

Airline Complaints Decline in September

Posted on December 6, 2022 by Business Editor



New data from the United States government found that air travel service complaints dropped 15.6 percent from August to September, but the overall numbers remained 380 percent above pre-pandemic levels in September 2019.

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Air Travel Consumer Report (ATCR), there were 571,533 flights operated in September, 87.9 percent of the 649,667 flights in pre-pandemic September 2019.

September's flights were up 2.03 percent year-over-year from the 560,140 flights operated in September 2021 and down 4.45 percent month-over-month from the 598,166 flights operated in August.

The Department of Transportation received 6,115 complaints about airline service from consumers in September, down 15.6 percent from the 7,243 complaints received in August and up 386.1 percent from the 1,258 complaints received in pre-pandemic September 2019.

Through the first nine months of 2022, the Department received 48,737 complaints, up 27.1 percent from the 38,357 filed during the same period in 2021. Of the 6,115 complaints received in September, 3,477 (56.9 percent) were against U.S. carriers, 2,222 (36.3 percent) were against foreign air carriers and 413 (6.8 percent) were against travel companies.

In total, 1,295 of September's complaints (21.2 percent) concerned refunds.

The 10 marketing network carriers reported 580,391 scheduled domestic flights in September, with 8,858 (1.5 percent) being canceled. In September 2019, airlines planned 660,712 domestic flights, of which 11,045 (1.7 percent) were canceled.

Hawaiian Airlines had the lowest cancellation rate with 0.2 percent, followed by Alaska Airlines (0.7 percent) and Delta Air Lines (0.9 percent). As for the highest cancellation rates, Allegiant Air topped the list at 4.6 percent, followed by Frontier Airlines at 4.2 percent and Spirit Airlines at 3.5 percent.

The ATCR also found that Delta Air Lines had the highest on-time arrival rate at 88.5 percent, followed by United Airlines (85.8 percent) and Alaska Airlines (83 percent). As for the lowest on-time arrival rate, JetBlue Airways topped the list at 68.8 percent, followed by Frontier Airlines at 70.3 percent and Allegiant Air at 72 percent.

