



WASHINGTON AVIATION SUMMARY

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CONTENTS

I.	REGULATORY NEWS.....	1
II.	AIRPORTS.....	4
III.	SECURITY AND DATA PRIVACY	6
IV.	TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT	7
V.	ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT	9
VI.	U.S. CONGRESS.....	10
VII.	BILATERAL AND STATE DEPARTMENT NEWS	11
VIII.	EUROPE/AFRICA.....	12
IX.	ASIA/PACIFIC/MIDDLE EAST	15
X.	AMERICAS	17

For further information, including documents referenced, contact:

Joanne W. Young
Kirstein & Young PLLC
1750 K Street NW
Suite 700
Washington, D.C. 20006
Telephone: (202) 331-3348
Fax: (202) 331-3933
Email: jyoung@yklaw.com

<http://www.yklaw.com>

The Kirstein & Young law firm specializes in representing U.S. and foreign airlines, airports, leasing companies, financial institutions and aviation-related companies before U.S. Government agencies, Congress, the courts and in commercial and financing matters.

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I. REGULATORY NEWS

1. Michael Whitaker Confirmed as FAA Administrator.

The U.S. Senate unanimously confirmed Michael Whitaker to serve as Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Administrator for a five-year term. Whitaker served as FAA Deputy Administrator from 2013–2016, and was Chief NextGen Officer. He has served as COO of Supernal, a Hyundai unit designing an electric Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) vehicle, and as Group CEO of InterGlobe Enterprises, operator of India's largest airline, IndiGo. Whitaker has held executive positions at United and TWA and is a private pilot. He will be the first permanent FAA Administrator since Steve Dickson resigned in March 2022. Polly Trottenberg, Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), served as FAA Acting Administrator for the past five months. Whitaker's confirmation was applauded by industry groups.

2. DOT Launches #AccessibleAirTravel Campaign.

In celebration of the 37th anniversary of the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA), DOT launched the #AccessibleAirTravel campaign to raise awareness about the right of air travelers with disabilities to safe, dignified and accessible air travel. About 5.5 million Americans use a wheelchair, and many encounter barriers when it comes to air travel. The campaign promotes DOT's Airline Passengers with Disabilities Bill of Rights with a video shared by airlines, airports, ticket agents, and disability organizations on their websites and social media channels. The Bill of Rights was developed with representatives of passengers with disabilities, national disability organizations, U.S. and foreign air carriers, airport operators, contractor service providers, aircraft and wheelchair manufacturers, and national organizations representing veterans with disabilities. Enacted in 1986, the ACAA prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities in commercial air transportation. "Its passage represented a watershed moment for non-discrimination in air transportation," said DOT, leading to regulations to remove barriers to accessible travel by air. Recent DOT efforts to improve transportation for individuals with disabilities include billions of dollars through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to modernize airport terminals, such as adding wheelchair ramps and accessible restrooms; a proposed rule that would make it an automatic violation of ACAA regulations for airlines to mishandle a passenger's wheelchair, and would enhance training requirements for airline personnel who provide hands-on transfer assistance to passengers and handle wheelchairs; a final rule requiring airlines to make lavatories on new, single-aisle aircraft more accessible; and a potential rule that would allow passengers to stay in their own wheelchairs when they fly.

3. IATA: Speed and Convenience Top Priority for Passengers.

Travelers prioritize speed and convenience and are increasingly embracing biometrics and off-airport processes, according to the 2023 Global Passenger Survey, released by the International Air Transport Association (IATA). Proximity to the airport was passengers' main priority when choosing their departure point (71%), more important than ticket price (31%). A small majority prefer to book directly with the airline (52%). Regardless of booking channel used, however, they want complete visibility into the fare offer including easy access to optional products and services. Among seven different payment methods, the most popular was credit/debit card (73%), followed by digital wallet (18%) and bank transfer (18%). Complex visa requirements deter travelers who want a convenient, digital online visa process; many are willing to share immigration information for faster airport procedures. Passengers want to complete more processing elements off-airport; 45% identified immigration as top pick for off-airport processing, check-in was second, followed by baggage check-in (19%), and 91% are interested in a special program for trusted travelers (background checks) to expedite security screening. Passengers want more flexibility and control in the baggage process; 67% would be interested in home pick-up and delivery, 77% would be likely to check a bag if they could tag it and check it in before they get to the airport, and 87% would be willing to check in a bag if they could track it. In the last 12 months, 46% of passengers used biometrics at the airport; 75% prefer using biometric data over traditional passports and boarding passes. Data protection remains a concern for half of the travelers. Results are based on over 8,000 responses from more than 200 countries.

