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2008 Passenger Airline Employment by Job Category

U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed 2.3 percent more pilots and 5.9 percent more maintenance workers in 2008 than in 2007 while total industry jobs declined by 3.0 percent, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today (Table 1).

BTS, a part of the Research and Innovative Technology Administration, reported that the seven large network carriers employed 1.1 percent more pilots and 8.6 percent more maintenance workers in 2008 than in 2007. The seven largest low-cost carriers employed 5.2 percent more pilots and 6.8 percent fewer maintenance workers from 2007 to 2008.

Delta Air Lines had the largest increase in pilots of any network airline from 2007 to 2008 while Alaska Airlines had the greatest percentage decrease in pilot employment of the network airlines. United Airlines had the largest increase in maintenance workers of any network airline from 2007 to 2008 while Northwest Airlines had the smallest increase (Table 2).

All of the low-cost carriers except Frontier Airlines added pilots from 2007 to 2008. Spirit Airlines had the largest increase in pilot employment followed by Allegiant Airlines. Allegiant had the largest increase in maintenance workers of any low-cost airline from 2007 to 2008 while Spirit had the largest reduction (Table 3).

Scheduled passenger airlines include network, low-cost, regional and other airlines. Network carriers operate a significant portion of their flights using at least one hub where connections are made for flights on a spoke system. Low-cost carriers are those that the industry recognizes as operating under a low-cost business model, with lower infrastructure and aircraft operating costs.

The merged US Airways and America West Airlines began joint reporting of annual employment numbers in 2008. US Airways' employment numbers for previous years do not include America West, which is included in Tables 1, 4 and 7 as a low-cost carrier for 2000 and 2006. America West did not file a 2007 report.

Airlines that meet the reporting standards report annual employment numbers by job category to BTS. The annual numbers are a 12-month average for the year and are not comparable to the full-time equivalent employee numbers issued monthly by BTS.

Airlines that operate at least one aircraft with the capacity to carry combined passengers, cargo and fuel of 18,000 pounds – the payload factor – and have annual operating revenue of more than \$20 million must report annual employment data.

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ADD ONE

Pilots

The seven network carriers employed 13.2 pilots per aircraft in 2008, down from 13.5 pilots per aircraft in 2007. The low-cost carriers employed 11.2 pilots per aircraft in 2008, down 1.8 percent from 11.4 pilots per aircraft in 2007 (Table 4).

Alaska had 12.0 pilots per aircraft in 2008, down from 12.9 per aircraft in 2007, the fewest of any network airline. Delta, with 14.9 per aircraft, up from 14.3 per aircraft in 2008, had the largest increase in the number of pilots per aircraft from 2007 to 2008 and had the most pilots per aircraft of any network carrier (Table 5).

Allegiant had 9.3 pilots per aircraft in 2008, the fewest of any low-cost airline, compared to 9.6 pilots per aircraft in 2007. Spirit, with 15.5 per aircraft, up from 12.6 per aircraft in 2007 had the most pilots per aircraft in the low-cost group (Table 6).

Maintenance

The passenger airlines had 8.9 maintenance workers per aircraft in 2008, up from 8.3 per aircraft in 2007. The network airlines had 12.9 maintenance workers per aircraft in 2008, up from 12.3 per aircraft in 2007. Spending by network airlines for outsourced maintenance increased from 42.5 percent of total maintenance spending in 2007 to 42.8 percent in 2008 (Table 7).

The low-cost airlines had 3.2 maintenance workers per aircraft in 2008, down from 3.7 per aircraft in 2007. Spending by low-cost airlines for outsourced maintenance increased from 52.1 percent of total maintenance spending in 2007 to 54.6 percent in 2007 (Table 7).

Northwest had 0.8 maintenance workers per aircraft in 2008, the fewest of any network airline and unchanged from the 0.8 employees per aircraft in 2007. Northwest's spending for outsourcing declined from 71.0 percent of total spending in 2007 to 65.9 percent in 2008. American Airlines had 22.4 maintenance workers per aircraft in 2008, the most of any network airline. American's spending for outsourcing was 23.6 percent of total maintenance spending in 2008, the lowest percentage spending share of the network carriers (Table 8).

Virgin America had 1.7 maintenance workers per aircraft in 2008 the fewest of any low-cost airline. Of the low-cost airlines, Spirit spent the smallest portion of its maintenance expense on outsourcing at 22.6 percent. Southwest had the highest percentage share for outsourcing at 61.3 percent. Frontier had 3.9 maintenance workers per aircraft in 2008, the most of any low-cost airline but down from 7.7 employees per aircraft in 2007. Frontier's spending for outsourcing increased from 20.5 percent of total maintenance spending in 2007 to 24.9 percent in 2008 (Table 9).

