



# WASHINGTON AVIATION SUMMARY

## May 2025 EDITION

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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. **DOT Seeks Comment on Regulations Review.**

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) is seeking comments and information through May 5 “to assist in identifying existing regulations, guidance, paperwork requirements, and other regulatory obligations that can be modified or repealed, consistent with law, to ensure that DOT administrative actions do not undermine the national interest and that DOT achieves meaningful burden reduction while continuing to meet statutory obligations and ensure the safety of the U.S. transportation system.”

### 2. **Airbus to Acquire Spirit AeroSystems Assets.**

Airbus entered into a definitive agreement with Spirit AeroSystems for the acquisition of industrial assets dedicated to its commercial aircraft programs. As part of the agreement, Airbus will take ownership of the sites of Kinston, North Carolina; St. Nazaire, France; and Casablanca; and the production of A220 pylons in Wichita, Kansas; and A220 wings and mid-fuselage in Belfast, Northern Ireland, unless a suitable buyer for the part of the site where these activities are located is identified. Airbus will also acquire production of wing components for the A320 and A350 in Prestwick, Scotland. The Subang, Malaysia site will be sold to a third-party owner. Airbus will be compensated by payment of \$439 million from Spirit AeroSystems, subject to certain adjustments at closing, which is planned for third quarter, subject to regulatory and other customary approvals. Airbus also agreed to provide Spirit non-interest-bearing lines of credit in an aggregate amount of \$200 million, which will be used to support Airbus programs.

### 3. **Paul Rinaldi Joins A4A.**

Paul Rinaldi, former President of the National Air Traffic Controllers Association, was named Senior Vice President, Operations and Safety, at Airlines for America (A4A), which said “he will be integral to working with the White House, DOT and Congress to advance meaningful change which is urgently needed to modernize America’s air traffic control system.”

### 4. **FAA SAFO Warns Carriers of Risks Associated with Visual Approaches.**

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) issued a Safety Alert for Operators (SAFO) to remind operators and pilots of risks associated with visual approaches, due to the severity of recent “notable and high visibility events.” The alert stresses effective communication between pilots and air traffic

controllers, and the pilot-in-command's authority to declare "unable" when a clearance reduces the safety margin, and makes recommendations.

**5. Commercial Air Tour Aviation Rulemaking Committee Established.**

FAA established an Aviation Rulemaking Committee (ARC) to develop recommendations for improving commercial air tour safety, to comply with a provision of the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024. The committee will consider recommendations from the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), industry organizations, previous ARCs, and data from aviation safety reporting programs, and provide recommendations and submit a report to FAA by September 22. . . . In related news, FAA grounded New York Helicopter Charter, which operated a Bell 206 helicopter that crashed in the Hudson River, killing the pilot and a family of five. . . . FAA held a Rotorcraft Safety Roundtable, saying the January 29 midair fatal collision near Washington National exposed hazards from the mix of helicopters and fixed-winged aircraft in the surrounding airspace. Attendees analyzed "hotspots" like Harry Reid International in Las Vegas. Mixed traffic can also refer to faster and slower moving airplanes, and airplanes flying into and out of multiple, closely spaced airports, such as Hollywood Burbank and Van Nuys airports, which are less than 10 miles apart, serve a wide mix of aircraft, and have closely spaced arrival and departure paths. A forum focusing on airline safety is planned for May.

**6. House Democrats Question Counter-Drone Activity in D.C. Airspace.**

House Democrats sent a letter to DOT Secretary Sean Duffy and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Secretary Kristi Noem regarding "recent misuse of counter-unmanned aircraft systems (C-UAS) by the U.S. Secret Service that allegedly violated existing notification and operating requirements previously agreed upon with FAA and threatened the safety of the flying public in the Washington, D.C. airspace." The events resulted in false Traffic Collision Avoidance System (TCAS) alerts in March on several commercial passenger aircraft operating near Washington National, wrote Rick Larsen (D-WA) and Bennie Thompson (D-MI), Ranking Members of the House Transportation and Homeland Security Committees, respectively. They are seeking answers about the apparent breach of protocol and details on how the Departments will work together to prevent similar incidents in the future. . . . Separately, FAA is testing drone detection technologies at airports and off-airport locations to help determine their effectiveness and if they interfere with FAA or aircraft navigation systems. FAA receives more than 100 drone-sighting reports near airports each month.

