



U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of Public Affairs
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590
<http://www.dot.gov/briefingroom>

BTS Data

BTS 34-14
Monday, July 21, 2014
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May 2014 Passenger Airline Employment Data

U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed 385,619 workers in May 2014, 1.1 percent more than in May 2013, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today. May was the sixth consecutive month that full-time equivalent (FTE) employment for U.S. scheduled passenger airlines was higher than the same month of the previous year (Tables 1, 2, 3).

Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-Time Equivalent Employees, Month of May, 1990-2014



The May 2014 FTE total for scheduled passenger airlines was 4,247 more than in May 2013 and the highest monthly total since September 2012 (Table 3). Scheduled passenger airline categories include network, low-cost, regional and other airlines. [Historical employment data](#) can be found on the BTS web site.

The five network airlines that collectively employ two-thirds of the scheduled passenger airline FTEs reported 0.5 percent more FTEs in May 2014 than in May 2013 (Table 7). Alaska Airlines, US Airways, Delta Air Lines and American Airlines increased FTEs from May 2013 while United Airlines reduced FTEs (Table 9). Network airlines operate a significant portion of their flights using at least one hub where connections are made for flights to down-line destinations or spoke cities.

Of the six low-cost carriers, four - Allegiant Airlines, Spirit Airlines, JetBlue Airways and Virgin America - reported an increase in FTEs from May 2013 while two - Frontier Airlines and Southwest Airlines - reported a decline (Table 12). Low-cost airlines operate under a low-cost business model, with infrastructure and aircraft operating costs below the overall industry average.

Among the 13 regional carriers, four carriers reported reduced employment levels in May compared to the previous year: Chautauqua Airlines, Endeavor Airlines, Envoy Air and Shuttle America. The others reported increases (Table 15). Regional carriers typically provide service from small cities, using primarily regional jets to support the network carriers' hub and spoke systems.

Carrier Groups: The five network airlines employed 66.8 percent of the total number of FTEs employed by all scheduled passenger airlines in May, the six low-cost carriers employed 18.4 percent and the 13 regional carriers employed 13.1 percent (Table 4). The three airlines with the most FTEs in May – United, Delta and American – employed 56.0 percent of the month's total passenger airline FTEs (Tables 3, 6). These three airlines carried 40.3 percent of total passengers traveling on U.S. airlines in April, the most recent month available. See [Air Traffic press releases](#).

Top Employers by Group: United employed the most FTEs (80,500) in May among the network airlines, Southwest employed the most FTEs (45,342) among low-cost airlines, and Envoy employed the most FTEs (10,813) among regional airlines. Four of the top five employers in the industry are network airlines (Table 6).

Airline Mergers: Airlines that announce mergers typically begin joint reporting following U.S. Department of Transportation approval and issuance of a single economic certificate. Southwest and AirTran Airways began joint reporting of their financial data, including employment numbers, in April 2012 under a waiver granted by the Department, while continuing to report all other data as separate carriers. American and US Airways, following their December 2013 merger announcement, will report separately until the Department approves single carrier reporting and a single economic certificate is issued.

In March 2014 (for January 2014 data), the Department began displaying combined on-time performance data, mishandled baggage data, oversales data and complaint data in its [Air Travel Consumer Report](#) for Southwest and Air Tran as well as for American and U.S. Airways because both sets of airlines are sufficiently integrated that consumers perceive them as a single airline. The *Air Travel Consumer Report* also continues to display the separate performance data of each of these airlines and will continue to do so until a single economic certificate is issued.

Network Airlines

Recent Changes: The network airlines employed 1,304 more FTEs in May 2014 than in May 2013, a 0.5 percent increase. Four of the five network carriers reported an FTE increase from May 2013 while United reported a decrease (Tables 8, 9).

