

FAA Reduces Number of Flights in New York City Due to Staffing Issues

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The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) took the unusual step of reducing the number of flights in the area of New York City on Monday night, as the government agency said it didn't have enough staff to cover the traffic into and out of the three major airports near the city.

New York has Newark Liberty International Airport just across the Hudson River from Manhattan in New Jersey, and John F. Kennedy International and LaGuardia airports, both in the borough of Queens.

The three facilities form what is arguably the most congested set of airports in the world as LaGuardia is 10 miles from JFK, which is 34 miles from Newark. While delays have since improved the announcement is something travelers should keep in mind moving forward.

According to ABC News, the FAA warned of significant delays due to a lack of staffing. Presumably, the FAA is speaking about its air traffic controllers and not airline or airport personnel such as gate agents or baggage handlers. The FAA did not specifically say it was air traffic controllers and it likely would not, as the agency faces criticism from airlines that say the FAA's shortage of ATCs is also a contributing factor to the lengthy delays and cancellations the industry has suffered this spring and summer.

"Due to the availability of staff tonight, the FAA must reduce the flow of aircraft in certain airspace serving New York City to maintain safety," the FAA said in a statement Monday afternoon.

On Monday, ABC News noted that flights at LaGuardia were being delayed more than an hour and flights at Newark by about 45 minutes.

However, as of Tuesday afternoon, only 6 percent of Newark's schedule was experiencing delays while LaGuardia was reporting delays for just 3 percent of its schedule, according to flight-tracking website FlightAware.com.

Travelers are always encouraged to check their flight status with their airline prior to arriving at the airport.