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Reporting Notes

Data are compiled from annual reports filed with BTS by commercial air carriers as of May 20. There were 37 reporting scheduled passenger carriers in 2008. Hawaiian Airlines failed to file its report.

Additional airline employment data and the list of reporting carriers can be found on the BTS website at http://www.bts.gov/programs/airline_information/number_of_employees/labor_category/index.html

Table 1: Change in Passenger Airline Employees, Maintenance Workers and Pilots 2007-2008

Total Passenger Airlines, Network Airlines and Low-Cost Airlines

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
Passenger Airlines*					
Total	523,208	415,434	421,463	408,964	-3.0
Maintenance	64,248	43,549	43,490	46,075	5.9
Pilots	66,119	64,804	63,648	65,084	2.3
Other	392,841	307,081	314,325	297,805	-5.3
Network (7 Airlines)**					
Total	425,233	274,194	288,767	282,993	-2.0
Maintenance	55,715	30,893	31,957	34,698	8.6
Pilots	50,201	33,993	35,186	35,565	1.1
Other	319,317	209,308	221,624	212,730	-4.0
Low-Cost (7 Airlines)***					
Total	58,836	71,214	60,876	62,775	3.1
Maintenance	3,630	4,088	3,234	3,015	-6.8
Pilots	8,039	11,155	10,102	10,632	5.2
Other	47,167	55,971	47,540	49,128	3.3

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* All scheduled passenger airlines reporting annual employment numbers to BTS: 30 in 2000, 37 in 2006, 36 in 2007 and 37 in 2008.

** US Airways' 2008 report followed merger with America West. Previous years do not include America West.

*** Nine airlines in 2000, eight in 2006 and 2007, seven in 2008. For numbers for largest low-cost carriers by revenue see Table 3.

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Table 2: Change in Network Airline Employees, Maintenance Workers and Pilots 2007-2008

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
Alaska					
Total	9,531	9,307	9,680	9,628	-0.5
Maintenance	562	152	699	727	4.0
Pilots	1,239	1,367	1,385	1,361	-1.7
Other	7,730	7,788	7,596	7,540	-0.7
American					
Total	92,665	72,757	71,818	70,923	-1.2
Maintenance	15,139	14,296	13,980	14,479	3.6
Pilots	10,408	8,572	8,343	8,306	-0.4
Other	67,118	49,889	49,495	48,138	-2.7
Continental					
Total	42,468	39,363	40,948	40,630	-0.8
Maintenance	3,443	3,676	3,808	3,889	2.1
Pilots	4,656	4,408	4,598	4,578	-0.4
Other	34,369	31,279	32,542	32,163	-1.2
Delta					
Total	71,384	45,562	47,286	47,420	0.3
Maintenance	5,728	4,872	5,240	5,272	0.6
Pilots	9,123	5,706	5,904	6,391	8.2
Other	56,533	34,984	36,142	35,757	-1.1
Northwest					
Total	51,553	30,729	29,619	29,124	-1.7
Maintenance	5,852	267	265	266	0.4
Pilots	5,981	4,531	4,340	4,345	0.1
Other	39,720	25,931	25,014	24,513	-2.0
United					
Total	95,327	55,027	55,160	52,585	-4.7
Maintenance	15,846	4,848	4,891	6,644	35.8
Pilots	11,278	6,277	6,338	6,350	0.2
Other	68,077	43,902	43,931	39,591	-9.9
US Airways*					
Total	42,652	21,449	34,256	32,683	-4.6
Maintenance	5,353	2,782	3,074	3,421	11.3
Pilots	5,330	3,132	4,278	4,234	-1.0
Other	31,969	15,536	26,904	25,028	-7.0

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* US Airways' 2008 report followed merger with America West. Previous years do not include America West.

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Table 3: Change in Low-Cost Airline Employees, Maintenance Workers and Pilots 2007-2008

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
AirTran					
Total	4,035	7,415	8,304	8,259	-0.5
Maintenance	337	407	409	405	-1.0
Pilots	547	1,325	1,498	1,559	4.1
Other	3,173	5,683	6,397	6,295	-1.6
Allegiant*					
Total	N/A	841	1,133	1,330	17.4
Maintenance	N/A	70	88	122	38.6
Pilots	N/A	178	268	307	14.6
Other	N/A	616	811	901	11.1
Frontier					
Total	1,745	4,034	5,219	4,939	-5.4
Maintenance	231	363	418	225	-46.2
Pilots	547	655	704	641	-8.9
Other	967	3,019	4,097	4,073	-0.6
JetBlue					
Total	693	9,272	9,713	10,177	4.8
Maintenance	50	456	468	471	0.6
Pilots	203	1,451	1,707	1,794	5.1
Other	440	7,365	7,538	7,912	5.0
Southwest					
Total	28,671	32,167	33,680	34,680	3.0
Maintenance	1,146	1,643	1,682	1,701	1.1
Pilots	3,316	4,845	5,317	5,588	5.1
Other	24,209	25,679	26,681	27,391	2.7
Spirit					
Total	1,911	2,018	2,145	2,410	12.4
Maintenance	246	199	161	72	-55.3
Pilots	244	368	442	526	19.0
Other	1,421	1,463	1,542	1,812	17.5
Virgin America					
Total	N/A	N/A	N/A	980	N/A
Maintenance	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	N/A
Pilots	N/A	N/A	N/A	217	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A	N/A	744	N/A