Longer-term Changes: The network airlines employed 2,060 more FTEs in May 2014 than in May 2010, a 0.8 percent increase. American (-9.2 percent) reported a decrease in FTE employment from 2010 to 2014 while US Airways (7.7 percent), Alaska (7.1 percent) and Delta (1.4 percent) reported increases. United's numbers for the two years are not directly comparable because of the intervening merger. United reported 5.4 percent more FTEs in May 2014 than United and Continental Airlines reported separately in May 2010 (Tables 8, 9).

Low-Cost Airlines

Recent Changes: The six low-cost airlines reported 1.8 percent more FTEs as a group from May 2013 to May 2014. Frontier and Southwest reported year-to-year decreases while the remaining four airlines reported increases (Table 12).

Longer-term Changes: The low-cost carriers employed 7,162 more FTEs in May 2014 than in May 2010, an 11.2 percent increase. Spirit reported the largest percentage increase, 78.0 percent, while Frontier was the only low-cost carrier to report a decline, 24.7 percent. May 2014 numbers for Southwest are not directly comparable to 2010 because of the intervening merger. Southwest reported 6.5 percent more FTEs in May 2014 than Southwest and AirTran reported separately in May 2010 (Table 12).

Regional Airlines

Recent Changes: Regional airlines reported a 2.4 percent increase in FTE employment in May 2014 compared to May 2013. PSA Airlines and Republic Airlines reported the largest percentage increases in FTEs from May 2013 to May 2014. Chautauqua and Endeavor reported the largest percentage decreases (Table 15).

Longer-term Changes: The 13 regional carriers operating in May employed 2.8 percent fewer FTEs in 2014 than the 18 carriers operating in May 2010. Horizon Air and Mesa Airlines reported declines. GoJet Airlines reported the biggest four-year percentage gain. The ExpressJet/Atlantic Southeast combination reported 2.0 percent more FTE's in May 2014 than the two airlines reported separately in May 2010. The Endeavor/Mesaba combination reported 30.4 percent fewer FTE's in May 2014 than the two airlines reported separately in May 2010 (Table 15).

Envoy operated as American Eagle prior to April 2014. Endeavor operated as Pinnacle prior to August 2013.

Reporting Notes

Airlines that operate at least one aircraft that has more than 60 seats or the capacity to carry a payload of passengers, cargo and fuel weighing more than 18,000 pounds must report monthly employment statistics.

The “Other Carrier” category generally reflects those airlines that operate within specific niche markets such as the Hawaiian Islands served by Hawaiian Airlines and Island Air Hawaii.

Data are compiled from monthly reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers as of July 14. Additional [airline employment data](#) and previous [press releases](#) can be found on the BTS website. BTS has [scheduled release](#) of June passenger airline employment data for Aug. 21.

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	Network Airlines	Low-Cost Airlines	Regional Airlines	All Passenger Airlines**
May 2012-May 2013	-3.0	-0.3	-4.4	-2.5
Jun 2012-Jun 2013	-2.8	-0.6	-4.4	-2.4
Jul 2012-Jul 2013	-2.8	-0.4	-6.3	-2.6
Aug 2012-Aug 2013	-2.5	0.0	-5.1	-2.2
Sep 2012-Sep 2013	-2.1	-0.2	-3.0	-1.6
Oct 2012-Oct 2013	-1.4	-0.1	-0.8	-0.8
Nov 2012-Nov 2013	-0.4	-0.1	-0.5	-0.1
Dec 2012-Dec 2013	0.4	-0.6	-0.5	0.3
Jan 2013-Jan 2014	0.4	0.3	-0.4	0.5
Feb 2013-Feb 2014	0.1	0.7	0.5	0.4
Mar 2013-Mar 2014	0.6	0.8	0.9	0.8
Apr 2013-Apr 2014	0.4	1.5	2.3	1.0
May 2013-May 2014	0.5	1.8	2.4	1.1

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, Sun Country Airlines and Island Air Hawaii.

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.

