

DOT 118-11

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Airline On-Time Performance Improves in July

The on-time performance of the nation's largest airlines improved in July 2011 compared to the previous month and July 2010, according to the Air Travel Consumer Report released today by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

Information filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), a part of DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration, shows that the 16 carriers reporting on-time performance recorded an overall on-time arrival rate of 77.8 percent in July, up from both the 76.7 percent on-time rate of July 2010 and June 2011's 76.9 percent rate.

The monthly report also includes data on lengthy tarmac delays, chronically delayed flights, flight cancellations, and the causes of flight delays filed with the Department by the reporting carriers. In addition, the report contains information on reports of mishandled baggage filed by consumers with the carriers, and consumer service, disability and discrimination complaints received by DOT's Aviation Consumer Protection Division. This report also includes reports of incidents involving pets traveling by air, as required to be filed by U.S. carriers.

Tarmac Delays

The carriers filing on-time performance with the Department reported only one tarmac delay of more than three hours in July, compared to three in July 2010 and 14 in June 2011.

Cancellations

During July, the carriers canceled 1.7 percent of their scheduled domestic flights, up from July 2010's 1.4 percent cancellation rate but down from June 2011's 1.8 percent.

Chronically Delayed Flights

At the end of July, there was one flight that was chronically delayed – more than 30 minutes late more than 50 percent of the time – for three consecutive months. There were an additional 34 flights that were chronically delayed for two consecutive months. There were no chronically delayed flights for four consecutive months or more. A list of flights that were chronically delayed for a single month is [available](http://www.bts.gov) from BTS (www.bts.gov).

Causes of Flight Delays

In July, the carriers filing on-time performance data reported that 5.69 percent of their flights were delayed by aviation system delays, compared to 6.06 percent in June; 7.99 percent by late-arriving aircraft, compared to 8.15 percent in June; 5.84 percent by factors within the airline's control, such as maintenance or crew problems, compared to 6.10 percent in June; 0.64 percent by extreme weather,

compared to 0.67 percent in June; and 0.03 percent for security reasons, compared to 0.04 percent in June. 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 shows the percentage of late flights delayed by weather, including those reported in either the category of extreme weather or included in National Aviation System delays. In July, 38.21 percent of late flights were delayed by weather, up 1.60 percent from July 2010, when 37.61 percent of late flights were delayed by weather, and up 4.11 percent from June when 36.70 percent of late 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>.

Mishandled Baggage

The U.S. carriers reporting flight delays and mishandled baggage data posted a mishandled baggage rate of 3.71 reports per 1,000 passengers in July, up from both July 2010's rate of 3.69 and June 2011's rate of 3.57.

Incidents Involving Pets

In July, carriers reported six incidents involving the loss, death or injury of pets while traveling by air, down from the eight reports filed in July 2010, but up from the five reports filed in June 2011. July's incidents involved the deaths of five pets and the injury of one pet.

Complaints About Airline Service

In July, the Department received 1,285 complaints about airline service from consumers, up 17.1 percent from the 1,097 complaints filed in July 2010, and up 14.0 percent from the 1,127 received in June 2011.

Complaints About Treatment of Disabled Passengers

The report also contains a tabulation of complaints filed with DOT in July against airlines regarding the treatment of passengers with disabilities. The Department received a total of 56 disability-related complaints in July, up from both the total of 31 complaints filed in July 2010 and the 48 complaints received in June 2011.

Complaints About Discrimination

In July, the Department received five complaints alleging discrimination by airlines due to factors other than disability – such as race, religion, national origin or sex – down from the total of 12 recorded in both July 2010 and June 2011.

Consumers may file their complaints in writing with the Aviation Consumer Protection Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, C-75, W96-432, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20590;

by voice mail at (202) 366-2220 or by TTY at (202) 366-0511; or on the web at <http://airconsumer.dot.gov>.

Consumers who want on-time performance data for specific flights should call their airline's reservation number or their travel agent. This information is available on the computerized reservation systems used by these agents. The information is also available on the appropriate carrier's website.

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

Facts

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT July 2011

KEY ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND FLIGHT CANCELLATION STATISTICS Based on Data Filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics by the 16 Reporting Carriers

Overall

77.8 percent on-time arrivals

Highest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Hawaiian Airlines – 95.1 percent
2. Alaska Airlines – 90.9 percent
3. Southwest Airlines – 83.8 percent

Lowest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Atlantic Southeast Airlines – 69.0 percent
2. ExpressJet Airlines – 71.1 percent
3. Frontier Airlines – 72.8 percent

Flights with Longest Tarmac Delays

1. Continental Airlines flight 44 from Miami to Newark, NJ, 7/7/11 – delayed on tarmac 201 minutes (There was only one reported flight in July with a tarmac delay of more than three hours)

Highest Rates of Canceled Flights

1. American Eagle Airlines – 3.6 percent
2. Frontier Airlines – 3.2 percent
3. ExpressJet Airlines – 2.8 percent

Lowest Rates of Canceled Flights

1. Hawaiian Airlines – 0.0 percent*
2. Alaska Airlines – 0.3 percent
3. AirTran Airways – 0.5 percent

*Hawaiian canceled two flights in July

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