4. DOT Grants Help Small Communities Improve Air Service.

DOT is awarding \$14.8 million from the Small Community Air Service Development Program to help 20 communities in 16 states develop solutions to local air service needs. Grants are used to provide financial incentives for service, conduct studies on possible expanded service, and carry out marketing programs to promote existing local service, and address other challenges small airports may experience. The financial assistance helps communities establish first air services, restore lost service, and provides support to establish new routes. DOT received 48 applications from 26 states, requesting a total of more than \$34 million. Selected communities are contributing financial resources to supplement the federal support; nearly all "have established robust public-private partnerships to enhance community participation and facilitate access to air services, provided a specific plan and timetable for using their grant funds in a timely manner, and many have provided letters of support from interested air carriers."

5. FAA Approves Nation's First Public-Use Vertiport.

FAA issued the first conditional approval for a Vertiport at Allen C. Perkinson Blackstone Army Airfield, a dual-use airport for military and civilian flight operations in Blackstone, Virginia. After licensing by the Virginia Department of Aviation, the Vertiport will be established and used for research on an end-to-end concept of operations, developed by Virginia-based air navigation services company NAVOS Air, based on modifying and designing terminal instrument procedures and enroute infrastructure specifically for Uncrewed Aircraft System (UAS) and advanced air mobility use cases. "AAM is the next generation of the aviation industry that seeks to connect previously underserved markets with innovative aircraft powered by emerging technologies," said officials. NAVOS Air was the proponent of the Vertiport, as part of a project funded by the Virginia Innovation Partnership Corporation, through the Virginia Commonwealth Center of Innovation for Autonomous Systems grant program.

II. AIRPORTS

1. Post-Security Connections Between All Terminals Open at LAX.

Post-security connections between all terminals have opened at Los Angeles International. “The new path of travel equals approximately 2-miles from Terminal 1 to Terminal 8,” said owner/operator Los Angeles World Airports (LAWA), a department of the City of Los Angeles, and “will be bolstered further when the Automated People Mover and its corresponding pedestrian bridges open in 2024.”

2. Denver Completes \$50.9 Million Taxiway Project.

Denver International completed a \$50.9 million taxiway project, which was fully funded by an FAA grant. Taxiway EE eliminates a “Hot Spot,” a location on an airport movement area with a history or potential risk of collision or runway incursion. A \$30 million grant is funding much of a lighting and runway rehabilitation project. The airport unveiled plans to add another 100 gates by 2045 and four new walkable concourses. An expansion program that ended last year added 39 gates and increased overall airport capacity by 30%.

3. Four New Gates in Boston Logan’s Terminal E Completed.

Four new gates in Boston Logan’s international terminal were completed, announced owner/operator Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport). The Terminal E project included construction of 390,000 square feet and renovations to existing structure to create a unified building.

4. Fort Lauderdale Building Fifth Terminal.

Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International is building its fifth terminal. The two-level, five-gate domestic T5 will be about 230,000 square feet and will connect to Terminal 4 and an existing parking garage through pedestrian bridges or walkways. JetBlue is managing construction on behalf of Broward County. Expected completion date of the \$404 million facility is mid-2026.

5. Raleigh-Durham to Replace Primary Runway.

Raleigh-Durham International broke ground for a 10,639 ft. runway. The five-year project will cost \$500 million. The existing runway will be rebuilt as a taxiway.

6. Nashville Satellite Concourse Soft Opening.

Nashville International opened its first free-standing, eight-gate Satellite Concourse, which primarily will accommodate Allegiant and Spirit operations.