Table 2: Change from Previous Year in Scheduled Passenger Airline* Full-time Equivalent Employees**
Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014
January	0.4	2.1	-2.3	0.5
February	1.0	2.1	-2.4	0.4
March	1.5	2.1	-2.7	0.8
April	2.0	1.8	-2.4	1.0
May	2.1	1.6	-2.5	1.1
June	1.9	1.4	-2.4	
July	2.3	0.8	-2.6	
August	2.8	0.1	-2.2	
September	2.9	-0.6	-1.6	
October	3.0	-1.3	-0.8	
November	2.6	-2.0	-0.1	
December	2.7	-2.6	0.3	

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 2010-2014
(FTE numbers in thousands (000's))

Month	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
						2010-2014	2013-2014
January	379.4	380.9	388.8	380.0	381.8	0.6	0.5
February	378.0	381.8	389.9	380.4	382.0	1.0	0.4
March	377.3	382.8	390.8	380.5	383.6	1.7	0.8
April	376.2	383.4	390.2	380.5	384.3	2.1	1.0
May	377.0	385.0	391.0	381.4	385.6	2.3	1.1
June	378.3	385.4	390.9	381.7			
July	378.1	386.8	391.3	381.3			
August	377.8	388.5	389.0	380.6			
September	377.7	388.6	386.4	380.2			
October	378.1	389.4	384.3	381.2			
November	379.3	389.4	381.6	381.2			
December	379.7	389.7	379.6	380.8			
12-Month Average	378.1	386.0	387.8	380.8			
Jan-May Average	377.6	382.8	390.1	380.6	383.5	1.6	0.8

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.

Note: Percent changes based on numbers prior to rounding.

Table 4: Airline Group Full-time Equivalent Employees*, May 2010-2014
 FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2010	255.5	63.9	52.1	377.0
2011	260.8	66.6	52.9	385.0
2012	264.2	70.1	51.7	391.0
2013	256.3	69.8	49.4	381.4
2014	257.6	71.1	50.6	385.6
Pct. Change 2010-2014	0.8%	11.2%	-2.8%	2.3%
Percent of Total Passenger Airline Employees in 2014	66.8%	18.4%	13.1%	100%

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*, May 2010-2014
 Percent change in FTEs from the same month of the previous year

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2010	-1.9	0.6	-8.0	-2.7
2011	2.1	4.8	1.6	2.1
2012	1.3	5.3	-2.2	1.6
2013	-3.0	-0.3	-4.5	-2.5
2014	0.5	1.8	2.4	1.1

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 6: Top 10 Airlines, May 2014

Ranked by Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees*
 FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	Airline	Total FTE Employees	Carrier Group**	Top 10 Airlines May 2013
1	United	80.5	Network	United
2	Delta	75.7	Network	Delta
3	American	59.7	Network	American
4	Southwest	45.3	Low-Cost	Southwest
5	US Airways	31.8	Network	US Airways
6	JetBlue	13.8	Low-Cost	JetBlue
7	Envoy**	10.8	Regional	American Eagle
8	Alaska	9.8	Network	Alaska
9	SkyWest	9.8	Regional	SkyWest
10	ExpressJet	9.3	Regional	ExpressJet

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** Envoy operated as American Eagle prior to April 2014

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

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

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

	2011	2012	2013	2014
January	0.3	1.5	-3.1	0.4
February	1.1	1.2	-3.0	0.1
March	1.5	1.2	-3.3	0.6
April	1.8	1.3	-3.0	0.4
May	2.1	1.3	-3.0	0.5
June	1.6	1.4	-2.8	
July	2.1	0.8	-2.8	
August	2.7	-0.2	-2.5	
September	2.7	-0.8	-2.1	
October	2.7	-1.4	-1.4	
November	2.6	-2.4	-0.4	
December	2.3	-3.3	0.4	