- 7. FAA Investigates DCA Wingtip Incident Involving Members of Congress.**  
FAA is investigating an incident involving two American Airlines planes on a taxiway at Washington National, in which the wingtip of a Bombardier CRJ 900 struck an Embraer E175. Several members of Congress were on board one of the planes. There was no effect on flight operations, both aircraft returned to gates and no injuries were reported, said Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.
- 8. FAA Accelerates NOTAM Upgrade.**  
FAA plans to deploy a modernized Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) system by September, ahead of schedule. The system issues time-critical and sensitive aeronautical information to pilots and airports. “The public is sick of outages that ground regional air travel, create delays and otherwise ruin the flying experience,” said DOT Secretary Sean Duffy. FAA says the upgrades will provide near-real-time data exchange and will be securely hosted in the cloud.
- 9. FAA Seeks Comments on Improving Pilot Medical Process.**  
FAA will not proceed with a proposal to issue initial denials to pilots who provide incomplete medical applications, said Acting Administrator Chris Rocheleau at a listening session about improving the airman medical process. Applications reached 450,000 in 2024 compared to a recent annual average of 385,000, said FAA Federal Air Surgeon Dr. Susan Northrup. A checklist on how to prepare for a medical exam was developed by participants, who included representatives from pilots’ unions and other industry groups.
- 10. Texas A&M to Lead FAA Center for Advanced Aviation Technologies.**  
Texas A&M University System will be the managing entity to establish and operate FAA’s Center for Advanced Aviation Technologies (CAAT), selected from 28 proposals because of proximity to major international airports and an FAA regional headquarters, existing infrastructure for advanced aviation technology testing, and strong academic programs and industry partnerships. The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 requires FAA to develop a CAAT with airspace laboratory, flight demonstration zones and testing corridors.

## II. AIRPORTS

### 1. ACI World Traffic Forecasts 2024–2053.

Preliminary figures from Airports Council International (ACI) World indicate that 2024 global total passengers at close to 9.5 billion represented an increase of 9% from 2023. . . . The Top 10 busiest airports, representing 9% of global traffic (855 million passengers), had a gain of 8.8% from 2023 and 8.4% from 2019 (789 million). Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta remained at top position, followed by Dubai International and Dallas Fort Worth. Shanghai Pudong moved to 10th spot, from 21 in 2023, due to expanded visa policies, resumption and expansion of international flights, operational enhancements, and recovery of Asia-Pacific, particularly China. Global passenger traffic is forecast to reach 9.9 billion in 2025, with a 4.8% year-over-year growth rate. “Amid global challenges, the resilience of the world’s busiest airports shines,” said ACI World Director General Justin Erbacci. . . . A significant gap between the recovery of passenger traffic and total airport revenues is reported in the 2025 ACI World Airport Economics Report and Key Performance Indicators. While passenger traffic nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels in 2023—5.4% below 2019—airport revenues fell short by 11.4%. With global passenger numbers expected to rise to 17.7 billion by 2043 and 22.3 billion by 2053, an estimated \$2.4 trillion in total capital investment will be needed by 2040 for airport infrastructure.

### 2. Houston Bush Terminal B Progress.

A curtainwall comprised of 1,316 units of glass panels is being installed at gate areas of Terminal B North concourses at George Bush Intercontinental, part of a \$2.55 billion redevelopment project of United Airlines and Houston Airports. The concourses are expected to be operational by fall 2026. . . . Houston City Council passed a proposal to rename Bush Terminal E in honor of Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee, who died last year. Lee represented Houston in the U.S. House of Representatives for almost 30 years.

### 3. Airlines Oppose Schiphol Flight Cap.

In light of Amsterdam Schiphol’s decision to cap annual flights at 478,000, Airlines for Europe, European Regions Airline Association and International Air Transport Association warned the Dutch government that “European Commission recommendations must be followed, as they uphold the Balanced Approach to noise management and protect the integrity of the Single Market. The Commission’s previous decision reinforces that cutting flights should not be the goal—achieving meaningful noise reduction should be.”

**4. London Luton Expansion Approved.**

The UK government approved London Luton expansion plans, which will increase annual passenger capacity from the current cap of 18 million to 32 million. The airport is operated by a consortium led by AENA and InfraBridge; airlines include easyJet, Wizz Air, Jet2, Ryanair, Tui, FlyOne, Sun Express and El Al.

**5. Heathrow Power Outage Probed.**

Parliament held a session to discuss the power outage following a substation fire which led to closure of Heathrow on March 21. Officials from the airport, Heathrow Airline Operators' Committee, and the UK Electricity Transmission for the National Grid provided testimony. The government has commissioned the independent National Energy System Operator to investigate the power outage, and the airport is conducting a review of the incident.