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* Allegiant did not meet the standard for reporting in 2000. The standard is operation of at least one aircraft with the capacity to carry combined passengers, cargo and fuel of 18,000 pounds – the payload factor – and annual operating revenue of more than \$20 million.

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AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE
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Table 4: Change in Passenger Airline Pilots and Pilots Per Aircraft 2007-2008
Total Passenger Airlines, Network Airlines and Low-Cost Airlines

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
Passenger Airlines*					
Total Pilots	66,119	64,804	63,648	65,084	2.3
Pilots Per Aircraft	13.3	12.8	12.1	12.6	4.1
Network (7 Airlines)**					
Total Pilots	50,201	33,993	35,186	35,565	1.1
Pilots Per Aircraft	15.0	13.1	13.5	13.2	-2.2
Low-Cost (7 Airlines)***					
Total Pilots	8,039	11,155	10,102	10,632	5.2
Pilots Per Aircraft	12.7	12.0	11.4	11.2	-1.8

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* All scheduled passenger airlines reporting annual employment numbers to BTS: 30 in 2000, 37 in 2006, 36 in 2007 and 37 in 2008.

** US Airways' 2008 report followed merger with America West. Previous years do not include America West.

*** Nine airlines in 2000, eight in 2006 and 2007, seven in 2008. For numbers for largest low-cost carriers by revenue see Table 6.

Table 5: Change in Network Airline Pilots and Pilots Per Aircraft 2007-2008

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
Alaska					
Total Pilots	1,239	1,367	1,385	1,361	-1.7
Pilots Per Aircraft	13.6	12.3	12.9	12.0	-7.0
American					
Total Pilots	10,408	8,572	8,343	8,306	-0.4
Pilots Per Aircraft	14.7	12.5	13.3	12.9	-3.0
Continental					
Total Pilots	4,656	4,408	4,598	4,578	-0.4
Pilots Per Aircraft	12.9	12.6	13.7	12.8	-6.6
Delta					
Total Pilots	9,123	5,706	5,904	6,391	8.2
Pilots Per Aircraft	15.2	13.4	14.3	14.9	4.2
Northwest					
Total Pilots	5,981	4,531	4,340	4,345	0.1
Pilots Per Aircraft	14.2	12.1	12.4	12.9	4.0
United					
Total Pilots	11,278	6,277	6,338	6,350	0.2
Pilots Per Aircraft	18.8	13.6	14.7	14.3	-2.7
US Airways*					
Total Pilots	5,330	3,132	4,278	4,234	-1.0
Pilots Per Aircraft	13.4	13.1	12.6	11.8	-6.3

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* US Airways' 2008 report followed merger with America West. Previous years do not include America West.

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Table 6: Change in Low-Cost Airline Pilots and Pilots Per Aircraft 2007-2008

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
AirTran					
Total Pilots	547	1,325	1,498	1,559	4.1
Pilots Per Aircraft	11.4	11.6	12.0	11.5	-11.2
Allegiant*					
Total Pilots	N/A	178	268	307	14.6
Pilots Per Aircraft	N/A	14.2	9.6	9.3	-3.1
Frontier					
Total Pilots	547	655	704	641	-8.9
Pilots Per Aircraft	12.5	13.9	13.0	11.1	-14.6
JetBlue					
Total Pilots	203	1,451	1,707	1,794	4.1
Pilots Per Aircraft	38.3	13.1	14.1	12.9	-8.5
Southwest					
Total Pilots	3,316	4,845	5,317	5,588	5.1
Pilots Per Aircraft	10.2	10.5	11.2	10.5	-6.2
Spirit					
Total Pilots	244	368	442	526	19.0
Pilots Per Aircraft	10.2	11.5	12.6	15.5	23.0
Virgin America					
Total Pilots	N/A	N/A	N/A	217	N/A
Pilots Per Aircraft	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.4	N/A

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* Allegiant did not meet the standard for reporting in 2000. The standard is operation of at least one aircraft with the capacity to carry combined passengers, cargo and fuel of 18,000 pounds – the payload factor – and annual operating revenue of more than \$20 million.

