 2005's 6.40 rate and July 2006's 6.50 mark.

Incidents Involving Pets

In August, carriers reported seven incidents involving pets while traveling by air, one more than the total for July. The August incidents involved five deaths and two lost pets.

Complaints About Airline Service

In August, the Department received 860 complaints from consumers about airline service, up 4.4 percent from the 824 complaints received in August 2005 and 3.2 percent more than the 833 filed in July 2006.

Complaints About Treatment of Disabled Passengers

The report also contains a tabulation of complaints filed with DOT in August against specific airlines regarding the treatment of passengers with disabilities. The Department received a total of 34 disability-related complaints in August, down 42.3 percent from the 59 complaints received in August 2005 and 26.1 percent fewer than the 46 filed in July 2006.

Complaints About Discrimination

In August, the Department received nine complaints alleging discrimination by airlines due to factors other than disability – such as race, religion, national origin or sex – down from the 13 received in August 2005 but more than the total of seven filed in July 2006.

Consumers may file their complaints in writing with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, C-75, Room 4107, 400 7th St. SW, Washington, DC 20590; by e-mail at 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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Facts

**AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT
August 2006**

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

Overall

75.8 percent on-time arrivals

Highest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Hawaiian Airlines – 95.7 percent
2. Aloha Airlines – 93.9 percent
3. Frontier Airlines – 83.7 percent

Lowest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Atlantic Southeast Airlines – 58.1 percent
2. ATA Airlines – 68.3 percent
3. Alaska Airlines – 68.5 percent

Most Frequently Delayed Flights

1. Atlantic Southeast Airlines flight 4503 from Atlanta to Peoria, IL – late 100.00 percent of the time
1. Comair flight 5162 from New York JFK to Buffalo, NY – late 100.00 percent of the time
1. Comair flight 5596 from New York JFK to Buffalo, NY – late 100.00 percent of the time
4. Comair flight 5590 from New York JFK to Burlington, VT – late 96.77 percent of the time
4. Comair flight 5073 from New York JFK to Atlanta – late 96.77 percent of the time
6. Comair flight 5285 from Atlanta to Raleigh/Durham, NC – late 96.77 percent of the time

Highest Rates of Canceled Flights

1. American Eagle Airlines – 3.3 percent
2. Atlantic Southeast Airlines – 3.2 percent
3. Comair – 3.2 percent

Lowest Rates of Canceled Flights

1. Frontier Airlines – 0.2 percent
2. Continental Airlines – 0.4 percent
3. JetBlue Airways – 0.4 percent

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