**6. Ho Chi Minh Opens New Domestic Terminal.**

Terminal 3 at Ho Chi Minh Tan Son Nhat, dedicated to domestic operations, officially opened in April, marking the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. Vietnam Airlines operated the first commercial flight and, with some exceptions, will operate all domestic flights from T3. Pacific Airlines and VASCO, members of Vietnam Airlines Group, will continue to operate at Terminal T1 until further notice.

### III. **SECURITY AND DATA PRIVACY**

#### 1. **TSA Begins REAL ID Full Enforcement on May 7.**

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) will begin enforcing the 2005 REAL ID Act and regulations on May 7 at checkpoints nationwide. Passengers who present a state-issued identification that is not REAL ID compliant and who do not have an acceptable alternative (e.g., passport) can expect to face delays, additional screening and potentially not being permitted into the security checkpoint.

#### 2. **American, CBP Pilot Baggage Screening Initiative.**

A new security initiative is being piloted by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and Sydney Airport Authority on American Airlines' daily flight from Sydney Kingsford Smith to Los Angeles. With the International Remote Baggage Screening (IRBS) program, passengers arriving in the U.S. from select international airports do not have to claim checked baggage in the CBP Customs Hall and recheck it with American for their connecting flight. Instead, after clearing CBP Passport Control, they proceed directly to a TSA checkpoint and then continue to their connecting flight. CBP personnel can view X-ray images captured at the foreign international airport and review them remotely before the aircraft lands. The initiative will expand to other routes and airlines in the future.

#### 3. **El Salvador is U.S. Global Entry Partner Country.**

El Salvador is now an official Global Entry partner country, joining Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Brazil, Colombia, Croatia, the Dominican Republic, Germany, Japan, India, Mexico, the Netherlands, Panama, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan, the United Arab Emirates, and the UK. Pre-vetted, low-risk citizens of El Salvador can receive expedited customs and immigration processing upon arrival to the United States.

## **IV. TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT**

### **1. Electric Wheelchair Travel Solution Enhanced.**

Last year, Collins Aerospace introduced a solution that enables passengers with reduced mobility (PRM) to remain seated in their electric wheelchairs throughout flight. Electric wheelchairs are secured to the aircraft utilizing an industry standard “roll on, lock down” tie-down system commonly found in ground transportation systems, ensuring user familiarity, personal safety and convenience. New refinements to the Prime wheelchair seating solution, shown at Aircraft Interiors Expo (AIX), incorporate direct feedback from passengers, airlines and technical advisors, utilize a custom transformable monument to provide passenger amenities when PRM usage is required or a flexible crew service station when not. Amenities include a height-adjustable tray table with integrated tablet holder, power outlets and passenger service unit with reading light, attendant call button and public address speaker. When in service mode, the Prime solution deploys to provide crews with additional service space, room below to store a half-sized trolley cart and additional stowage space inside the monument itself. Once service concludes, the monument converts to a passenger self-service station. . . . Also at AIX, Airbus announced that Air Canada is launch customer for the new A220 cabin, which has “the widest seats, aisle, and largest cabin and windows in its class.” XL bins offer a “20% increase in volume, are 10% lighter and will enable a faster turnaround for crew.” New lighting features include an optional third LED light strip under the bins, contributing to cabin ambience. Air Canada expects delivery of its first A220-300 with the new XL bins installed by early 2026. XL bins will become the new standard later in 2026.

### **2. United Receives FAA Certification for Starlink-Equipped E-175.**

United received FAA certification for its first Starlink-equipped aircraft type and expects first customer flight to operate in May on a United Express Embraer 175. Roll-out will continue with plans to install 40 regional jets each month and the entire two-cabin regional fleet by end of year. Starlink access will be free for all MileagePlus® customers and include streaming, shopping and gaming at Wi-Fi speeds of up to 250 megabits per second.

### **3. Archer Unveils Planned New York City Air Taxi Network.**

Archer announced it is continuing to work with FAA to seek Type Certification of its piloted electric air taxi, Midnight. A proposed New York City air taxi network, in partnership with United Airlines, would enable passengers to travel from Manhattan to nearby airports in just 5-15 minutes. Previously announced air taxi networks will be in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Midnight carries up



to four passengers while producing less noise and emissions than a traditional helicopter, and is built with redundant systems, including 12 total engines and propellers, allowing levels of safety similar to commercial airliners. Archer received its Part 135 Air Carrier and Operator Certificate in 2024. Adam Goldstein is CEO and Founder. . . . Archer secured design approval from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) General Civil Aviation Agency for transformation of the Abu Dhabi Cruise Terminal helipad into a hybrid heliport for helicopter and electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft operations. Partners in the UAE include Abu Dhabi Aviation (ADA) and Falcon Aviation Services. Dubai-based Air Synapsis provides heliport and vertiport design, supplies and project management services.