7. **Heathrow, Airlines Lose Appeal on Passenger Fees.**

The UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) published a final determination after Heathrow Airport and three airlines – British Airways, Delta and Virgin Atlantic – appealed a price control decision from the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), which details how much the airport operator can charge airlines, per person, for using its services. “Having considered these appeals, we found that the CAA’s Heathrow price control struck broadly the right balance between ensuring prices for passengers are not too high and encouraging investors to maintain and improve the airport over time,” said the CMA, which also ordered CAA to reconsider “a handful of smaller issues.”

8. **Abu Dhabi Set to Open New Terminal.**

A new terminal at Abu Dhabi International is scheduled to begin operations in early November. Known as Midfield Terminal Building during the construction phase, the 742,000 square meter Terminal A is among the largest airport terminals in the world. Features include interconnected biometric systems that allow “a seamless, digitized journey from pre-travel to boarding gate,” spa facilities and 163 food and retail outlets. Once fully operational, Terminal A “will accommodate up to 45 million passengers per year, be able to process 11,000 travelers per hour and operate 79 aircraft at any given time,” said Abu Dhabi Airports; Elena Sorlini is Managing Director & Interim CEO.

9. **Saudi Arabia to Expand Abha International Airport.**

Saudi Arabia launched a general plan for Abha International Airport, which will increase capacity to 13 million passengers annually and establish Abha as a global tourist destination. The airport design was inspired by Asiri heritage architecture.

III. SECURITY AND DATA PRIVACY

1. **TSA Update.**

During the first three quarters of 2023, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) intercepted 5,072 firearms at airport security checkpoints, and expects to surpass last year's record 6,542 firearms. In third quarter, Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) stopped 1,820 firearms at checkpoints, an average 19.8 per day, of which more than 94% were loaded.

2. **ACI World: Improving Cyber Resilience of Airports.**

Airports Council International (ACI) World launched an addition to the Airport Excellence (APEX) peer assessment program to help airports identify cybersecurity vulnerabilities, mitigate risks, and ensure regulatory compliance. "APEX in Cybersecurity" is an onsite airport review designed to assist airports in undertaking a comprehensive evaluation of their cybersecurity landscape. "By leveraging international standards and renowned frameworks, the program offers a proactive and rounded perspective on the cyber challenges faced by airports today."

3. **London Heathrow Launches Security Lane Booking System.**

London Heathrow is testing Heathrow Timeslot, which allows passengers to book a security lane timeslot up to three days before departure and receive an email confirmation with a QR code. The six-month trial is open for select flights of American, Delta, Emirates and Virgin Atlantic in Terminal 3. Similar systems are in place at other airports, some fee-based.

4. **Israel Admitted into U.S. Visa Waiver Program.**

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the start of visa-free travel for short-term visits to the United States for eligible Israeli citizens and nationals, following Israel's admission into the U.S. Visa Waiver Program in September. Eligible Israeli citizens and nationals can apply for authorization to travel to the United States through the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) for tourism or business purposes for up to 90 days without first obtaining a U.S. visa. Israeli citizens and nationals with valid B-1/B-2 visas may continue to use them for business and tourist travel to the United States.

IV. TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT

1. First Integrated Digital Identity Travel Experience Tested.

IATA and industry partners successfully tested the first fully integrated digital identity travel experience, from shopping for flights to arrival, on a journey from London Heathrow to Rome Fiumicino with British Airways. “In future, a smart phone storing a digital wallet that is loaded with your digital passport, loyalty cards and other verifiable travel credential, is all that will be needed to travel,” said IATA. “Success, of course, is underpinned by interoperability and global standards.” Companies involved in the project include Accenture, Amadeus, Australian Border Force, AWS, Branchspace, British Airways, IDnow, Aeroporti di Roma, SICPA, Trip.com and Verchaska.

