



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

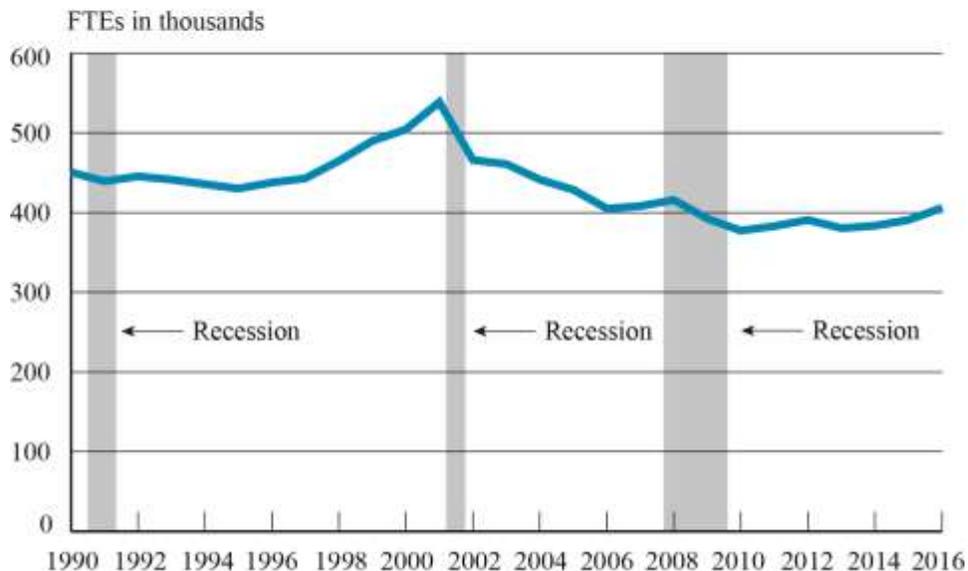
BTS Data

BTS 29-16
Thursday, May 19, 2016
Contact: Dave Smallen
Tel: 202-366-5568

March 2016 Passenger Airline Employment Data

U.S. scheduled passenger airlines employed 3.9 percent more workers in March 2016 than in March 2015, the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reported today. March was the highest monthly total (406,113) since August 2008 and was the 28th consecutive month that U.S. scheduled passenger airline full-time equivalent (FTE) employment exceeded the same month of the previous year (Tables 1, 2, 3).

Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-Time Equivalent Employees,
Month of March, 1990-2016



Month-to-month, the number of FTEs rose 0.5 percent from February to March (Table 1A). Scheduled passenger airline categories include network, low-cost, regional and other airlines. [Historical employment data](#) can be found on the BTS web site.

The four network airlines that collectively employ two-thirds of the scheduled passenger airline FTEs reported 2.9 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than in March 2015 (Table 7). Alaska Airlines, Delta Air Lines and United Airlines increased FTEs from March 2015 (Table 9). The fourth network airline, American Airlines, which has merged with US Airways, reported 3.3 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than American and US Airways reported separately in March 2015. July 2015 was the first month for which the two merged airlines submitted a combined report. Month-to-month, the number of network airline FTEs rose 0.5 percent from February to March (Table 1A). 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.

The six low-cost carriers reported 9.6 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than in March 2015 (Table 10). Allegiant Airlines, Spirit Airlines, Virgin America, JetBlue Airways and Southwest Airlines reported increases while Frontier Airlines reported reduced FTEs (Table 12). Month-to-month, the number of low-cost airline FTEs rose 4.2 percent from February to March, rising for the 12th consecutive month (Table 1A). Low-cost airlines operate under a low-cost business model, with infrastructure and aircraft operating costs below the overall industry average.

The 12 regional carriers reported 0.4 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than in March 2015 (Table 13). Eight regional airlines – PSA Airlines, Mesa Airlines, Compass Airlines, Horizon Air, SkyWest Airlines, GoJet Airlines, Republic Airlines and Endeavor Air – reported increased employment levels. The others reported decreases (Table 15). Month-to-month, the number of regional airline FTEs rose 0.3 percent from February to March (Table 1A). Regional carriers typically provide service from small cities, using primarily regional jets to support the network carriers' hub and spoke systems.

Carrier Groups: The four network airlines employed 66.1 percent of the 406,113 FTEs employed by all scheduled passenger airlines in February, the six low-cost carriers employed 19.7 percent and the 12 regional carriers employed 12.4 percent (Table 4). The three airlines with the most FTEs in March – American, Delta and United – employed 63.4 percent of the month's total passenger airline FTEs (Tables 3, 6). From 2007 to 2016, the network share of FTEs rose from 64.8 percent to 66.1 percent, the low-cost share rose from 17.6 percent to 19.7 percent and the regional airline share dropped from 14.7 percent to 12.4 percent (Table 5).