**4. United Invests in JetZero Blended Wing Aircraft Start-Up.**

United announced an investment in blended wing body aircraft start-up JetZero, which includes a path to order up to 100 airplanes and an option for another 100, conditional upon JetZero achieving development milestones, including flight of a full-scale demonstrator in 2027. JetZero's Z4, a 250-passenger all-wing design with 5,000 nautical mile range, projects up to 50% lower fuel burn compared to existing commercial airliners. JetZero was awarded a \$235 million contract by the U.S. Air Force to fast-track development of its commercial demonstrator, with first flight expected in 2027 and entry into commercial service in 2030. Alaska and Delta are investing in the JetZero project also.

**5. Lufthansa Innovation Hub, Munich Airport Collaborate.**

Lufthansa Innovation Hub and Munich Airport Terminal 2 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) “to collectively enhance the customer experience and optimize operations across the entire travel journey.” Among several projects is the deployment of robots from Ottonomy to assist passengers and promote Lufthansa services. Passengers scanning a QR code on the robot with their phone are directed to Lufthansa’s chat assistant for self-service options. They can access flight information and manage processes, such as rebooking or requesting refunds.

## V. ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT

### 1. Fuel Bill for Global Airline Industry.

The global average jet fuel price for week ending April 11 was \$82.91 per barrel, down -6.7% on prior month's average, and down -16.3% on prior year's average, according to the Jet Fuel Price Monitor, a joint IATA-Platts initiative.

### 2. IATA SAF Registry Goes Live.

IATA launched the Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) Registry, a global system to record SAF transactions in a standardized and transparent way. Now live under Civil Aviation Decarbonization Organization (CADO) management, the Registry was developed with airlines, government authorities, OEMs, fuel producers and suppliers, and corporate travel management companies. It helps solve the challenge of limited SAF supply—acutely scarce and available in only a few locations globally—by connecting airlines with producers and suppliers. In addition, it gives airlines' corporate customers access to in-sector emissions reductions and capitalizes on firms' capacity to co-finance the cost of decarbonization. With over 30 early users in the process of onboarding and ready to use the system, the Registry is underpinned by the IATA SAF Accounting and Reporting Methodology. Participation in the SAF Registry will be free until April 2027, then operated on a cost recovery basis. CADO is a not-for-profit organization established under Canadian Law with headquarters in Montreal.

### 3. Bodø e-SAF Declaration and Conference.

The Bodø e-SAF Declaration was signed by Deutsche Aircraft, Energi i Nord (North Energy Cluster), BLU (Green Arctic Aviation Development) and other industry partners, at the third annual e-SAF Conference, held at Northern Norway's aviation hub, Bodø. The declaration advocates for long-term regulatory certainty, funding and use of market-based measures like the EU ETS to support e-SAF development; establishment of a European book and claim system to streamline SAF adoption; cross-sector collaboration to drive innovation and accelerate e-SAF integration; a goal of 100% SAF usage in aviation; and annual progress reports to ensure accountability and transparency. E-SAF is a synthetic fuel produced from renewable electricity, such as wind, solar, or hydropower, said SAS. Carbon-neutral, it only emits as much carbon as was captured during production.

## VI. U.S. CONGRESS

### 1. Hearing: “Restoring Boeing’s Status as a Great American Manufacturer.”

Boeing CEO Kelly Ortberg testified before the Senate Commerce Committee, at a hearing titled “Safety First: Restoring Boeing’s Status as a Great American Manufacturer,” noting steps taken to correct production deficiencies and safety issues identified after the Alaska Airlines Flight 1282 incident last year, in which a door panel blew out mid-flight. An investigation determined that supplier Spirit AeroSystems had failed to re-install the door properly. Boeing is acquiring Spirit AeroSystems, which, said Ortberg, will help improve performance and quality. He said Boeing is implementing a Safety Management System, and a Safety and Quality plan to address findings from an FAA special audit, with a focus on reduction of defects, employee training, simplifying processes and procedures, and elevating the safety and quality culture. Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Ranking Member of the Committee, noted Ortberg’s “commitment to live in Seattle [and] has been spending his time listening to employees, customers, affected crash victim families, the FAA, aviation experts and transportation inspectors.” Ortberg succeeded Dave Calhoun after the door panel incident.