2. Sabre Signs NDC Agreements with LATAM, Air France-KLM.

Sabre and LATAM Airlines Group announced an enhanced agreement that provides Sabre-connected agencies with long-term access to LATAM’s traditional and New Distribution Capability (NDC) content through Sabre’s global distribution system (GDS). Integration of LATAM’s NDC connection to Sabre is to be implemented in first half 2024. . . . Air France-KLM and Sabre completed a strategic multi-year NDC distribution agreement. NDC offers will be rolled out to Sabre-connected travel agencies in a phased approach next year. . . . Sabre and UK leisure airline Jet2.com announced a multi-year agreement giving Sabre-affiliated agencies access to Jet2.com content through the Sabre GDS. . . . Under a new agreement, Sabre customers will have access to CellPoint Digital’s suite of payment services, which will be directly connected and pre-configured for all current and prospective airline merchants and other travel companies. . . . Sabre launched AI-powered retailing solution Upgrade IQ, which enables airlines to better manage seat upgrades and generate incremental revenue by filling unsold seats in premium cabins. Travelers can bid for a seat upgrade at any stage during pre-travel, throughout the booking flow, at check-in, in the airline’s mobile app or via email communication. Sabre leveraged AI capabilities from Google and integrated with Hopper’s advanced bidding platform.

3. Alaska Airlines Invests in AI Company Assaia.

Alaska Star Ventures, the investment arm of Alaska Airlines, is taking an equity stake in Assaia, developer of artificial intelligence (AI) technology used by airlines to reduce turnaround times and improve on-time performance. Alaska becomes a member of Assaia’s Strategic Partner Community (SPC) which provides strategic and tactical counsel to guide development of products for managing and optimizing ramp operations.

4. Global Coalition for Trusted Reviews Launched.

At the first ever Fake Reviews Conference, organized by Tripadvisor, experts in government, academia and industry discussed common challenges and potential mitigation approaches related to fake reviews on the Internet. The Coalition for Trusted Reviews was established, comprised of Amazon, Booking.com, Expedia Group, Glassdoor, Tripadvisor and Trustpilot, to define best practices for hosting online reviews, share methods of fake review detection, and develop common standards and definitions. Coalition members will next meet in Brussels in December for a conference organized by Amazon.

5. Wisk Conducts AAM Tests at Long Beach.

Wisk Aero conducted a public demonstration of its autonomous air taxi at Long Beach Airport, using its 5th Generation (Cora) electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. Boeing and local officials discussed the future of AAM in the region. Wisk, a fully-owned Boeing subsidiary, is headquartered in the San Francisco Bay Area, with locations around the world. Wisk's CEO is Brian Yutko.

V. ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

1. Fuel Bill for Global Airline Industry.

Average price of aviation jet fuel for week ending October 13 was \$121.20 per barrel, down 7.5% on prior month's average, and down 12.5% on prior year's average, reports IATA; data from S&P Global Platts.

2. IATA Holds First World Sustainability Symposium.

IATA held the inaugural World Sustainability Symposium (WSS) in Madrid, hosted by Iberia with 450 attendees from aviation, sustainability, technology and finance disciplines as well as policy makers and other stakeholders. Discussed were government policies to incentivize production of sustainable aviation fuels (SAF); hydrogen or electric powered aircraft and continuous efficiency improvements in airframe and engine technologies; and need for a concrete plan to track and monitor progress of industry commitment to net zero CO2 emissions by 2050.

3. EPA Addresses Lead Emissions from Small Aircraft Engines.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) determined that emissions from aircraft that operate on leaded fuel "cause or contribute to air pollution which may reasonably be anticipated to endanger public health and welfare under the Clean Air Act," as exposure to lead can cause irreversible and life-long health effects in children. Jet aircraft used for commercial transport do not operate on leaded fuel, but small piston-engine aircraft pose risks to communities near general aviation airports. EPA and FAA are considering regulatory options. FAA and industry last year announced a program to achieve a lead-free aviation system no later than 2030. FAA has approved use of a 100 Octane unleaded fuel (G100UL) that can be widely used by piston-engine fleet, that is not yet commercially available, and a lower octane fuel (UL 94), currently available at about 35 U.S. airports.

VI. U.S. CONGRESS

1. House Approves Three-Month FAA Extension.

As FAA authorization was set to expire on September 30, the House of Representatives passed legislation to extend statutory authorities through December 31, 2023, as part of a continuing resolution to fund the federal government for 45 days. The short-term extension is necessary to ensure all FAA programs continue to function, said bill sponsors, but “enacting a long-term bill as soon as possible is a top priority, as a series of short-term extensions will be detrimental to the FAA, airport infrastructure improvements, and the aviation industry.”

