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News

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August On-Time Performance Up From Previous Year, July 2015

WASHINGTON – The nation’s largest airlines posted an on-time arrival rate of 80.3 percent in August, up from both the 77.7 percent on-time rate in August 2014 and the 78.1 percent mark in July 2015, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s *Air Travel Consumer Report (ATCR)* released today.

In addition, the reporting carriers canceled 1.0 percent of their scheduled domestic flights, an improvement over the 1.2 percent cancellation rate posted in August 2014, but up from the 0.9 percent rate in July 2015.

The consumer report also includes data on tarmac delays, 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 statistics on mishandled baggage reports filed by consumers with the carriers and aviation service complaints filed with DOT’s Aviation Consumer Protection Division by consumers regarding a range of issues such as flight problems, baggage, reservation and ticketing, refunds, consumer service, disability, and discrimination. The consumer report also includes reports of incidents involving the loss, death, or injury of animals traveling by air, as required to be filed by U.S. carriers.

Tarmac Delays

In August, airlines 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 September, Mesa Airlines submitted late reports to DOT of three tarmac delays of more than three hours on domestic flights that occurred in May. The July ATCR has been updated to reflect this new information. All of the reported tarmac delays are under investigation by the Department.

Chronically Delayed Flights

At the end of August, there was one regularly scheduled flight that was chronically delayed – more than 30 minutes late more than 50 percent of the time – for four consecutive months. There were an additional seven regularly scheduled flights that were chronically delayed for three consecutive months and an

additional 22 regularly scheduled flights that were chronically delayed for two consecutive months. 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 total delays of 18.44 percent – 5.21 percent of their flights were delayed by aviation system delays, compared to 5.58 percent in July; 6.81 percent by late-arriving aircraft, compared to 8.16 percent in July; 5.69 percent by factors within the airline’s control, such as maintenance or crew problems, compared to 6.27 percent in July; 0.68 percent by extreme weather, compared to 0.62 percent in July; and 0.05 percent for security reasons, compared to 0.04 percent in July. In addition, 0.99 percent of flights were canceled and 0.30 percent were diverted.

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.

BTS uses the data collected from airlines to determine the percentage of late flights delayed by weather, which includes those reported in the categories of extreme weather, late-arriving aircraft, and National Aviation System delays. In August, 27.98 percent of late flights were delayed by weather, down from 35.73 percent in August 2014 and 29.36 percent in July 2015.

Detailed information on flight delays and their causes is available from [BTS](#).

Mishandled Baggage

The U.S. carriers reporting flight delays and mishandled baggage data posted a mishandled baggage rate of 3.33 reports per 1,000 passengers in August, down from August 2014’s rate of 3.69, but up from July 2015’s rate of 3.22.

Incidents Involving Animals

In August, carriers reported five incidents involving the loss, injury, or death of animals while traveling by air, equal to the five reports filed in in July 2015. August’s incidents involved the death of four animals and one injured animal.

Complaints About Airline Service

In August, the Department received 2,205 complaints about airline service from consumers, up 37.4 percent from the total of 1,605 filed in August 2014 and up 1.9 percent from the 2,163 received in July 2015.

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 82 disability-related complaints in August, down from both the 85 complaints received in August 2014 and the 97 complaints received in July 2015.

Complaints About Discrimination

In August, 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 both the total of seven recorded in August 2014 and the nine recorded in July 2015.

Consumers may file their complaints on the web at www.transportation.gov/airconsumer or by voice mail at (202) 366-2220 or by TTY at (202) 366-0511. They may also mail a complaint to the Aviation Consumer Protection Division, U.S. Department of Transportation, C-75, W96-432, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Washington, DC 20590.

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 website at <http://www.transportation.gov/airconsumer/air-travel-consumer-reports>.

Facts

AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT October 2015

KEY AUGUST 2015 ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND FLIGHT CANCELLATION STATISTICS

**Based on Data Filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics by the 13 Reporting Carriers and
Tarmac Data Filed by All Carriers**

Overall

80.3 percent on-time arrivals

Highest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Delta Air Lines – 85.5 percent
2. Alaska Airlines – 82.9 percent
3. Hawaiian Airlines – 81.5 percent

Lowest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Spirit Airlines – 63.7 percent
2. JetBlue Airways – 74.0 percent
3. Frontier Airlines – 77.1 percent

Domestic Flights with Longest Tarmac Delays Exceeding Three Hours

1. Delta Air Lines flight 897 from Orlando to Atlanta, 8/20/15 – delayed on tarmac 232 minutes
2. PSA Airlines flight 4947 from Charlotte to Washington Dulles, 8/20/15 – delayed on tarmac 185 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. Envoy Air – 2.9 percent
2. Spirit Airlines – 1.8 percent
3. SkyWest Airlines – 1.5 percent

Lowest Rates of Canceled Flights

1. Delta Air Lines – 0.1 percent
2. Alaska Airlines – 0.2 percent
3. Frontier Airlines – 0.3 percent

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