

**DOT 76-09**

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## **Airline On-Time Performance Improves in April**

The nation's largest airlines had a rate of on-time flights this past April that was higher than both the same month last year and the mark posted in March 2009, according to the Air Travel Consumer Report released today by the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT).

According to information filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), a part of DOT's Research and Innovative Technology Administration (RITA), the 19 carriers reporting on-time performance recorded an overall on-time arrival rate of 79.1 percent in April, better than both the 77.7 percent on-time rate of April 2008 and March 2009's 78.4 percent.

The monthly report also includes data on lengthy tarmac delays, flight cancellations and the causes of flight delays by the reporting carriers, as well as reports of mishandled baggage filed 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.

### **Cancellations**

The consumer report includes BTS data on the number of domestic flights canceled by the reporting carriers. In April, the carriers canceled 1.5 percent of their scheduled domestic flights, a lower rate than both the 1.7 percent cancellation rate of April 2008 and the 2.1 percent rate posted in March 2009.

### **Tarmac Delays**

In April, the carriers filing on-time performance data reported that .0152 percent of their scheduled flights had tarmac delays of three hours or more, down from .0158 percent in March. There were five flights with tarmac delays of four hours or more in April.

### **Causes of Flight Delays**

In April, the carriers filing on-time performance data reported that 7.40 percent of their flights were delayed by aviation system delays, compared to 7.29 percent in March; 6.19 percent by late-arriving aircraft, compared to 6.49 percent in March; 4.78 percent by factors within the airline's control, such as maintenance or crew problems, compared to 4.84 percent in March; 0.69 percent by extreme weather, compared to 0.62 percent in March; and 0.03 percent for security reasons, compared to 0.04 percent in March. 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 April, 44.38 percent of late flights were delayed by weather, up 17.13 percent from April 2008, when 37.89 percent of late flights were delayed by weather, and down 2.42 percent from March when 45.48 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 3.79 reports per 1,000 passengers in April, an improvement over both April 2008's rate of 4.99 and March 2009's 4.12 rate.

### **Incidents Involving Pets**

In April, carriers reported no incidents involving the loss, death or injury of pets while traveling by air, down from three incidents in April 2008 and two in March 2009.

### **Complaints About Airline Service**

In April, the Department received 781 complaints about airline service from consumers, down 29.8 percent from the 1,112 complaints filed in April 2008 but 10.8 percent more than the total of 705 complaints received in March 2009.

### **Complaints About Treatment of Disabled Passengers**

The report also contains a tabulation of complaints filed with DOT in April against airlines regarding the treatment of passengers with disabilities. The Department received a total of 46 disability-related complaints in April, up from both the total of 35 complaints received in April 2008 and the 37 complaints received in March 2009.

### **Complaints About Discrimination**

In April, the Department received 14 complaints alleging discrimination by airlines due to factors other than disability – such as race, religion, national origin or sex – up from both the total of eight discrimination complaints filed in April 2008 and the total of six received in March 2009.

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 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

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### AIR TRAVEL CONSUMER REPORT April 2009

#### KEY ON-TIME PERFORMANCE AND FLIGHT CANCELLATION STATISTICS Based on Data Filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics by the 19 Reporting Carriers

##### Overall

79.1 percent on-time arrivals

##### Highest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Hawaiian Airlines – 91.1 percent
2. Pinnacle Airlines – 86.2 percent
3. SkyWest Airlines – 85.8 percent

##### Lowest On-Time Arrival Rates

1. Comair – 68.6 percent
2. Atlantic Southeast Airlines – 69.4 percent
3. Continental Airlines – 72.0 percent

##### Most Frequently Delayed Flights

1. Northwest Airlines flight 803 from Atlanta to Honolulu – late 96.55 percent of the time
2. Comair flight 6652 from Kansas City, MO to New York LaGuardia – late 96.15 percent of the time
3. Comair flight 6295 from Indianapolis to New York JFK – late 90.00 percent of the time
3. Comair flight 6675 from New York JFK to Dallas/Fort Worth – late 90.00 percent of the time
3. Continental Airlines flight 1567 from Cleveland to Newark, NJ – late 90.00 percent of the time
3. SkyWest Airlines flight 2852 from Milwaukee to Newark, NJ – late 90.00 percent of the time

##### Flights with Longest Tarmac Delays

1. American Airlines flight 2306 from Vail/Eagle, CO to Dallas/Fort Worth, 4/3/09 – delayed on tarmac 290 minutes
2. United Airlines flight 406 from Denver to New York LaGuardia, 4/17/09 – delayed on tarmac 264 minutes
3. American Airlines flight 370 from Chicago O'Hare to New York LaGuardia, 4/20/09 – delayed on tarmac 249 minutes
4. JetBlue Airways flight 1103 from New York JFK to Raleigh/Durham, NC, 4/6/09 – delayed on tarmac 247 minutes
5. American Airlines flight 2396 from Vail/Eagle, CO to New York JFK, 4/3/09 – delayed on tarmac 240 minutes

### **Highest Rates of Canceled Flights**

1. American Eagle Airlines – 3.3 percent
2. JetBlue Airways – 3.2 percent
3. Atlantic Southeast Airlines – 3.2 percent

### **Lowest Rates of Canceled Flights**

1. Alaska Airlines – 0.4 percent
2. Hawaiian Airlines – 0.4 percent
3. Northwest Airlines – 0.5 percent

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