### 2. House Hearing on Current State of U.S. Airports.

The House Aviation Subcommittee held a hearing to discuss ongoing airport infrastructure needs and how Congress can promote regulatory stability to enable airports to properly plan and invest in capital improvement projects. FAA estimates \$67.5 billion in needed airport infrastructure upgrades through 2029. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act included \$15 billion to support modernization, terminal improvements, and safety upgrades. The FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 increased Airport Improvement Program (AIP) funding to \$4 billion annually, added flexibility to the use of AIP funds, contained comprehensive environmental streamlining reform to expand the number of projects excluded from National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) reviews, and cut bureaucratic red tape to expedite project deliveries. . . . In his testimony, Michael Landguth, President and CEO of Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority, related the difficulty in navigating “the complex web of federal laws, regulations, and guidance documents, all to build a replacement runway. That single project, now slated for completion in 2029, will have taken nearly 13 years from initial planning to construction.” Among his recommendations for reducing costly regulatory burdens on airports: FAA’s role in regulating airports should be refocused on its primary function of oversight of airfield/airspace standards and safety, and airport-related air traffic control functions. FAA should ensure consistency in applying standards nationwide by adopting and promoting the least burdensome interpretation of statutory requirements and

educating/directing regional and local airport offices to implement them. Congress should provide greater clarity and specificity when writing laws, giving less leeway for broad, extra-statutory interpretations and guidance documents from FAA. . . . Lawrence Krauter, CEO of Cincinnati/Northern Kentucky International, called for eliminating overregulation of airport capital development projects, accelerating delivery of safety-critical infrastructure projects, promoting accountability and efficiency within the federal workforce, and reducing unnecessary regulatory requirements and costs for the airport industry.

**3. Hearing on Efforts to Secure, Improve U.S. Travel System.**

With the U.S. set to host several premier events over the next four years, including the 2025 Ryder Cup, America's 250th birthday, the 2026 FIFA World Cup and the 2028 Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games, the House Subcommittee on Transportation and Maritime Security held a hearing entitled, "America on the Global Stage: Examining Efforts to Secure and Improve the U.S. Travel System and Prepare for Significant International Events." To prepare for an estimated 40 million international visitors, U.S. Travel Association President and CEO Geoff Freeman urged the government to focus on visa processing reform, and equip every TSA screening lane with biometrics, advanced imaging technology, and Computed Tomography baggage scanners. U.S. Customs and Border Protection should implement advanced traveler vetting and biometric capabilities, and Congress should provide full funding for ATC staffing, with emergency appropriations to rapidly upgrade key parts of the ATC system, and designate ATC investments as mandatory spending. The U.S. now ranks behind Spain and France in the global competition for visitors, he said. China is on a path to catch or surpass the U.S. over the next decade. "Our competitors are investing billions to leapfrog the U.S. and win a bigger share of the \$11.1 trillion in economic benefits from the global travel market."

## **VII. BILATERAL AND STATE DEPARTMENT NEWS**

### **1. UK Accepts Slot Concessions of Atlantic Joint Business Agreement.**

The UK Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) published a notice of intention to accept commitments offered by the Atlantic Joint Business Agreement (AJBA) to give competitors slots at London airports on three key routes: London-Boston, London-Miami and London-Chicago; and to carry a minimum number of passengers on the London-Dallas route. The AJBA is comprised of American Airlines, Finnair and International Consolidated Airlines Group units British Airways, Iberia and Aer Lingus. “Remedy slots allowing competitor airlines to operate on U.S.-UK routes have been a core part of the commitments which have been in place since 2010,” said CMA, adding that it had “engaged with the U.S. Department of Transportation throughout the investigation.”

### **2. Thailand Achieves FAA Category 1 Safety Assessment Rating.**

FAA announced that Thailand achieved an International Aviation Safety Assessment (IASA) Category 1 rating. FAA’s IASA program assesses a country’s ability to comply with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) safety standards. “The return to CAT1 not only restores Thai Airways’ potential in the global market, but also reaffirms Thailand’s determination to develop the aviation industry to grow sustainably and stand at the forefront of the region,” said Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand, adding that upcoming actions include a review of the Open Sky Agreement and coordination with TSA, as well as an assessment by ICAO of whether Thailand has effectively implemented critical elements of the safety oversight system.

