

CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20428

FOR RELEASE:

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ON OR AFTER
Tuesday
January 27, 1976
CAB 76-9

RESERVATIONS AND FLIGHT MATTERS HEAD LIST OF COMPLAINTS IN YEAR END 1975 OCA CONSUMER COMPLAINT REPORT

WASHINGTON, D. C. (January 27)--Complaints on reservations and flight matters head the list of consumer complaints received by the Civil Aeronautics Board's Office of the Consumer Advocate (OCA) during 1975, as they did in 1974, but in 1975 they accounted for a smaller share of the total.

The 1,744 flight complaints (delays, cancellations, irregularities) accounted for 14.6 percent of the 11,916 complaints received by OCA during 1975. The 1,878 reservations complaints (oversales, ticketing, other problems) were 15.7 percent of the total. In 1974, there were 2,936 flight and 2,704 reservations complaints, or 18.6 and 17.2 percent, respectively, of the 15,720 complaints received that year.

The 11,916 complaints handled by OCA last year was down 3,804 from the previous year but the 1,095 complaints logged during December 1975, was up 232 from November's 863 and 35 from the 1,060 received in December a year ago.

Among other major categories in 1975, complaints on baggage totaled 1,628 or 13.6 percent of all complaints (compared with 2,461 or 15.6 percent in 1974); on fares, 1,585 or 13.3 percent (1,877 or 11.9 percent in 1974); flight information, 677 or 5.6 percent (675 or 4.2 percent in 1974); and cargo, 768 or 6.4 percent (920 or 5.8 percent in 1974).

MORE

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Consumers and others who have encountered air transportation difficulties relating to fares, flight cancellations, delays, baggage handling and similar problems are encouraged to write the CAB Office of the Consumer Advocate, 1825 Connecticut Avenue, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20428.

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ATTACHMENTS

Civil Aeronautics Board
Washington, D. C. 20428
CONSUMER REPORT

For the Month of December, 1975

CARRIER	Number of Letters	Flights			Reservations			Baggage				Fares & Customs	Flight Info	In Flight Service	Service at General	Cargo										Other	Total					Monthly Expenditures in 100 units	Reports for 1975-1976	
		Canceled	Delayed	Improper	Overseas	Prob. time	Ticketing	Loss	Damage	Delay	Other	Rates				Refunds	Treatment	Rail	Truck	COG	Loss	Damage	Delay	Other	Rates		Current month	Year to date	Previous month	Same month previous year	Previous year same month			
AMERICAN	53	2	7	3	6	8	0	5	3	1	0	0	6	9	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	11	68	835	64	81	1339	1758	1.81	
BRANIFF	26	0	3	1	3	7	0	3	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	4	33	323	22	26	613	727	1.26	
CONTINENTAL	21	3	4	1	1	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	6	3	4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	32	257	5	13	266	610	1.19	
DELTA	32	0	2	5	4	3	2	2	0	1	5	1	8	6	5	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	7	27	552	27	60	693	2310	1.10	
EASTERN	62	1	14	2	1	10	3	1	1	2	2	1	7	12	4	2	1	0	2	0	2	2	2	1	0	6	61	957	49	97	1600	2265	1.11	
NATIONAL	6	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	460	14	44	590		1.17	
NORTHWEST	36	1	17	3	3	6	0	0	0	4	4	0	5	11	5	8	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	10	75	457	23	36	489	743	1.06	
TRANS WORLD	23	1	3	1	7	13	2	2	1	4	0	1	8	1	2	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	10	61	804	49	84	1100	1412	1.05	
UNITED	58	19	1	2	6	5	0	2	0	1	1	1	8	5	5	5	1	0	1	0	0	1	0	1	1	11	77	861	56	74	982	2660	1.18	
WESTERN	14	0	2	2	3	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	16	256	15	23	268	634	1.07	
PAN AMERICAN	30	1	2	3	1	4	0	3	0	2	1	0	2	7	2	1	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	1	7	40	483	18	47	792	170	1.12	
AIR WEST	9	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	12	139	11	11	229	339	1.04	
ALLEGHENY	18	1	1	4	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	0	5	2	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	28	375	50	59	957	1745	1.03	
FRONTIER	9	0	1	1	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	11	143	15	4	182	116	1.08	
NORTH CENTRAL	13	0	1	2	3	4	0	1	0	0	0	1	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	18	138	10	11	174	400	1.00	
OZARK	18	1	4	7	7	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	7	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	5	35	160	9	11	319	309	1.00	
PIEDMONT	12	0	4	1	1	5	2	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	100	10	11	119	132	1.12	
SOUTHERN	6	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2	11	89	3	6	129	26	1.09	
TELEVISION	5	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	78	6	10	201	202	1.08	
ALOMA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38	1	5	31	173	0		
HAWAIIAN	4	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	56	3	7	171	224	1.08	
ALASKA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	35	0	1	30	61	0		
WEN AIR ALASKA	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	2	10	85	10	4	35	50	1.00	
AIR NEW ENGLAND	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	90	6	0	6	33	1.03	
FOREIGN	72	3	10	2	6	16	2	9	9	2	4	1	23	19	8	7	0	0	0	1	2	0	0	1	0	20	145	1502	125	68	1461			
CAP. INT'L AIRWAYS, INC.	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	73	10	7	184			
JOHNSON FLYING SERV., INC.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		
MCULLOCH INT'L AIRLINES	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	0	0	1			
MODERN AIR TRANS., INC.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	2	53			
OVERSEAS NAT'L AIRWAYS, INC.	5	0	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	13	112	16	6	112		
SATURN AIRWAYS, INC.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	66			
TRANS INT'L AIRLINES, INC.	5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	10	57	12	0	145			
WORLD AIRWAYS, INC.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	38	5	8	64			
FOREIGN SUPP.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	4	1	37			
COMMUTERS	19	1	4	1	0	1	0	5	1	3	0	0	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	23	340	23	30	425			
FREIGHT FDR	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4	1	3	0	15	290	23	43	407				
AGENT & GROUP	54	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	9	5	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77	915	65	107	1084			
OTHER	97	1	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	9	1	1	1	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	1	1	74	98	579	81	40	435			
TOTAL	Current month	759	38	92	38	61	102	12	36	27	24	15	7	113	102	36	9	0	7	3	11	11	13	6	9	261	1095							
	Year to date	8988	516	880	348	794	917	161	667	349	294	224	94	1585	859	677	316	82	9	56	103	152	145	130	70	168	2314		11916					
	Previous month	690	21	43	23	61	60	12	36	32	15	16	7	129	63	39	25	10	1	3	10	7	11	4	2	16	216		863					
	Same month previous year	790	55	69	35	49	68	9	76	35	16	26	2	143	99	58	24	6	0	1	10	26	11	17	6	13	204		1060					
	Previous year (1974 same month)	8520	890	1550	496	1181	1296	227	1100	479	470	377	72	1877	886	673	349	102	9	42	79	281	173	160	74	151	2761				15720			

