



Memorial Day holiday marks start of summer travel season at airport

Passengers should be aware of TSA's new Secure Flight program

INDIANAPOLIS—According to a May 15 Air Transport Association (ATA) news release, 195 million passengers will travel by air this summer in the domestic U.S. between June 1 and August 31.

That figure is about seven percent less than the 209 million who traveled in 2008 during the same period. The reduction equates to about 150,000 fewer domestic passengers per day or a total of 171 million (compared to 183 million last year).

International travel will drop by six percent for a total of 24 million passengers in 2009; that same figure was 26 million in 2008.

Industry experts believe the weak global economy is the main cause for the reduction, but say despite fewer travelers, planes will remain near full. Delays may occur due to weather and congestion in the nation's air space.

By taking some simple steps, however, passengers can make their travel experience more efficient and enjoyable.

TSA'S SECURE FLIGHT ENTERS FIRST PHASE; SECOND PHASE TO START AUGUST 15

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Secure Flight passenger vetting program is designed to ensure consistency between names appearing on ID and names given at the time flights are booked.

- As of May 15, all passengers booking reservations and purchasing tickets should use the name that appears on the government-issued identification (such as driver's license, birth certificate, or passport) they will use while traveling.
- If passenger ID includes a middle initial, a full middle name, or no middle name or initial, ticket purchasers should follow suit when making airline reservations.

Beginning August 15, passengers will also be required to give their date of birth and gender when booking flights.

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Once implemented, TSA will be better positioned to monitor ticketed passengers against national watch lists. The Secure Flight program will help prevent misidentification of passengers who have names similar to individuals on TSA's watch list and better identify individuals who may pose known or suspected threats to the U.S. aviation industry.

For more details, please go to www.tsa.gov.

OTHER SUMMER TRAVEL TIPS

Passengers are also advised to:

- Check with the airline for its policies and fees for baggage. Both United and U.S. Airways, for example, recently announced increases in their baggage fees.
- Use automated check-in options on airline Web sites or airport kiosks up to 24 hours before departure. Sign-up for the airline's automated travel notifications in the event of delays and flight or schedule changes.
- Allow plenty of time for check-in and screening at the airport.
- Become familiar with the TSA Web site at www.tsa.gov, especially information about permitted and prohibited items, traveling with prescription medicines and medically necessary liquids, etc.
- Tag each bag, inside and out, with passenger name and contact information, including home address. Remove old baggage tags from previous trips.

Passengers with questions should contact the airline for more specifics.

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