

DOT 86-13

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Airline On-Time Performance in August Down From Previous Year, Up From July

WASHINGTON – The nation’s largest airlines posted an on-time arrival rate of 78.8 percent in August, down from the 79.1 percent on-time rate from August 2012, but up from the 73.1 percent mark from July 2013, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Air Travel Consumer Report released today.

Airlines also reported two tarmac delays of more than three hours on domestic flights and no tarmac delays of more than four hours on international flights in August. Both of the reported tarmac delays involved flights scheduled to arrive in Denver, Colo. on Aug. 3 that were diverted due to storms. Both delays are under investigation by the Department.

The larger U.S. airlines have been required to file complete reports on their long tarmac delays for domestic flights since October 2008. Under a rule that took effect Aug. 23, 2011, all U.S. and foreign airlines operating at least one aircraft with 30 or more passenger seats must report lengthy tarmac delays at U.S. airports.

Also beginning Aug. 23, 2011, carriers operating international flights may not allow tarmac delays at U.S. airports to last longer than four hours without giving passengers an opportunity to deplane. There is a separate three-hour limit on tarmac delays involving domestic flights, which went into effect in April 2010. Exceptions to the time limits for both domestic and international flights are allowed only for safety, security, or air traffic control-related reasons. Severe weather could cause or exacerbate such situations.

The consumer report also includes data on cancellations, chronically delayed flights, and the causes of flight delays filed with the Department’s Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) by the reporting carriers. In addition, the consumer report contains information on mishandled baggage reports filed by consumers with the carriers, and consumer service, disability, and discrimination complaints received by DOT’s Aviation Consumer Protection Division. The consumer report also includes reports of incidents involving the loss, death, or injury of pets traveling by air, as required to be filed by U.S. carriers.

Cancellations

The reporting carriers canceled 1.0 percent of their scheduled domestic flights in August, down from both the 1.3 percent cancellation rate posted in August 2012 and the 1.7 percent rate posted in July 2013.

Chronically Delayed Flights

At the end of August, there were 11 regularly scheduled flights that were chronically delayed – more than 30 minutes late more than 50 percent of the time – for three consecutive months. There were an additional 96 regularly scheduled flights that were chronically delayed for two consecutive months.

There were no chronically delayed flights for four months or more. A list of flights that were chronically delayed for a single month is [available](#) from [BTS](#).

Causes of Flight Delays

In August, the carriers filing on-time performance data reported that 5.66 percent of their flights were delayed by aviation system delays, compared to 7.40 percent in July; 8.03 percent by late-arriving aircraft, compared to 9.98 percent in July; 5.79 percent by factors within the airline's control, such as maintenance or crew problems, compared to 6.77 percent in July; 0.49 percent by extreme weather, compared to 0.76 percent in July; and 0.04 percent for security reasons, equal to 0.04 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 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 August, 33.83 percent of late flights were delayed by weather, down from 32.95 percent in August 2012 and 37.91 percent in July 2013.

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

Mishandled Baggage

The U.S. carriers reporting flight delays and mishandled baggage data posted a mishandled baggage rate of 3.12 reports per 1,000 passengers in August, down from both August 2012's rate of 3.38 and July 2013's rate of 3.68.

Incidents Involving Pets

In August, carriers reported four incidents involving the loss, death, or injury of pets while traveling by air, down from both the five reports filed in August 2012 and the six reports filed in July 2013. August's incidents involved the deaths of two pets and the injuries of two pets.

Complaints About Airline Service

In August, the Department received 1,318 complaints about airline service from consumers, down 30.0 percent from the 1,883 complaints filed in August 2012 and down 18.0 percent from the 1,607 received in July 2013.

Complaints About Treatment of Disabled Passengers

The report also contains a tabulation of complaints filed with DOT in August against airlines regarding the treatment of passengers with disabilities. The Department received a total of 87 disability-related complaints in August, up from the total of 72 complaints filed in August 2012, but down from the 88 complaints received in July 2013.

Complaints About Discrimination

In August, the Department received seven complaints alleging discrimination by airlines due to factors other than disability – such as race, religion, national origin, or sex – down from both the total of 10 recorded in August 2012 and the 12 recorded in July 2013.

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 www.dot.gov/airconsumer.

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://www.dot.gov/individuals/air-consumer/air-travel-consumer-reports>. It is available in "pdf" and Microsoft Word format.

Facts

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT October 2013

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

Overall

78.8 percent on-time arrivals

Highest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Hawaiian Airlines – 94.3 percent
2. Alaska Airlines – 85.1 percent
3. Delta Air Lines – 85.0 percent

Lowest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. JetBlue Airways – 72.6 percent
2. Southwest Airlines – 73.8 percent
3. American Eagle Airlines – 74.2 percent

Domestic Flights with Longest Tarmac Delays Exceeding Three Hours

1. SkyWest flight 5594 from Kalispell, Mont. to Denver, 8/3/13 – delayed on tarmac 221 minutes
2. Southwest flight 632 from Los Angeles to Denver, 8/3/13 – delayed on tarmac 184 minutes

International Flights with Longest Tarmac Delays Exceeding Four Hours

There were no international flights in August with tarmac delays exceeding four hours.

Highest Rates of Canceled Flights

1. American Eagle Airlines – 2.3 percent
2. ExpressJet Airlines – 2.1 percent
3. Mesa Airlines – 2.0 percent

Lowest Rates of Canceled Flights

1. Delta Air Lines – 0.1 percent
2. Hawaiian Airlines – 0.1 percent
3. Frontier Airlines – 0.1 percent

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