## **VIII. EUROPE AND AFRICA**

### **1. Air France Adds Summer Flights, Rolls Out La Première Suite.**

Air France will operate up to 900 flights per day to nearly 190 destinations worldwide during the 2025 summer season. U.S. connections from Paris-Charles de Gaulle include new 4Xweek, Airbus A350-900 Orlando service, from May 21. Phoenix will be increased to 5Xweek A350-900 flights. The Papeete connection via Los Angeles will become daily. During the Cannes Film Festival, Air France will operate special direct flights between Los Angeles and Nice, May 12 to 26. . . . Air France's new La Première suite is now offered on Boeing 777-300ERs flights to New York Kennedy. The suite extends across five portholes and features an armchair and chaise longue that converts to a bed. It will be available on Singapore and Tokyo-Haneda routes this summer and on all La Première destinations by 2026.

### **2. Lufthansa Deploys A350-900s to Denver, Seattle.**

Lufthansa is closing a gap caused by delayed aircraft deliveries, by deploying Airbus A350-900s from Frankfurt to Seoul, Shanghai, Denver and Seattle this summer season, said CEO Jens Ritter. “Over the next 36 months, Lufthansa is expecting the largest fleet renewal in its history. By the end of 2027, 61 new aircraft are scheduled to be added to the fleet. This means an average of one new aircraft every two weeks.”

### **3. ITA Airways to Begin Integration into Star Alliance.**

ITA Airways has officially received approval to start the integration process into Star Alliance, with entry expected in early 2026. ITA is 59% owned by Italy's Ministry of Economy and Finance and 41% by Deutsche Lufthansa. ITA operates passenger and cargo services and will add 360 daily flights to the Star network. Most growth will come from its home cities, especially Rome and Milan, which are currently served by 16 Star Alliance members collectively, said officials. ITA will be the fifth hub airline of the Lufthansa Group to join Star Alliance, following Lufthansa, SWISS, Austrian and Brussels.

### **4. SAS Summer Flights Include New York, Seattle.**

SAS is enhancing connectivity across Scandinavia and beyond with the launch of its summer 2025 schedule. Daily Oslo–New York Kennedy service began March 30, and 5Xweek Copenhagen–Seattle begins May 21.

### **5. Martin Gauss Leaves airBaltic.**

Riga-based airBaltic announced that CEO Martin Gauss stepped down, with the Latvian Transport Ministry saying Gauss was dismissed due to a “loss of

confidence.” Gauss was with airBaltic since 2011 and previously was CEO of Malev Hungarian Airlines. . . Pauls Cālītis will act as airBaltic Interim CEO, while continuing as Management Board Member and COO. “Our core objectives remain unchanged,” said Board Chair Andrejs Martinovs. “The shareholders remain focused on developing the company, strengthening its competitiveness, and continuing progress toward a potential Initial Public Offering (IPO).” airBaltic operates 130 routes to 70 destinations, with a fleet of 50 Airbus A220-300s. In January, Lufthansa announced an investment in a minority stake in airBaltic.

**6. Qatar, IAG, MASkargo to Launch Global Cargo Joint Business.**

See Section IX, item 7.

## **IX. ASIA/PACIFIC AND MIDDLE EAST**

### **1. United Adds Asia/Pacific Service.**

In October, United plans to launch daily Boeing 787-9 flights to Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City via Hong Kong, with one-stop connections from Los Angeles and San Francisco. A second daily Boeing 777-300ER nonstop will be added between San Francisco and Manila. In December, United will launch three weekly Dreamliner nonstops between the U.S. and Adelaide for the Australian summer.

### **2. JetBlue Adds Redemption Benefits to Japan Airlines Partnership**

JetBlue and Japan Airlines expanded their partnership to include mileage redemptions. TrueBlue members can use points for travel to destinations across Japan and East Asia, including Tokyo, Osaka, Okinawa and Hokkaido. JAL Mileage Bank members can redeem miles for select flights across JetBlue's network, including destinations in Latin America, the Caribbean, Canada, and cities along the U.S. East Coast.

### **3. Royal Jordanian Launches Washington Dulles Service.**

Royal Jordanian launched nonstop Boeing 787-8 Dreamliner service from Amman to Washington Dulles, its fourth U.S. gateway.

### **4. Mike Whitaker Named Independent Director of IndiGo.**

Former FAA Administrator Michael Whitaker has been appointed as an Independent Director of IndiGo, India's largest airline, subject to regulatory and shareholder approvals. His extensive experience in international governmental affairs will be hugely instrumental as IndiGo continues its global expansion, said Managing Director Rahul Bhatia.

### **5. Israir to Return to U.S. Market.**

DOT tentatively granted Israir Airlines a permit to engage in scheduled foreign air transportation between Tel Aviv and New York.