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

Table 8: Network Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2010-2014
 FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Month	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
						2010-2014	2013-2014
January	257.8	258.7	262.6	254.4	255.5	-0.9	0.4
February	256.8	259.5	262.8	255.0	255.2	-0.6	0.1
March	256.5	260.5	263.5	254.9	256.3	-0.1	0.6
April	255.7	260.3	263.7	255.7	256.7	0.4	0.4
May	255.5	260.8	264.2	256.3	257.6	0.8	0.5
June	256.6	260.7	264.3	256.8			
July	256.4	261.8	263.8	256.5			
August	256.1	263.1	262.4	255.8			
September	255.8	262.6	260.6	255.2			
October	255.9	262.9	259.2	255.7			
November	256.4	263.1	256.8	255.9			
December	256.8	262.6	254.1	255.2			
12-Month Average	256.4	261.4	261.5	255.6			
Jan-May Average	256.5	260.0	263.3	255.2	256.3	-0.1	0.4

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 9: Network Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees*, May 2010-2014

(FTEs for May of each year. Ranked by May 2014 FTEs)

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	Airline	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
							2010-2014	2013-2014
1	UA/CO Combined	76.4	77.1	82.5	82.6	80.5	5.4	-2.5
	United**	43.6	43.7	82.5	82.6	80.5	N/A	-2.5
	Continental**	32.8	33.5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	Delta	74.7	78.3	77.1	74.3	75.7	1.4	1.9
3	American	65.8	66.4	65.0	58.9	59.7	-9.2	1.5
4	US Airways	29.5	30.0	30.4	31.0	31.8	7.7	2.6
5	Alaska	9.2	9.0	9.2	9.5	9.8	7.1	3.0
	Total	255.5	260.8	264.2	256.3	257.6	0.8	0.5

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** 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 Airline Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014
January	2.2	5.7	1.1	0.3
February	2.3	6.4	0.2	0.7
March	2.3	7.1	-0.1	0.8
April	4.0	5.7	-0.3	1.5
May	4.1	5.3	-0.3	1.8
June	5.0	4.0	-0.6	
July	5.3	3.5	-0.4	
August	5.7	2.5	0.0	
September	5.9	2.5	-0.2	
October	6.2	1.9	-0.1	
November	5.9	1.4	-0.1	
December	6.6	1.3	-0.6	

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.

Table 11: Low-Cost Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2010-2014
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
						2010-2014	2013-2014
January	63.6	65.0	68.7	69.5	69.7	9.6	0.3
February	63.8	65.3	69.5	69.6	70.1	9.9	0.7
March	63.8	65.3	69.9	69.9	70.4	10.3	0.8
April	63.6	66.1	69.9	69.7	70.8	11.3	1.5
May	63.9	66.6	70.1	69.8	71.1	11.2	1.8
June	64.0	67.3	70.0	69.6			
July	64.0	67.4	69.8	69.5			
August	64.0	67.7	69.4	69.4			
September	64.1	67.9	69.6	69.4			
October	64.3	68.3	69.6	69.5			
November	64.7	68.5	69.4	69.4			
December	64.7	68.9	69.8	69.4			
12-Month Average	64.0	67.0	69.6	69.5			
Jan-May Average	63.7	65.6	69.6	69.7	70.4	10.5	1.0

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.

Table 12: Low-Cost Carrier Full-time Equivalent Employees,* May 2010-2014**
(FTEs for May of each year. Ranked by May 2014 FTEs)

Rank		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
							2010-2014	2013-2014
1	WN/FL Combined	42,568	43,955	46,176	45,498	45,342	6.5	-0.3
	Southwest**	34,613	35,882	46,176	45,498	45,342	N/A	-0.3
	AirTran	7,955	8,073	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	JetBlue	11,273	11,873	12,734	13,009	13,757	22.0	5.7
3	Frontier	4,876	4,944	4,244	3,724	3,670	-24.7	-1.5
4	Spirit	2,061	2,299	2,725	3,256	3,668	78.0	12.7
5	Virgin America	1,527	1,953	2,443	2,425	2,510	64.4	3.5
6	Allegiant	1,629	1,531	1,733	1,906	2,148	31.9	12.7
	Total	63,933	66,553	70,053	69,818	71,095	11.2	1.8

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.