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AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE
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Table 7: Change in Passenger Airline Maintenance Employees Per Aircraft and Percent of Maintenance Spending Outsourced* 2007-2008
Total Passenger Airlines, Network Airlines and Low-Cost Airlines

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
Passenger Airlines**					
Maintenance Employees	64,248	43,549	43,490	46,075	5.9
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	13.0	8.6	8.3	8.9	7.2
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	29.6	44.9	45.3	45.2	-0.1 Pt
Network (7 Airlines)***					
Maintenance Employees	55,715	30,893	31,957	34,698	8.6
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	16.6	11.9	12.3	12.9	4.9
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	24.3	41.7	42.5	42.8	0.3 Pt
Low-Cost (7 Airlines)****					
Maintenance Employees	3,630	4,088	3,234	3,015	-6.8
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	5.7	4.4	3.7	3.2	-13.5
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	52.0	52.6	52.1	54.6	0.5 Pt

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* Percent of total maintenance spending that is contracted outside the airline

** All scheduled passenger airlines reporting annual employment numbers to BTS: 30 in 2000, 37 in 2006, 36 in 2007 and 37 in 2008.

*** US Airways' 2008 report followed merger with America West. Previous years do not include America West.

**** Nine airlines in 2000, eight in 2006 and 2007, seven in 2008. For numbers for largest low-cost carriers by revenue see Table 9.

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**AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE
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Table 8: Change in Network Airline Maintenance Employees Per Aircraft and Percent of Maintenance Spending Outsourced* 2007-2008

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
Alaska					
Maintenance	562	152	699	727	4.0
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	6.2	1.4	6.5	6.4	-1.5
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	76.2	53.5	53.8	54.8	1.0 Pt
American					
Maintenance	15,139	14,296	13,980	14,479	3.6
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	21.4	20.9	22.4	22.4	0.0
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	23.4	22.8	23.4	23.6	0.2 Pt
Continental					
Maintenance	3,443	3,676	3,808	3,889	2.1
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	9.6	10.5	11.4	10.9	-4.4
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	46.6	48.1	49.2	47.7	-1.5 Pts
Delta					
Maintenance	5,728	4,872	5,240	5,272	0.6
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	9.5	13.1	12.7	12.3	-3.1
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	18.8	38.8	31.7	30.7	-1.0 Pt
Northwest					
Maintenance	5,852	267	265	266	0.4
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	13.9	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.0
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	23.8	69.5	71.0	65.9	-5.1 Pts
United					
Maintenance	15,846	4,848	4,891	6,644	35.8
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	26.4	10.5	11.4	15.0	31.6
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	16.3	44.9	45.7	44.3	-1.4 Pts
US Airways**					
Maintenance	5,353	2,782	3,074	3,421	11.3
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	13.5	11.6	9.0	9.6	6.7
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	29.6	43.2	55.0	63.7	8.7 Pts

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* Percent of total maintenance spending that is contracted outside the airline

** US Airways' 2008 report followed merger with America West. Previous years do not include America West.

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AIRLINE EMPLOYMENT PRESS RELEASE
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Table 9: Change in Low-Cost Airline Maintenance Employees Per Aircraft and Percent of Maintenance Spending Outsourced* 2007-2008

	2000	2006	2007	2008	Pct. Change 2007-2008
AirTran					
Maintenance Employees	337	407	409	405	-1.0
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	7.0	3.6	3.3	3.0	-9.1
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	39.2	48.5	48.4	49.6	1.2 Pts
Allegiant*					
Maintenance Employees	N/A	70	88	122	38.6
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	N/A	6.4	3.1	3.7	19.4
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	N/A	38.1	34.6	36.3	1.7 Pts
Frontier					
Maintenance Employees	231	363	418	225	-46.2
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	12.8	7.7	7.7	3.9	-49.4
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	16.6	16.8	20.5	24.9	4.4 Pts
JetBlue					
Maintenance Employees	50	456	468	471	0.6
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	10.0	4.1	3.9	3.4	-12.8
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	6.8	44.2	45.7	49.9	4.2 Pts
Southwest					
Maintenance Employees	1,146	1,643	1,682	1,701	1.1
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	3.5	3.6	3.5	3.2	-8.6
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	60.0	56.2	60.5	61.3	0.8 Pt
Spirit					
Maintenance Employees	246	199	161	72	-55.3
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	10.3	6.2	4.6	2.1	-54.3
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	0.0	10.0	18.9	22.6	3.7 Pts
Virgin America					
Maintenance Employees	N/A	N/A	N/A	19	N/A
Maintenance Empl Per Aircraft	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.7	N/A
Pct. Maint. Expense Outsourced	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics, P-10

* Percent of total maintenance spending that is contracted outside the airline

** Allegiant did not meet the standard for reporting in 2000. The standard is operation of at least one aircraft with the capacity to carry combined passengers, cargo and fuel of 18,000 pounds – the payload factor – and annual operating revenue of more than \$20 million.

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