5/ These statistics reflect alleged problems with airline service as stated in complaint letters. No determination as to the validity of the complaint has been made nor should this report be construed as a rating of one carrier's service performance in relation to that of any other, since each class of carrier and, to some extent, each carrier has service problems unique to its operations.

6/ Expenditure figures are taken from CAB Form 41 report for October 1975; the most recent.

1/ Based on passenger complaints only; cargo complaints have been eliminated.

2/ Represents 723 letters received. Thirty-six letters had complaints against more than one carrier.

3/ Includes Allegheny Comuter boardings of 119,005 during the month of October.

4/ On strike September 1, 1975. Operations curtailed during month of October.

FLIGHT DELAYS AND CANCELLATIONS

Like other common carriers, air carriers do not guarantee their operating schedules because schedules cannot take into account factors such as adverse weather, airport repairs, airport congestion and mechanical breakdowns.

In order to assure that all passengers affected by a flight irregularity will be given the same consideration, the Civil Aeronautics Board requires certificated U.S. airlines to file rules in their tariffs which specify what amenities the airline will offer to delayed passengers. (A tariff is a schedule of fares and charges and rules for their application which an airline must keep currently on file with the CAB.) Generally, if the delay is expected to exceed four hours, the carrier will provide some form of communication (telephone or telegraph) to alert persons awaiting your arrival, a meal, and limited ground transportation. If you are stranded at a point other than a stopover or your point of origin during evening hours, the carrier also will pay for overnight lodging. Each carrier has its own policy in that regard so, whenever a flight irregularity of extended duration occurs, you should consult the airline personnel to determine if you should be accorded amenities.

If your flight is canceled, the canceling carrier normally will try to reroute you to your destination as quickly as possible. You will not be charged extra for the rerouting, even if it is necessary for the carrier to upgrade you to a higher class of service.

The point to bear in mind is that flight irregularities can and do occur despite the best intentions of the carrier. If you are ever involved in such a situation, stay calm and inquire about any assistance available to you in the form of amenities or assistance in getting you rerouted.

(Adapted from "Air Travelers' Fly-Rights,"
available without charge from the CAB
Publications Services Section,
Washington, D. C. 20428)