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June 2012 Passenger Airline Employment Rose 1.4 Percent from June 2011

Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-Time Equivalent Employees, Month of June, 1990-2012



U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed 1.4 percent more workers in June 2012 than they did in June 2011, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today. Scheduled passenger airline categories include network, low-cost, regional and other airlines. This is the 19th consecutive month that full-time equivalent employee (FTE) levels for scheduled passenger carriers have been higher than the same month of the previous year (Tables 1, 2). FTE calculations count two part-time employees as one full-time employee.

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, reported that the June FTE total of 390,923 for scheduled passenger carriers was 5,540 more than that in June 2011 (Table 3). The 1.4 percent year-over-year growth rate, although down from the growth rates achieved in the last half of 2011, still reflects a gradual increase in the industry's employment following declines that began in July 2008 (Table 2).

[Historical employment data](#) can be found on the BTS web site.

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Network airlines operate a significant portion of flights using at least one hub where connections are made for flights to down-line destinations or spoke cities. The five network airlines as a group increased employment by 1.4 percent from June 2011 to June 2012 but two of the five reported fewer FTEs. Delta Air Lines, eliminating positions following its merger with Northwest Airlines, reduced FTEs by 1.0 percent. American Airlines, which filed for bankruptcy in November, reduced FTEs by 2.9 percent. United Airlines reported 82,565 FTEs in June 2012 in a joint report with Continental Airlines following the merger of the two airlines. This was 5,753, or 7.5 percent, more FTEs than the 76,812 the two airlines reported separately in June 2011 (Table 9).

Low-cost airlines operate under a low-cost business model, with infrastructure and aircraft operating costs below the overall industry average. Among the six low-cost carriers, Allegiant Airlines, Virgin America Airlines, Spirit Airlines and JetBlue Airways reported an increase in FTEs. Frontier Airlines was the only low-cost carrier reporting fewer FTEs. Southwest Airlines reported 46,128 FTEs in June 2012 in a joint report following its merger with AirTran Airways. The combined report was 1,729 more FTEs or 3.9 percent more than the 44,399 FTEs the two airlines reported separately in June 2011 (Table 12).

Regional carriers typically provide service from small cities, using primarily regional jets to support the network carriers' hub and spoke systems. Among the 15 regional carriers, six carriers reported reduced employment levels compared to last year: Colgan Airlines, Mesa Airlines, Horizon Airlines, Republic Airlines, Comair and Executive Airlines. The total number of FTEs reported by Pinnacle Airlines – which recently merged with Mesaba Airlines – was below the total number of FTEs reported individually by the two airlines prior to the merger (Table 15).

Carrier Groups: The five network airlines employed 67.6 percent of the total number of FTEs employed by all scheduled passenger airlines in June, the six low-cost carriers employed 17.9 percent and the 14 regional carriers employed 13.2 percent (Table 4). The three airlines with the most FTEs in June – United, Delta and American – employed 63.9 percent of the total passenger airline FTEs (Table 6).

Top employers by group: The newly-merged United employed the most FTEs (82,565) in June among the network airlines, Southwest employed the most FTEs (46,128) among low-cost airlines, and American Eagle Airlines employed the most FTEs (9,839) among regional airlines. Four of the top five employers in the industry are network airlines (Table 6).

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Network Airlines

Recent Trend: The network airlines employed 3,612 more FTEs in June 2012 than in June 2011. Three of the five network carriers increased FTEs from June 2011 to June 2012 (Tables 8, 9).

Five-Year Trend: The network airlines employed 18,498 fewer FTEs in June 2012 than in June 2008. American reported the biggest percentage decline in FTE employment from 2008 to 2012, 11.7 percent, followed by Alaska Airlines, down 8.9 percent. June 2012 numbers for United and Delta are not directly comparable to 2008 because of the intervening mergers. United reported 6.5 percent fewer FTEs in June 2012 than United and Continental reported separately in June 2008; Delta reported 1.1 percent fewer FTEs in June 2012 than Delta and Northwest reported separately in June 2008 (Tables 8, 9).

Low-Cost Airlines

Recent Trend: The six low-cost airlines' FTEs were up 4.0 percent in June 2012 from June 2011. All low-cost airlines except Frontier reported year-over-year increases (Table 12).