2. Passage of “Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act” Urged.

Union leaders and members of Congress urged passage of the “Global Aircraft Maintenance Safety Improvement Act,” which was introduced in the Senate in April; near identical companion legislation passed the House in September 2022 and was reintroduced on March 22, 2023. The bill “would close loopholes that currently allow foreign repair and maintenance facilities to operate without requirements that facilities in the U.S. must comply with,” said Transport Workers Union (TWU), including drug and alcohol testing for safety-sensitive personnel, background checks for workers at maintenance facilities, security threat assessments for foreign facilities, unannounced inspections for maintenance operations, and minimum qualifications for aircraft mechanics. The number of foreign repair and maintenance shops used by the U.S. airline industry has grown 36% in the last eight years.

VII. BILATERAL AND STATE DEPARTMENT NEWS

1. State Dept Advises U.S. Citizens Overseas to Increase Caution.

The Department of State advised U.S. citizens overseas to exercise increased caution, “due to increased tensions in various locations around the world, the potential for terrorist attacks, demonstrations or violent actions against U.S. citizens and interests.”

2. Russia Complains to ICAO of West's Air Traffic Rules Violations.

Russia filed a complaint at the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), reported TASS, charging 37 states, including the United States, Canada, Britain and all members of the European Union (EU), with violating air traffic rules by banning use of airspace by Russian airlines, supply of aircraft, spare parts, maintenance and aircraft insurance services, detention of aircraft abroad, and restrictions on access to meteorological information for air navigation. The actions “have jeopardized the safety of international civil aviation flights and seriously undermined mutual trust,” said the Russian Foreign Ministry, adding that “Russia, as one of the leading aviation powers, is firmly determined to seek the cessation of all aforesaid violations of the convention's provisions through the ICAO's dispute settlement mechanisms” and expects ICAO to “respond effectively and impartially to the situation in the context of the defendants’ unprecedented large-scale disregard of their international legal obligations.” . . . Ukrainska Pravda noted that sanctions imposed on the Russian aviation industry since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine have resulted in incidents occurring on a regular basis. “Aircraft continue to fly, although they are cut off from important software updates and maintenance required to ensure their airworthiness [and] Russia has begun to conceal aircraft malfunctions.” Russia was removed from the ICAO Council in 2022 and aviation in Russia was declared to be unsafe.

VIII. EUROPE AND AFRICA

1. United Increases Summer Transatlantic Schedule.

United announced its largest-ever summer season transatlantic schedule, which includes launch of four weekly Boeing 757-200 nonstops between New York Newark and Faro, Portugal. The airline will resume Newark to Reykjavik, operating daily Boeing 757-200 flights; add second daily frequencies from Newark to Brussels, and Washington Dulles to Rome; and increase Newark to Malaga to daily. Some routes will resume early, including Dulles to Lisbon, Barcelona and Rome; Newark to Nice, Naples and Malaga; Chicago to Rome and Milan; and San Francisco to Rome.

2. JetBlue Announces Seasonal Flights to Dublin, Edinburgh.

JetBlue will operate daily from New York Kennedy and Boston Logan to Dublin from March 13 through September 30, and daily from Kennedy to Edinburgh from May 22 through September 30, on the Airbus A321neo. JetBlue also offers daily nonstops to London, Paris and Amsterdam from New York, and London and Amsterdam from Boston. Year-round service from Boston to Paris starts April 3, with a second daily flight added on June 20. . . . In other news, LOT Polish Airlines announced it will code share with JetBlue; they have been interline partners since 2012.

3. Aer Lingus Expands U.S. Service.

Aer Lingus restarted winter season flights to Miami from Dublin and will launch Minneapolis-St Paul from London Manchester on April 29, increasing from four-times weekly to daily year-round next October, served by the Airbus A321XLR. Flights to Denver from Dublin will operate four times weekly from May 17, bringing total number of transatlantic routes to 21. Aer Lingus extended nonstop A321neoLR service from Bradley International to Dublin beyond the summer season, making it almost year-round, announced the Connecticut Airport Authority, with seamless connections to up to 28 UK and European airports.