Top Employers by Group: American employed the most FTEs (97,723) in March among the network airlines, Southwest employed the most FTEs (50,911) among low-cost airlines, and Envoy Air employed the most FTEs (10,658) among regional airlines. The top three employers in the industry are network airlines (Table 6).

Airline Mergers: Airlines involved in mergers typically begin joint reporting following U.S. Department of Transportation approval and issuance of a single economic certificate. American and US Airways began reporting jointly with July 2015 employment numbers. The airlines announced the merger in January 2013.

Network Airlines

The network airlines employed 2.9 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than in March 2015 and 3.0 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than in March 2012 (Tables 8, 9).

Low-Cost Airlines

The six low-cost airlines employed 9.6 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than in March 2015 and 14.8 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than in March 2012 (Tables 11, 12).

Regional Airlines

Regional airlines employed 0.4 percent more FTEs in March 2016 than in March 2015. The 12 regional carriers reporting in March 2016 employed 3.9 percent fewer FTEs in March 2016 than the 15 carriers reporting in March 2012 (Tables 14, 15).

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 May 11. Additional [airline employment data](#) and previous [press releases](#) can be found on the BTS website. BTS has [scheduled release](#) of April passenger airline employment data for June 17.

Table 1: Yearly Change in Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Airline Group

Most recent 13 months - percent change from same month of the previous year

	Network Airlines	Low- Cost Airlines	Regional Airlines	All Passenger Airlines**
Mar 2014-Mar 2015	1.7	4.0	-0.5	1.9
Apr 2014-Apr 2015	2.4	4.2	-0.4	2.4
May 2014-May 2015	2.7	4.3	-0.3	2.6
Jun 2014-Jun 2015	3.1	4.9	0.1	3.0
Jul 2014-Jul 2015	3.1	5.2	-3.3	2.7
Aug 2014-Aug 2015	3.7	5.8	-2.7	3.3
Sep 2014-Sep 2015	3.6	6.5	-2.7	3.3
Oct 2014-Oct 2015	3.6	6.7	-0.6	3.7
Nov 2014-Nov 2015	3.7	6.4	-2.1	3.4
Dec 2014-Dec 2015	3.5	7.7	0.9	3.7
Jan 2015-Jan 2016	3.3	7.9	2.0	4.1
Feb 2015-Feb 2016	3.2	8.5	0.2	3.8
Mar 2015-Mar 2016	2.9	9.6	0.4	3.9

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 1A: Monthly Change in Scheduled Passenger Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees* by Airline Group

Percent change in FTEs from the previous month

	Network Airlines	Low-Cost Airlines	Regional Airlines	All Passenger Airlines**
Mar 2015-Apr 2015	0.8	1.7	-0.1	0.7
Apr 2015-May 2015	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.6
May 2015-Jun 2015	0.4	0.6	-0.2	0.3
Jun 2015-Jul 2015	0.0	0.5	-1.8	-0.1
Jul 2015-Aug 2015	0.0	0.7	-0.2	0.1
Aug 2015-Sep 2015	-0.1	0.7	-0.2	0.1
Sep 2015-Oct 2015	0.1	1.1	0.6	0.4
Oct 2015-Nov 2015	0.2	0.8	0.1	0.3
Nov 2015-Dec 2015	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0
Dec 2015-Jan 2016	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.2
Jan 2016-Feb 2016	0.3	1.2	-0.1	0.4
Feb 2016-Mar 2016	0.5	4.2	0.3	0.5

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	2013	2014	2015	2016
January	-2.3	0.5	1.2	4.1
February	-2.5	0.4	1.8	3.8
March	-2.7	0.8	1.9	3.9
April	-2.4	1.0	2.6	
May	-2.5	1.1	2.6	
June	-2.4	0.9	3.0	
July	-2.6	1.3	2.7	
August	-2.2	1.0	3.3	
September	-1.6	1.1	3.3	
October	-0.8	0.9	3.7	
November	-0.1	1.5	3.4	
December	0.3	1.4	3.9	

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 2012-2016

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percent Change	
						2012-2016	2015-2016
January	386.2	380.0	381.8	386.5	402.2	4.2	4.1
February	387.1	380.4	382.0	389.0	403.9	4.3	3.8
March	388.0	380.5	383.6	390.8	406.1	4.7	3.9
April	390.2	381.0	384.3	393.4			
May	391.0	381.4	385.6	395.6			
June	390.9	381.7	385.2	397.0			
July	391.3	381.3	386.2	396.5			
August	389.0	380.6	384.5	397.0			
September	386.4	380.2	384.5	397.2			
October	384.3	381.2	384.7	398.9			
November	381.6	381.2	386.9	400.3			
December	379.6	380.8	386.2	401.4			
12-Month Average	387.1	380.9	384.6	395.3			
Jan-Mar Average	387.1	380.3	382.5	388.8	404.1	4.4	3.9