Five-Year Trend: The six low-cost carriers reporting employment data in both 2008 and 2012 employed 11.1 percent more FTEs in June 2012 than in June 2008. Virgin America reported the largest percentage increase (up 105.6 percent), while Frontier reported a decline. June 2012 numbers for Southwest are not directly comparable to 2008 because of the intervening merger. Southwest reported 8.4 percent more FTEs in June 2012 than Southwest and AirTran reported separately in June 2008 (Table 12).

Regional Airlines

Recent Trend: The regional airlines' FTEs were down 2.5 percent in June 2012 compared to June 2011. GoJet Airlines and Shuttle America report the largest percentage increases in FTEs from June 2011 to June 2012 among airlines not involved in mergers. Comair and Executive reported the largest percentage decreases. Atlantic Southeast Airlines and ExpressJet Airlines reported separately in June 2011 as did Pinnacle and Mesaba while their reports were combined in June 2012 as a result of mergers (Table 15).

Five-Year Trend: The 15 regional carriers reporting employment data in both 2008 and 2012 employed 15.3 percent fewer FTEs in 2012 than in 2008. Comair reported the largest percentage decline followed by Mesa. GoJet Airlines reported the biggest four-year percentage gain. Effective with January 2011 reporting, Republic's employment numbers include FTEs from Midwest Airlines. Midwest employment data were formerly included in the "Other Airlines" category (Table 15).

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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 Hawaiian Airlines serving the Hawaiian Islands.

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers as of Aug. 15. Additional [airline employment data](#) can be found on the BTS website. BTS has scheduled release of July 2012 passenger airline employment data for Sept. 28.

Table 1: Change from Previous Year in Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Airline Group

Most recent 13 months - percent change compared to same month the previous year

Month	All			
	Network Airlines	Low-Cost Airlines	Regional Airlines	Passenger Airlines**
June 2010-June 2011	1.6	5.0	1.5	1.9
July 2010-July 2011	2.1	5.3	1.9	2.3
Aug. 2010-Aug. 2011	2.7	5.7	2.1	2.8
Sept. 2010-Sept. 2011	2.7	5.9	2.0	2.9
Oct. 2010-Oct. 2011	2.7	6.2	2.1	3.0
Nov. 2010-Nov. 2011	2.6	5.9	0.6	2.6
Dec. 2010-Dec. 2011	2.3	6.5	1.5	2.7
Jan. 2011-Jan. 2012	1.5	5.7	0.1	2.1
Feb. 2011-Feb. 2012	1.2	6.4	0.9	2.1
Mar. 2011-Mar. 2012	1.2	7.1	0.2	2.1
Apr. 2011-Apr. 2012	1.3	5.7	-1.5	1.8
May 2011-May 2012	1.3	5.3	-2.2	1.6
June 2011-June 2012	1.4	4.0	-2.5	1.4

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. Other Carriers generally operate within specific niche markets. They are: Hawaiian Airlines and Sun Country Airlines.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Note: See Table 2 for all passenger airlines, Table 7 for Network, Table 10 for Low-Cost and Table 13 for Regional.

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Table 2: Change from Previous Year in Scheduled Passenger Airline* Full-time Equivalent Employees**

Percent change compared to same month the previous year

Month	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	-6.7	-2.9	0.4	2.1
February	-6.6	-3.5	1.0	2.1
March	-5.6	-3.8	1.5	2.1
April	-5.5	-4.1	2.0	1.8
May	-6.8	-2.7	2.1	1.6
June	-6.3	-2.4	1.9	1.4
July	-5.9	-2.3	2.4	
August	-5.5	-1.7	2.8	
September	-4.4	-0.6	2.9	
October	-3.7	-0.4	3.0	
November	-3.3	0.0	2.6	
December	-3.3	0.2	2.7	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** 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.