4. Lufthansa Returns A380 to Los Angeles Service.

Lufthansa will return the Airbus A380 to its Los Angeles International daily service from Munich on October 26, as demand surges. By the end of 2025, eight A380s will be deployed on the route. . . . City Airlines will begin operations in summer 2024, offering A319 feeder flights from Munich and Frankfurt for parent Lufthansa. The startup will operate alongside Lufthansa CityLine. Recruitment of cockpit and cabin crews begins in November. “The competitive strengthening of the short-haul network is essential for the market position of

Lufthansa Group and for the planned growth of the long-haul segment in the German market,” said Lufthansa.

5. Air France-KLM to Take Equity Stake in SAS.

Air France-KLM and U.S. investment firm Castlelake proposed to take stakes of 19.9% and 32%, respectively, in SAS, while 26% would be held by the Danish government and 8.6% by Danish firm Lind Invest, all subject to approvals by the European Commission, the U.S. court overseeing the SAS Chapter 11 reorganization and, in respect of SAS AB, the Swedish court. All SAS common shares and listed commercial hybrid bonds would be canceled, redeemed and delisted in second quarter 2024. SAS would eventually join SkyTeam, of which Air France-KLM is a founding member, and exit Star Alliance. SAS said it will continue to operate as usual throughout this process. In parallel to the transaction, Air France-KLM said it would seek commercial cooperation between its airlines and SAS “to strengthen its footprint in Scandinavian markets,” adding, “Air France-KLM is determined to play an active role in the consolidation of European aviation. The envisaged cooperation with SAS is one of the components of the Group’s strategic roadmap.” Definitive agreements would include specific provisions whereby Air France-KLM’s stake may be increased to a controlling share, after a minimum of two years.

6. EU Delays Entry-Exit System, ETIAS.

The European Union Entry-Exit System (EES) has been delayed again, with implementation expected in 2024. The EES, for UK and other non-EU travelers who do not require a visa to enter the EU, will register the traveler’s name, biometric data, and the date and place of entry and exit. Facial scans and fingerprint data will be retained for three years after each trip. The ETIAS visa waiver program was also postponed, and will start in 2025. ETIAS will allow entry into EU countries for a fee of €7. . . . In other news, new EU antitrust commissioner Didier Reynders told the Financial Times that Europe will address concerns about airline mergers by, in some cases, requiring airlines to sell assets that would directly support the entry and viability of a competitor; the assets could range from planes to cargo businesses or contracts with ground handlers.

7. Air France Shifts Domestic Flights from Orly to De Gaulle.

“To maintain a strong brand presence in all the markets it serves, and be more responsive to rapidly changing travel demand,” Air France Group plans to operate domestic service to and from Paris Charles de Gaulle by summer 2026, with exceptions. The Corsica route will continue to operate from Orly, and Transavia would become the Group’s reference operator from Paris-Orly, as it has a fleet of new Airbus A320neo aircraft, which offer a 15% reduction in fuel

consumption and CO2 emissions, and a 50% reduction in noise. Between 2019 and 2023, traffic on domestic routes out of Paris Orly fell by 40%, and by 60% for day return trips. The company anticipates “a limited impact on employment, avoiding any forced dismissals.”

8. **Russia Complains to ICAO of West's Air Traffic Rules Violations.**

See Section VII, item 2.

IX. ASIA/PACIFIC AND MIDDLE EAST

1. Qatar's Akbar Al Baker to Step Down.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Akbar Al Baker will step down on November 5, and will be succeeded by Hamad Airport executive Mohammed Al-Meer. Al Baker led Qatar Airways for 27 years. . . . Xiamen Airlines began daily Boeing-787 flights from Beijing Daxing to Doha, the first direct China-Qatar flight by a Chinese airline, while twice weekly service from Xiamen to Doha was set to begin October 31. Xiamen Airlines and Qatar Airways plan “extensive cooperation in intermodal transportation network, intermodal check-in and direct baggage handling.”

2. Hawaiian Resumes Tokyo Haneda-Kona Service.

Hawaiian Airlines resumed service between Tokyo Haneda and Kona, operating three flights through November 4, restarting regular weekly service on November 22, and gradually returning to three-times-weekly in March. By March 13, the airline's Japan capacity will be 59% above summer 2023 levels. . . . West Maui reopened to tourism on October 8 following tragic wildfires. Hawaiian noted that demand for travel to Maui is recovering, but remains below historical levels.