### **6. Richard Nuttall Named President of Philippine Airlines.**

Philippine Airlines (PAL) appointed Richard Nuttall as its new President, effective May 29. The British national most recently served as CEO of SriLankan Airlines and was an Executive Board Member of SkyTeam Alliance. He succeeds Stanley Ng, who will become Vice President of PAL Holdings and a Board member, and will report directly to PAL Chairman and CEO Lucio Tan and Lucio Tan III, President and COO of PAL Holdings. Carlos Luis Fernandez assumes the role of Executive Vice President and COO on May 29. . . . PAL



expects to receive the first of nine Airbus A350-1000s this year, is rolling out refurbished A321neos, and will take delivery of 13 new A321neos starting 2026. . . . PAL and Qatar Airways launched a strategic partnership and will code share on daily nonstops between Manila and Doha from June.

7. **Qatar, IAG, MASkargo to Launch Global Cargo Joint Business.**

Qatar Airways Cargo, IAG Cargo and MASkargo plan to launch a Global Cargo Joint Business, subject to regulatory approvals. The strategic collaboration will offer “enhanced connectivity, faster transit times and new routing opportunities across their combined extensive networks. . . . In parallel, the parties are jointly working at developing industry-leading harmonized safety and security standards for their customers.” MASkargo is the cargo division of Malaysia Aviation Group.

8. **Thailand Achieves FAA Category 1 Safety Assessment Rating.**

See Section VII, item 2.

9. **ITA Airways to Begin Integration into Star Alliance.**

See Section VIII, item 3.

## X. AMERICAS

### 1. Ted Christie Steps Down, Spirit Names Dave Davis as President, CEO.

Dave Davis was named President and CEO of Spirit Airlines, effective April 21, replacing Ted Christie who ended 13 years at the company on April 7. Davis most recently was Sun Country President and CFO, and earlier worked at Northwest, which, said Spirit Chairman Robert Milton, position him well to lead Spirit's continued transformation. Matt Klein, EVP and Chief Commercial Officer, also stepped down. Senior Vice President Rena Ghosh was appointed the new as Chief Commercial Officer. Other new appointments include former Air Canada executive Duncan Dee as Senior Vice President, Corporate Communications, and Trey Urbahn as Senior Commercial Advisor. Mr. Urbahn previously has worked at Etihad, Breeze, Azul, TAP and JetBlue. Spirit common stock was approved for listing on the NYSE American stock exchange, with trading to begin April 29 under the symbol "FLYY." Spirit Aviation Holdings, parent company of Spirit Airlines, emerged from a financial restructuring on March 12.

### 2. Economic Uncertainty Drives Industry Decisions.

American Airlines Group reported first-quarter revenue of \$12.6 billion. Total unit revenue was up 0.7%, driven by continued strength in international unit revenue, which was up 2.9% year-over-year on 0.8% lower capacity, and continued growth in premium and loyalty revenue. "Economic uncertainty that pressured domestic leisure demand and the tragic accident of American Eagle Flight 5342" affected results. The company withdrew full-year guidance until the economic outlook becomes clearer. . . . Most airlines withdrew full-year guidance due to uncertainty, with some planning capacity reductions. Boeing CEO Kelly Ortberg said customers in China had indicated they would not take about 50 deliveries planned for this year, due to tariffs. "We have many customers who want near-term deliveries, so we plan to redirect the supply to the stable demand. And we are not going to continue to build aircraft (and ship it) to customers who will not take them," he said.

### 3. United Reports Record First-Quarter Revenue.

United reported its best first-quarter financial results in the past five years, with record revenue of \$13.2 billion. Premium cabin revenue rose 9.2%, business revenue was up 7.4% and revenue from Basic Economy was up 7.6% year-over-year. Cargo revenue was up 9.7%. Capacity was up 4.9% compared to first-quarter 2024. "In response to the current demand environment," United said it will remove four percentage points of scheduled domestic capacity from third quarter and continue "to make prudent adjustments to the utilization rate of its

fleet, including ongoing reductions in off-peak flying on lower demand days,” and will retire 21 aircraft earlier than previously planned. . . . United is launching flights to San Jose, Costa Rica and Panama City from San Francisco in May, and adding daily flights to Cancun, Los Cabos and Puerto Vallarta.