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

Month	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percent Change	
						2008-2012	2011-2012
January	418,702	390,566	379,388	380,949	388,778	-7.1	2.1
February	419,014	391,596	378,020	381,831	389,901	-6.9	2.1
March	415,516	392,077	377,261	382,796	390,761	-6.0	2.1
April	415,391	392,104	376,204	383,411	390,243	-6.1	1.8
May	415,484	387,431	376,957	384,974	390,957	-5.9	1.6
June	414,406	387,665	378,297	385,383	390,923	-5.7	1.4
July	411,085	386,770	378,060	386,843			
August	406,716	384,304	377,835	388,523			
September	397,295	379,924	377,676	388,641			
October	394,166	379,713	378,112	389,444			
November	392,095	379,358	379,335	389,361			
December	391,806	378,953	379,651	389,728			
12-Month Average	407,640	385,872	378,066	385,967	390,261	-4.3	1.1
Jan-Jun Average	416,419	390,240	377,688	383,224	390,261	-6.3	1.8

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

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

R: Revised with updated filing by Mesa Airlines.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 4: Airline Group Full-time Equivalent Employees*, June 2008-2012
FTE Numbers in thousands (000's)

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2008	282,799	62,976	60,967	414,406
2009	260,808	63,501	56,563	387,665
2010	256,576	64,046	52,210	378,297
2011	260,689	67,261	52,984	385,383
2012	264,301	69,969	51,664	390,923
Pct. Change 2008-2012	-6.5%	11.1%	-15.3%	-5.7%
Percent of Total Passenger Airline Employees in 2012	67.6%	17.9%	13.2%	

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.

Table 5: Year-to-Year Change in Airline Group Full-time Equivalent Employees*, June 2008-2012
Percent change in FTEs from the same month of the previous year

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2008	5.3	-14.9	1.8	0.1
2009	-7.8	0.8	-7.2	-6.5
2010	-1.6	0.9	-7.7	-2.4
2011	1.6	5.0	1.5	1.9
2012	1.4	4.0	-2.5	1.4

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.

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**Table 6: Top 10 Airlines, June 2012
Ranked by Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees***

Rank	Airline	Total FTE Employees	Carrier Group**	Top 10 Airlines June 2011
1	United	82,565	Network	Delta
2	Delta	77,541	Network	American
3	American	64,581	Network	United
4	Southwest	46,128	Low-Cost	Southwest
5	US Airways	30,393	Network	Continental
6	JetBlue	12,691	Low-Cost	US Airways
7	American Eagle	9,839	Regional	JetBlue
8	ExpressJet	9,426	Regional	American Eagle
9	SkyWest	9,405	Regional	SkyWest
10	Alaska	9,222	Network	Alaska

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** See Table 9 for Network, Table 12 for Low-Cost and Table 15 for Regional

Table 7: Network Airlines - Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year**

Percent change compared to same month the previous year

	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	-6.3	-2.3	0.3	1.5
February	-6.4	-3.0	1.1	1.2
March	-6.7	-3.1	1.5	1.2
April	-6.5	-3.6	1.8	1.3
May	-8.2	-1.9	2.1	1.3
June	-7.8	-1.6	1.6	1.4
July	-7.1	-1.6	2.1	
August	-6.4	-0.9	2.7	
September	-5.0	0.3	2.7	
October	-2.8	-1.2	2.7	
November	-2.7	-0.7	2.6	
December	-2.5	-0.5	2.3	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

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Table 8: Network Airlines Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2008-2012

Month	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percent Change	
						2008-2012	2011-2012
January	281,701	263,934	257,787	258,653	262,561	-6.8	1.5
February	282,627	264,561	256,756	259,545	262,788	-7.0	1.2
March	283,917	264,811	256,504	260,454	263,464	-7.2	1.2
April	283,684	265,199	255,697	260,347	263,666	-7.1	1.3
May	283,628	260,485	255,518	260,832	264,183	-6.9	1.3
June	282,799	260,808	256,576	260,689	264,301	-6.5	1.4
July	280,357	260,459	256,373	261,743			
August	276,118	258,569	256,122	263,063			
September	268,416	254,866	255,751	262,639			
October	266,608	259,031	255,890	262,912			
November	265,227	258,132	256,432	263,129			
December	264,744	258,148	256,834	262,617			
12-Month Average	276,652	260,750	256,353	261,385	263,494	-4.8	0.8
Jan-Jun Average	283,059	263,300	256,473	260,087	263,494	-6.9	1.3

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* 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 9: By Network Airline: Full-time Equivalent Employees*, June 2008-2012
(FTEs for June of each year. Ranked by June 2012 FTEs)