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*, March 2012-2016

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	All Passenger Airlines**
2012	260.7	69.9	52.6	388.0
2013	254.9	69.9	50.2	380.5
2014	256.3	70.4	50.6	383.6
2015	260.8	73.2	50.4	390.8
2016	268.4	80.2	50.6	406.1
Percent of Total Passenger Airline Employees in 2016	66.1%	19.7%	12.4%	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: Carrier Group Percent of Total Scheduled Passenger Airline FTEs 2007-2016

Percent of Total Passenger FTEs

March of each year

	Network	Low-Cost	Regional	Other
2007	64.8	17.6	14.7	2.9
2011	68.0	17.1	13.7	1.2
2015	66.7	18.7	12.9	1.7
2016	66.1	19.7	12.4	1.7

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, March 2016

Ranked by Number of Full-Time Equivalent Employees*

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	Airline	Total FTE Employees	Carrier Group**	Top 10 Airlines March 2015
1	American	97.7	Network	United
2	United	80.1	Network	Delta
3	Delta	79.6	Network	American
4	Southwest	50.9	Low-Cost	Southwest
5	JetBlue	15.5	Low-Cost	US Airways
6	Alaska	11.0	Network	JetBlue
7	Envoy	10.7	Regional	Envoy
8	SkyWest	10.6	Regional	Alaska
9	ExpressJet	7.1	Regional	SkyWest
10	Hawaiian	5.2	Other	ExpressJet

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** 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

	2013	2014	2015	2016
January	-3.1	0.4	0.8	3.3
February	-3.0	0.1	1.4	3.2
March	-3.3	0.6	1.7	2.9
April	-3.0	0.4	2.4	
May	-3.0	0.5	2.7	
June	-2.8	0.3	3.1	
July	-2.8	0.4	3.1	
August	-2.5	0.1	3.7	
September	-2.1	0.4	3.6	
October	-1.4	0.3	3.6	
November	-0.4	0.4	3.7	
December	0.4	0.8	3.5	

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 2012-2016

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Month	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percent Change	
						2012-2016	2015-2016
January	259.7	254.4	255.5	257.6	266.2	2.5	3.3
February	260.0	255.0	255.2	258.8	267.0	2.7	3.2
March	260.7	254.9	256.3	260.8	268.4	3.0	2.9
April	263.7	255.7	256.7	262.9			
May	264.2	256.3	257.6	264.4			
June	264.3	256.8	257.5	265.5			
July	263.8	256.5	257.5	265.6			
August	262.4	255.8	256.1	265.6			
September	260.7	255.2	256.1	265.3			
October	259.2	255.7	256.4	265.7			
November	256.8	255.9	256.8	266.3			
December	254.1	255.2	257.3	266.1			
12-Month Average	261.5	255.6	256.6	263.7			
Jan-Mar Average	260.1	254.7	255.7	259.1	267.2	2.7	3.1

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 9: Network Airline Full-time Equivalent Employees*, March 2012-2016
(FTEs for March of each year. Ranked by March 2016 FTEs)
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

Rank	Airline	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percent Change	
							2012-2016	2015-2016
1	AA/US Combined	95.8	89.7	91.5	94.6	97.7	2.0	3.3
	American**	65.5	59.0	59.8	62.1	97.7	N/A	N/A
	US Airways**	30.3	30.7	31.7	32.5	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	United	82.1	82.4	80.7	78.7	80.1	-2.5	1.8
3	Delta	73.7	73.4	74.5	77.0	79.6	7.9	3.3
4	Alaska	9.0	9.4	9.6	10.5	11.0	21.9	5.0
	Total	260.7	254.9	256.3	260.8	268.4	3.0	2.9

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

** American Airlines and US Airways merged and began reporting combined numbers in July 2015.

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	2013	2014	2015	2016
January	1.1	0.3	4.6	7.9
February	0.2	0.7	4.6	8.5
March	-0.1	0.8	4.0	9.6
April	-0.3	1.5	4.2	
May	-0.3	1.8	4.3	
June	-0.6	5.0	4.9	
July	-0.4	2.5	5.2	
August	0.0	3.0	5.8	
September	-0.2	2.9	6.5	
October	-0.1	3.8	6.9	
November	-0.1	5.2	6.5	
December	-0.6	4.4	7.7	

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 2012-2016
FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percent Change	
						2012-2016	2015-2016
January	68.9	69.5	69.7	72.9	78.6	14.1	7.9
February	69.5	69.6	70.1	73.4	79.6	14.5	8.5
March	69.9	69.9	70.4	73.2	80.2	14.8	9.6
April	69.9	69.7	70.8	73.7			
May	70.1	69.8	71.1	74.2			
June	70.0	69.6	71.1	74.6			
July	69.8	69.5	71.3	75.0			
August	69.4	69.4	71.4	75.5			
September	69.6	69.4	71.4	76.1			
October	69.6	69.5	72.1	77.1			
November	69.4	69.4	73.0	77.8			
December	69.8	69.4	72.4	78.0			
12-Month Average	69.6	69.5	71.2	75.1			
Jan-Mar Average	69.4	69.6	70.1	73.1	79.5	14.5	8.7