3. ANA Adds Third Airbus A380 to Honolulu Service.

In response to recovering passenger demand for flights to Hawaii, All Nippon Airways (ANA) will bring a third Airbus A380 into service between Tokyo and Honolulu, from December 6. Seat capacity on the route at 18,004, will surpass pre-COVID levels.

4. Cathay Pacific Resumes Chicago Passenger Service.

Cathay Pacific resumed Chicago passenger service with three-times-weekly Airbus A350-1000 nonstops from Hong Kong, after a three-year absence. The airline serves five U.S. destinations and Cathay Cargo flies to O'Hare eight times per week. Separately, Cathay Pacific reported a 480.1% increase in passengers in September 2023, compared with September 2022, and a 15.3% increase in cargo.

5. Qantas Board Announces Renewal Plans.

In recognition of “reputational issues” and to support “restoration of trust in the company,” Qantas announced Board retirements, including Chairman Richard Goyder in late 2024, and non-executive director Michael L'Estrange this year on November 3. Three new directors, including CEO Vanessa Hudson, Doug Parker and Heather Smith, “will offer themselves for election.” Hudson replaced

CEO Alan Joyce, who resigned in September, two months before scheduled, amid such charges as illegally outsourcing jobs and false advertising. . . . Qantas and China Eastern withdrew an application to extend their joint business and will end coordination of pricing and schedules, as the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) intended to end the partnership. The ACCC also opposed a Qantas bid to fully acquire Australian-based charter operator Alliance Aviation Services; Qantas Group instead will retain its 20% share of Alliance, which in turn will continue its long-term agreement to operate Embraer E190s for the Group.

6. Virgin Australia Returns to Profitability.

Virgin Australia reported Group revenue of \$5 billion in FY23, a 124% increase over FY22, and a statutory net profit of \$129 million, the first profit achieved in 11 years. “We have a long-term commitment to transformation and are only part-way through this multi-year journey,” said CEO Jayne Hrdlicka. “By creating a systemically lower cost base and a conservative balance sheet as well as investing heavily in technology and our frontline, we are well positioned for the future.” Bain Capital reportedly postponed plans for an initial public offering of Virgin Australia. Bain acquired the airline for A\$3.5 billion including liabilities in 2020 after it was placed in voluntary administration.

X. AMERICAS

1. United Airlines Pilots Approve New Contract.

United Airlines pilots voted in favor of a new agreement that adds more than \$10 billion of value to the existing contract, said Air Line Pilots Association, Int'l (ALPA), including “an industry-leading increase in pay raises.” The contract is effective on September 29, 2023 and becomes amendable on September 30, 2027. . . . United converted options and purchase rights into firm orders for 50 Boeing 787-9s, for delivery between 2028 through 2031, and 60 Airbus A321neos, for delivery between 2028 and 2030. The company secured new options for up to 50 additional B-787s and purchase rights for an additional 40 A321neo aircraft. United expects to take delivery of about 800 new narrowbody and widebody aircraft between 2023 and end of 2032. . . . United launched a program giving full-time, active-duty U.S. military pilots access to conditional job offers as First Officer, upon completing all required training and certification. The United Military Pilot Program gives the airline “direct access to some of the best, most talented aviators in the world,” said CEO Scott Kirby. United also launched the Calibrate Technician Pathway Program, in partnership with the U.S. Army Reserve and aviation maintenance schools.

2. Delta Expands LATAM, Aeromexico Joint Ventures.

On the first anniversary of the Delta-LATAM alliance, the airlines announced Medellin-Miami (LATAM) flights; LATAM’s new Lima-Atlanta, adding to Delta’s existing service; and Delta’s second Atlanta-Bogota frequency. New routes coming in December include Atlanta-Cartagena (Delta), seasonal service between New York Kennedy and Rio de Janeiro (Delta); and “in response to growing demand, Delta’s seasonal service between Atlanta and Rio de Janeiro that returns on December 16 will now operate year-round.” . . . The Delta-Aeromexico Joint Cooperation Agreement will increase the transborder seat offering by more than 30% in 2024. Aeromexico plans to operate nearly 60 daily frequencies to the U.S. by July 2024, representing a 35% increase in departures compared to 2023, with a presence in 36 U.S. markets. Delta plans to operate 34 daily frequencies to Mexico, serving seven Mexican destinations. Itineraries and ticket sales will be announced gradually, pending government approvals. Aeromexico's renewed fleet includes 50 new aircraft, most Boeing 737 MAX.