Rank	Airline	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percent Change	
							2008-2012	2011-2012
1	United***	51,623	45,221	43,597	43,152	82,565	59.9	91.3
	Continental***	36,646	35,397	32,833	33,660	N/A	N/A	N/A
	UA/CO Combined	88,269	80,618	76,430	76,812	82,565	-6.5	7.5
2	Delta**	49,025	45,589	75,550	78,346	77,541	58.2	-1.0
	Northwest**	29,342	25,749	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	DL/NW Combined	78,367	71,338	75,550	78,346	77,541	-1.1	-1.0
3	American	73,122	68,275	65,893	66,479	64,581	-11.7	-2.9
4	US Airways	32,918	31,059	29,512	30,010	30,393	-7.7	1.3
5	Alaska	10,124	9,521	9,191	9,043	9,222	-8.9	2.0
	Total	282,800	260,811	256,576	260,689	264,301	-6.5	1.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** Delta Air Lines and Northwest Airlines merged and began reporting combined numbers in January 2010.

*** United Airlines and Continental Airlines merged and began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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

Percent change compared to same month the previous year

Month	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	-3.1	1.4	2.2	5.7
February	-3.0	1.4	2.3	6.4
March	0.1	1.2	2.3	7.1
April	1.2	0.5	4.0	5.7
May	1.2	0.6	4.1	5.3
June	0.8	0.9	5.0	4.0
July	0.9	1.5	5.3	
August	-0.2	2.0	5.7	
September	-0.1	2.7	5.9	
October	-0.4	3.0	6.2	
November	-0.1	3.2	5.9	
December	0.0	3.3	6.6	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* 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 11: Low-Cost Airlines Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percent Change	
						2008-2012	2011-2012
January	64,736	62,699	63,600	64,978	68,684	6.1	5.7
February	64,935	62,958	63,845	65,321	69,473	7.0	6.4
March**	62,937	63,027	63,783	65,273	69,886	11.0	7.1
April***	62,537	63,275	63,571	66,114	69,861	11.4	5.7
May	62,800	63,532	63,933	66,553	70,053	11.5	5.3
June	62,976	63,501	64,046	67,261	69,969	11.1	4.0
July	62,474	63,025	63,981	67,373			
August	62,870	62,775	64,022	67,682			
September	62,486	62,400	64,113	67,875			
October	62,668	62,406	64,297	68,267			
November	62,699	62,635	64,657	68,450			
December	62,631	62,615	64,652	68,887			
12-Month Average	63,062	62,904	64,042	67,003	69,654	10.5	4.0
Jan-Jun Average	63,487	63,165	63,796	65,917	69,654	9.7	5.7

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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.

** ATA Airlines ceased operations on April 3, 2008 and stopped reporting employment data effective in March.

***SkyBus stopped reporting employment data effective in April 2008 resulting from its bankruptcy filing.

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Table 12: By Low-Cost Airline: Full-time Equivalent Employees*, June 2008-2012
(FTEs for June of each year. Ranked by June 2012 FTEs)

Rank		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percent Change	
							2008-2012	2011-2012
1	Southwest**	34,285	35,296	34,636	36,232	46,128	34.5	27.3
	AirTran	8,279	8,200	8,083	8,167	N/A	N/A	N/A
	WN/FL							
	Combined	42,564	43,496	42,719	44,399	46,128	8.4	3.9
2	JetBlue	10,523	10,776	11,234	12,016	12,691	20.6	5.6
3	Frontier	4,949	4,391	4,833	4,966	4,192	-15.3	-15.6
4	Spirit	2,453	1,905	2,053	2,334	2,770	12.9	18.7
5	Virgin America	1,189	1,449	1,576	1,982	2,445	105.6	23.4
6	Allegiant	1,299	1,485	1,633	1,566	1,744	34.3	11.4
	Total	62,977	63,502	64,048	67,261	69,969	11.1	4.0

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways merged and began reporting combined numbers in April 2012.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE
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Table 13: Regional Airlines - Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year
Percent change compared to same month the previous year

Month	2009	2010	2011	2012
January	-6.0	-8.5	0.4	0.1
February	-4.9	-9.8	0.9	0.8
March	-4.9	-10.1	1.8	0.2
April	-7.4	-9.3	2.1	-1.5
May	-7.7	-8.0	1.6	-2.2
June	-7.2	-7.7	1.5	-2.5
July	-6.9	-7.5	1.9	
August	-6.8	-7.2	2.1	
September	-5.7	-6.6	2.0	
October	-10.1	0.5	2.1	
November	-7.5	-1.0	0.6	
December	-8.9	-0.3	1.5	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

* 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.