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,* March 2012-2016**
(FTEs for March of each year. Ranked by March 2016 FTEs)

Rank		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percent Change	
							2012-2016	2015-2016
1	WN/FL Combined	46,116	45,791	45,163	47,005	50,911	10.4	8.3
	Southwest**	38,833	45,791	45,163	47,005	50,911	N/A	8.3
	AirTran	7,283	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2	JetBlue	12,521	12,775	13,513	13,980	15,457	23.4	10.6
3	Spirit	2,770	3,215	3,569	4,159	4,943	78.4	18.9
4	Allegiant	1,695	1,879	2,130	2,443	3,024	78.4	23.8
5	Frontier	4,426	3,808	3,504	3,022	3,015	-31.9	-0.2
6	Virgin America	2,359	2,386	2,505	2,554	2,852	20.9	11.7
	Total	69,887	69,854	70,384	73,163	80,202	14.8	9.6

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 employment 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	2013	2014	2015	2016
January	-4.1	-0.4	-1.9	2.0
February	-5.0	0.5	-0.3	0.2
March	-4.6	0.9	-0.5	0.4
April	-3.8	2.3	-0.4	
May	-4.5	2.4	-0.3	
June	-4.4	1.9	0.1	
July	-6.3	3.5	-3.3	
August	-5.1	2.5	-2.7	
September	-3.0	1.9	-2.7	
October	-0.8	-0.2	-0.6	
November	-0.5	1.5	-2.1	
December	-0.5	-0.2	0.9	

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 2012-2016

FTE numbers in thousands (000's)

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percent Change	
						2012-2016	2015-2016
January	52.8	50.6	50.4	49.5	50.5	-4.4	2.0
February	52.8	50.2	50.5	50.3	50.4	-4.6	0.2
March	52.6	51.4	51.7	50.4	50.6	-3.9	0.4
April	51.8	49.9	50.5	50.3			
May	51.7	49.5	50.6	50.5			
June	51.7	49.4	50.3	50.4			
July	52.7	49.4	51.1	49.4			
August	52.1	49.4	50.7	49.3			
September	51.1	49.5	50.6	49.2			
October	50.3	49.9	49.8	49.5			
November	50.1	49.9	50.6	49.6			
December	50.4	50.2	50.1	50.5			
12-Month Average	51.7	49.8	50.5	49.9			
Jan-Mar Average	52.7	50.3	50.5	50.1	50.5	-4.3	0.9

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*, March 2012-2016
(FTEs for March of each year. Ranked by March 2016 FTEs)

Rank		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Percent Change	
							2012-2016	2015-2016
1	Envoy	9,906	11,244	10,865	11,019	10,658	7.6	-3.3
2	SkyWest	9,372	9,414	9,912	9,845	10,632	13.4	8.0
3	ExpressJet	9,430	8,848	9,223	8,364	7,100	-24.7	-15.1
4	Endeavor	5,061	4,432	3,857	3,302	3,389	-33.0	2.6
5	Republic	1,984	2,273	2,767	3,160	3,276	65.1	3.7
6	Horizon	2,792	2,650	2,810	2,959	3,239	16.0	9.5
7	Mesa	1,751	1,545	1,912	2,380	2,923	66.9	22.8
8	PSA	1,058	1,067	1,311	2,068	2,550	141.0	23.3
9	S5/RP Combined	1,794	3,252	3,080	2,763	2,057	N/A	-25.6
	Shuttle America [#]	1,794	2,040	2,003	2,763	2,057	N/A	N/A
	Chautauqua [#]	N/A	1,212	1,077	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
10	Air Wisconsin	2,608	2,543	2,567	1,904	1,807	-30.7	-5.1
11	Compass	1,071	1,090	1,200	1,448	1,715	60.1	18.4
12	GoJet	831	1,086	1,119	1,149	1,208	45.4	5.1
13	Executive^{##}	1,588	737	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
14	Colgan^{###}	1,655	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
15	Comair^{####}	1,683	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	52,584	51,393	51,700	50,361	50,554	-3.9	0.4

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

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

[#] Effective July 2012 Chautauqua Airlines began reporting employment data. Chautauqua did not qualify for monthly reporting prior to July 2012 because it did not operate aircraft with more than 60 seats. Effective the end of December 2014, Shuttle America and Chautauqua combined operations and Chautauqua ceased operating.

^{##} 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.

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.