3. American Orders Four Embraer E175s for Envoy Air.

American Airlines signed a firm order with Embraer for four new E175s, to be operated by subsidiary Envoy Air. American ordered seven E175s in June. . . . American is purchasing 10 Airbus A321neos from Alaska, which is transitioning to an all-Boeing fleet. . . . American will add seven new routes next summer to

coastal destinations in New England and Nova Scotia. The expansion includes six new cities from New York LaGuardia. . . . American achieved record third-quarter revenue of approximately \$13.5 billion.

4. **Alaska Adds Anchorage to New York, San Diego Nonstops.**

Alaska will offer daily Anchorage-New York Kennedy summer service, beginning June 13. At 3,386 miles, the route will be the longest flight in the airline's network, enabled by its new Boeing 737-8 aircraft. Weekly Anchorage-San Diego flights start May 18. Alaska Air Group reported third quarter net income of \$139 million, compared to \$40 million for third quarter 2022, and an industry-leading completion rate of 99.7%.

5. **Southwest Flight Attendants to Vote on New Contract.**

Southwest announced a Tentative Agreement with Transport Workers Union Local 556 for the airline's nearly 19,000 flight attendants, saying "TWU 556 will communicate details directly to its members about the agreement and the voting timeline." . . . Beginning June 4, Southwest will launch daily service from Orlando to Cancun, Grand Cayman, Nassau, Providenciales, Punta Cana, and San José, Costa Rica, subject to government approvals. . . . Southwest ordered 108 Boeing 737-7s, growing its orderbook to more than 500 737 MAX jets; once certified, the 737-7 will join the carrier's all-Boeing 737 fleet.

6. **Frontier Names James Dempsey President.**

Frontier announced the promotions of James Dempsey to President, and Mark Mitchell to Senior Vice President and CFO, both reporting to CEO Barry Biffle. Prior to joining Frontier in 2014, Dempsey held senior management roles at Ryanair. . . . Frontier reported a third quarter net loss of \$32 million. "To strengthen our competitive position, we are focused on simplifying our operations, concentrating growth in underserved markets, delivering the lowest costs and enhancing our loyalty program offering," said Biffle. Among features of the enhanced loyalty program, miles will accrue based on dollars spent on Frontier products, i.e., flights, bags, seat assignments, and bundles, and in 2024 there will be four status levels.

7. **Allegiant Founder Maury Gallagher Resumes CEO Role.**

John Redmond resigned as CEO of Allegiant Travel Company and as a member of the Board of Directors. Maurice Gallagher, former CEO, current Executive Chairman and a major stockholder, resumed the CEO role and will maintain his role as Chairman of Allegiant's board. . . . Allegiant announced financing commitments for seven Airbus A320 and four Boeing 737 MAX aircraft from BNP Paribas and Jackson Square Aviation, a \$412 million transaction.

8. **State Dept Advises U.S. Citizens Overseas to Increase Caution.**
See Section VII, item 1.
9. **Russia Complains to ICAO of West's Air Traffic Rules Violations.**
See Section VII, item 2.
10. **United Increases Summer Transatlantic Schedule.**
See Section VIII, item 1.
11. **JetBlue Announces Seasonal Flights to Dublin, Edinburgh.**
See Section VIII, item 2.
12. **Aer Lingus Expands U.S. Service.**
See Section VIII, item 3.
13. **Lufthansa Returns A380 to Los Angeles Service.**
See Section VIII, item 4.
14. **Hawaiian Resumes Tokyo Haneda-Kona Service.**
See Section IX, item 2.
15. **ANA Adds Third Airbus A380 to Honolulu Service.**
See Section IX, item 3..
16. **Cathay Pacific Resumes Chicago Passenger Service.**
See Section IX, item 4.