Table 14: Regional Airlines Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month

	2008**	2009	2010	2011	2012	Percent Change	
						2008-2012	2011-2012
January	61,104	57,436	52,531	52,764	52,796	-13.6	0.1
February	60,547	57,581	51,952	52,409	52,831	-12.7	0.8
March	60,239	57,310	51,522	52,468	52,581	-12.7	0.2
April	61,333	56,778	51,502	52,596	51,811	-15.5	-1.5
May	61,358	56,626	52,074	52,930	51,746	-15.7	-2.2
June	60,967	56,563	52,210	52,984	51,664	-15.3	-2.5
July	60,694	56,477	52,229	53,197			
August	60,346	56,236	52,179	53,284			
September	59,412	56,009	52,322	53,361			
October	57,992	52,143	52,402	53,490			
November	57,464	53,176	52,656	52,954			
December	57,884	52,730	52,549	53,328			
12-Month Average	59,945	55,755	52,177	52,980	52,238	-12.9	-1.4
Jan-Jun Average	60,925	57,049	51,965	52,692	52,238	-14.3	-0.9

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** Lynx Airlines began reporting in February 2008. Colgan Airlines began reporting in April 2008. Trans States Airlines no longer met reporting requirements beginning in April 2008.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

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Table 15: By Regional Airline: Full-time Equivalent Employees*, June 2008-2012
(FTEs for June of each year. Ranked by June 2012 FTEs)

Rank								Percent Change	
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2008-2012	2011-2012	
1	American Eagle	9,683	9,070	9,266	9,786	9,839	1.6	0.5	
2	ExpressJet#	7,115	5,300	5,471	5,260	9,426	32.5	79.2	
	Atlantic Southeast#	4,517	3,833	3,611	3,777	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	XE/EV Combined	11,632	9,133	9,082	9,037	9,426	-19.0	4.3	
3	SkyWest	9,490	8,581	8,925	9,435	9,405	-0.9	-0.3	
4	Pinnacle**	3,424	3,378	3,321	3,555	4,806	40.4	35.2	
	Mesaba**	3,250	3,997	2,207	2,179	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	9E/XJ Combined	6,674	7,375	5,528	5,734	4,806	-28.0	-16.2	
5	Horizon	3,713	3,233	2,997	2,820	2,814	-24.2	-0.2	
6	Air Wisconsin	2,956	2,564	2,509	2,534	2,624	-11.2	3.6	
7	Republic***	1,350	1,498	2,078	2,160	1,917	42.0	-11.2	
8	Shuttle America	1,159	1,353	1,326	1,485	1,912	65.0	28.8	
9	Mesa	2,898	2,727	2,077	1,935	1,726	-40.4	-10.8	
10	Comair	5,933	5,296	2,500	2,147	1,556	-73.7	-27.5	
11	Executive	1,717	1,756	1,817	1,827	1,411	-17.8	-22.8	
12	Colgan	1,362	1,279	1,344	1,542	1,158	-15.0	-24.9	
13	Compass	594	844	975	976	1,093	84.0	12.0	
14	PSA	1,096	986	989	1,010	1,087	-0.8	7.6	
15	GoJet	357	472	573	559	892	149.9	59.6	
16	Lynx##	356	400	226	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
	Total	60,970	56,567	52,212	52,984	51,664	-15.3	-2.5	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** Pinnacle Airlines and Mesaba Airlines began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

*** Effective with November 2009 reporting, Republic Airlines' employment numbers include FTE's from Midwest Airlines. Midwest employment data were formerly included in the "Other Airlines" category.

ExpressJet Airlines and Atlantic Southeast Airlines began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

Effective the end of March 2011, Lynx Airlines ceased operations.

N/A: Carriers did not meet the standard for filing, was no longer operating, merged with another operating carrier or failed to file. See previous notes.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

-end-