**4. Delta Reports Record First-Quarter Revenue.**

Delta also reported record revenue in first quarter, with \$14 billion exceeding the anticipated \$13.11 billion. Citing broad economic uncertainty around global trade, CEO Ed Bastian said, “We are protecting margins and cash flow by focusing on what we can control. This includes reducing planned capacity growth in the second half of the year to flat over last year while actively managing costs and capital expenditures.” . . . Delta and LATAM expanded the scope of their Joint Venture to include Argentina, providing access to a broader network of more than 200 destinations and strengthening the cargo offering across the U.S., Canada and Argentina.

**5. Hawaiian Flight Attendants Vote To Extend Contract.**

Hawaiian Airlines flight attendants voted to ratify a nearly three-year contract extension that aligns amendable dates, as Alaska and Hawaiian work toward a joint collective bargaining agreement.

**6. Alaska Offers Nonstops from San Diego to DCA.**

Alaska is offering daily nonstop service between San Diego and Washington National; San Diego had been the largest U.S. airport without service to DCA. Alaska reportedly will discontinue service to Washington Dulles from Los Angeles and San Francisco, in August, due to decreased demand. New, 3Xdaily nonstops from San Diego will begin August 20 to Phoenix, and October 4 to Chicago O’Hare and Denver. Frequencies will increase on flights from San Diego to Las Vegas, Sacramento, Salt Lake City and San Jose, Calif. starting October 26.

**7. JetBlue to Resume Fort Lauderdale to Philadelphia, Ecuador.**

JetBlue will resume nonstop service from Fort Lauderdale to Philadelphia, operating twice daily from July 3; and once daily to Guayaquil, Ecuador, from July 17. Both routes will be operated with Airbus A320s.

**8. Republic, Mesa to Merge.**

Republic Airways Holdings and Mesa Air Group agreed to merge “and create a leading publicly-traded regional airline company in an all-stock transaction.” The proposed combination will maintain a single fleet of 310 Embraer 170/175 aircraft, with 1,250 daily departures, and will operate within their current basing structures and routes. Mesa and Republic will continue to operate under their

existing FAA operating certificates until securing a single-operating certificate for the combined airline. Republic will continue to support American, Delta and United under its existing capacity purchase agreements (CPAs). Mesa's operations will support United under a new 10-year CPA. The combined company will be led by Republic's executive leadership team, with a Board comprised of six existing directors from Republic and one independent director from Mesa. Upon close of transaction, Republic shareholders will own 88% of the combined company's common shares, and Mesa's up to 12%. The transaction was approved by Boards of both companies and is expected to close by early fourth quarter, subject to customary closing conditions. Upon closing, the combined company will be renamed Republic Airways Holdings and remain NASDAQ-listed under the new ticker symbol "RJET." Mesa Chairman and CEO Jonathan Ornstein said the move "represents the best outcome for our shareholders, employees, and all of our stakeholders." Republic President and CEO Bryan Bedford has been nominated to serve as FAA Administrator.

**9. Avelo to Conduct ICE Charters.**

Avelo Airlines agreed to conduct deportation flights for the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Air Operations Unit (ICE charters) from Mesa, Ariz., using three Boeing 737-800s that had operated from Sonoma County's Charles M. Schulz Airport; that service was to cease on May 1. Avelo Founder, Chairman and CEO Andrew Levy said the flights would provide "stability to continue expanding our core scheduled passenger service and keep our more than 1,100 Crewmembers employed for years to come." The decision was met with angry rallies, calls for boycotts and petitions. State of Connecticut warned it would not renew a fuel tax incentive. And the Association of Flight Attendants, expressing "grave concerns," said its members "are charged with the safety and health of the passengers on our flights and to evacuate an airplane in 90 seconds or less in the event of an emergency. Having an entire flight of people handcuffed and shackled would hinder any evacuation and risk injury or death. It also impedes our ability to respond to a medical emergency, fire on board, decompression, etc. We cannot do our jobs in these conditions."

**10. Air France Adds Summer Flights, Rolls Out La Première Suite.**

See Section VIII, item 1.

**11. Lufthansa Deploys A350-900s to Denver, Seattle.**

See Section VIII, item 2.

**12. ITA Airways to Begin Integration into Star Alliance.**

See Section VIII, item 3.

13. **SAS Summer Flights Include New York, Seattle.**  
See Section VIII, item 4.
14. **United Adds Asia/Pacific Service.**  
See Section IX, item 1.
15. **JetBlue Adds Redemption Benefits to Japan Airlines Partnership**  
See Section IX, item 2.
16. **Royal Jordanian Launches Washington Dulles Service.**  
See Section IX, item 3.
17. **Mike Whitaker Named Independent Director of IndiGo.**  
See Section IX, item 4.
18. **Israir to Return to U.S. Market.**  
See Section IX, item 5.