Table 13: Regional Airline Year-to-Year Change in Full-time Equivalent Employees* from the Previous Year

Percent change compared to same month of the previous year

Month	2011	2012	2013	2014
January	0.4	0.1	-4.1	-0.4
February	0.9	0.8	-5.0	0.5
March	1.8	0.2	-4.6	0.9
April	2.1	-1.5	-3.8	2.3
May	1.6	-2.2	-4.5	2.4
June	1.5	-2.5	-4.4	
July	1.9	-3.3	-6.3	
August	2.1	-2.3	-5.1	
September	2.0	-4.3	-3.0	
October	2.1	-6.0	-0.8	
November	0.6	-5.4	-0.5	
December	1.5	-5.4	-0.5	

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 Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Month 2010-2014

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
						2010-2014	2013-2014
January	52.5	52.8	52.8	50.6	50.4	-4.0	-0.4
February	52.0	52.4	52.8	50.2	50.5	-2.9	0.5
March	51.5	52.5	52.6	50.2	50.6	-1.7	0.9
April	51.5	52.6	51.8	49.4	50.5	-1.9	2.3
May	52.1	52.9	51.7	49.4	50.6	-2.8	2.4
June	52.2	53.0	51.7	49.4			
July	52.2	53.2	52.7	49.4			
August	52.2	53.3	52.1	49.4			
September	52.3	53.4	51.1	49.5			
October	52.4	53.5	50.3	49.9			
November	52.7	53.0	50.1	49.9			
December	52.5	53.3	50.4	50.2			
12-Month Average	52.2	53.0	51.7	49.8			
Jan-May Average	51.9	52.6	52.4	50.0	50.5	-2.7	1.1

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 15: Regional Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees*, May 2010-2014
(FTEs for May of each year. Ranked by May 2014 FTEs)

Rank		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	Percent Change	
							2010-2014	2013-2014
1	Envoy**	9,240	9,697	9,815	11,108	10,813	17.0	-2.7
2	SkyWest	8,943	9,340	9,383	9,447	9,835	10.0	4.1
3	XE/EV Combined	9,136	9,050	9,433	8,873	9,322	2.0	5.1
	ExpressJet***	5,518	5,296	9,433	8,873	9,322	N/A	5.1
	Atlantic Southeast***	3,618	3,754	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
4	9E/XJ Combined	5,517	5,723	4,828	4,368	3,838	-30.4	-12.1
	Endeavor****	3,300	3,562	4,828	4,368	3,838	N/A	-12.1
	Mesaba****	2,217	2,161	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
5	Republic	2,057	2,179	1,903	2,314	2,893	40.6	25.0
6	Horizon	3,026	2,835	2,765	2,643	2,818	-6.9	6.6
7	Air Wisconsin	2,498	2,557	2,627	2,497	2,543	1.8	1.8
8	Shuttle America	1,291	1,431	1,908	2,060	2,041	58.1	-0.9
9	Mesa	2,069	2,003	1,749	1,647	1,929	-6.8	17.1
10	PSA	990	1,009	1,072	1,070	1,389	40.3	29.8
11	Compass	981	950	1,079	1,102	1,189	21.2	7.9
12	GoJet	564	581	876	1,091	1,118	98.2	2.5
13	Chautauqua#	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,204	905	N/A	-24.8
14	Executive##	1,798	1,855	1,453	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
15	Colgan###	1,243	1,534	1,281	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
16	Comair####	2,499	2,189	1,577	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
17	Lynx#####	225	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	52,077	52,933	51,749	49,424	50,633	-2.8	2.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** Envoy Airlines operated as American Eagle prior to April 2014.

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

**** Endeavor Airlines operated as Pinnacle prior to August 2013. Pinnacle Airlines and Mesaba Airlines began reporting combined numbers in January 2012.

Effective July 2012 Chautauqua Airlines began reporting employment data.

Effective the end of March 2013, Executive Airlines ceased operations.

Effective the end of September 2012, Colgan Airlines ceased operations.

Effective the end of October 2012, Comair ceased operations.

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.