



## WASHINGTON AVIATION SUMMARY

### DECEMBER 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. Shutdown Ends; Continuing Resolution Expires in January.**

The longest government shutdown in U.S. history ended on November 12, with a continuing resolution (CR) enacted by Congress that provides funding through January 31. Back pay is provided for federal employees who had worked without pay from October 3. . . . Because many air traffic controllers and other aviation professionals chose not to work without pay during the shutdown, flight delays and cancelations mounted. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) and Department of Transportation (DOT) phased in flight reduction orders, stating: “the system is stressed. With continued delays and unpredictable staffing shortages, which are driving fatigue, risk is further increasing, and the FAA is concerned with the system’s ability to maintain the current volume of operations.” DOT Secretary Sean Duffy said 15 to 20 controllers were retiring daily. . . . On November 17, the flight reduction orders were terminated. Airlines began to resume regular schedules. . . . There were reports of non-compliance with the flight reduction orders by some carriers, FAA said; enforcement options include a civil penalty of up to \$75,000 for every flight operated above the set limits. . . . FAA and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) announced awards of \$10,000 for many air traffic controllers, technicians and security officers who worked without pay. . . . The shutdown caused “more than \$6 billion in lost travel spending and unnecessary pain for travelers and federal workers,” said U.S. Travel Association. . . . “We implore Congress to ensure future funding bills do not allow aviation to become collateral damage in Washington’s policy debates,” said Airlines for America (A4A). “FAA’s Airport and Airway Trust Fund currently has \$5 billion that could be used to pay air traffic controllers during future shutdowns. We ask Congress to consider legislation that would implement a long-term solution.”

### **2. UPS MD-11 Crashes; Several Deaths, Injuries.**

A United Parcel Service (UPS) MD-11 Freighter bound for Honolulu crashed shortly after takeoff from Louisville Muhammad Ali International on November 4, killing all three crewmembers and 11 people on the ground; many on the ground were injured. The three-engine Boeing (McDonnell-Douglas) airplane was mostly destroyed by fire. The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) is investigating the accident, with participation by FAA, UPS, Boeing, Independent Pilots Association, GE Aerospace and Teamsters Airline Division. . . . In preliminary NTSB findings, UPS flight 2976 initially climbed to about 30 feet above ground level. Airport surveillance video showed the left engine and

pylon separating from the wing and a fire igniting. The plane cleared the blast fence beyond the end of the runway, but the left main landing gear impacted the roof of a warehouse, then a storage yard and two additional buildings, including a petroleum recycling facility. Pilots had thousands of hours of flight experience. Recovered voice and flight recorders include the entirety of the accident flight. Fatigue cracks and areas of overstress failure were found on parts retrieved from the runway. Boeing recommended the grounding of MD-11 fleets. An FAA Emergency Airworthiness Directive prohibited further flight of MD-11s and MD-11Fs until inspected and corrective actions performed. . . . NTSB noted a similar accident in 1979, in which an American Airlines McDonnell Douglas DC-10-10 crashed in a field near Chicago-O'Hare in clear weather. During takeoff rotation, the left engine and pylon assembly and part of the left wing separated and fell to the runway. Flight 191 continued to climb then rolled and pitched down; the wreckage scattered into an adjacent trailer park; 271 persons on board and two on the ground were killed, and two others were seriously injured.

**3. FAA Cautions Airlines About Flying in Venezuelan Airspace.**

FAA issued a Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) for the Maiquetia Flight Region of Venezuela, advising caution “due to the worsening security situation and heightened military activity. Threats could pose a potential risk to aircraft at all altitudes, including during overflight, the arrival and departure phases of flight, and/or airports and aircraft on the ground.” The NOTAM expires February 19.

**4. Airline Passenger Rights Rule Withdrawn.**

DOT withdrew an advance notice of proposed rulemaking on airline passenger rights. Issued under the Biden Administration, the rule would have required airlines to provide passengers affected by significant flight disruptions with cash and other compensation. DOT said the withdrawal is consistent with current Administration Executive Orders that direct federal agencies “to reduce regulatory burdens,” and “identify and repeal or modify regulations that are unlawful or unauthorized.” Airlines can continue “to compete on the services and compensation that they provide to passengers.” . . . “By cancelling this rulemaking, the Department is actively foregoing an easy solution to foster consumer confidence and address the problem of unaffordable travel for many families,” said Senate Democrats.

**5. DOT Amends Disadvantaged Business Program Language.**

DOT issued an interim final rule that “removes race- and sex-based presumptions of social and economic disadvantage,” ensuring that its Disadvantaged Business Enterprise and Airport Concession Disadvantaged Business Enterprise programs conform to the current Executive Order that

agencies “terminate all discriminatory and illegal preferences, mandates, policies, programs, activities, guidance, regulations, enforcement actions, consent orders, and requirements.” . . . House Democrats wrote, in a letter to DOT Secretary Duffy, “discrimination affects minority and women entrepreneurs at every stage of the process, from access to investment dollars and credit to biased treatment from customers, suppliers and regulators [and] statistical evidence has shown the disparities between the capacity of minority- and women-owned businesses to compete for federal dollars, and the utilization of that capacity by federal contractors.”

**6. DOT Launches Civility Campaign.**

DOT launched a campaign to promote civility in air travel, urging passengers to dress appropriately and assist others, among other things. “The Golden Age of Travel Starts with You,” said DOT Secretary Duffy in a video promoting the campaign. FAA reports a 400% increase of in-flight outbursts, from disruptive behavior to violence, since 2019; 2024 saw double the number of unruly passenger events compared with 2019.

**7. Record-Breaking Thanksgiving Travel Season Expected.**

A4A projected that U.S. airlines would carry more than 31 million passengers over the Thanksgiving holiday travel period (November 21 through December 1), an average 2.8 million per day. . . . According to aviation analytics firm Cirium, bookings slowed during the shutdown and were down 4.48% from a year ago for the Thanksgiving holiday.

## II. AIRPORTS

### 1. Port Authority Proposes New Airport Projects.

Port Authority of New York and New Jersey proposed a capital plan for 2026-2035 that includes funds to complete major projects already underway at Kennedy and Newark, a new Newark Terminal B, more reliable mass transit access to LaGuardia and a rebuild of LaGuardia's Terminal A. The plan would invest \$100 million to launch Operation Legal Ride, a "war on predators who harass airport passengers by offering illegal rides and steal business from the taxi and Uber-Lyft/for-hire vehicle community."

### 2. Los Angeles Plans \$1 Billion Roadway Modernization.

Los Angeles Board of Airport Commissioners approved \$1 billion in additional funding for final phase construction of the Airfield and Terminal Modernization Program Roadway Improvement Project at Los Angeles International. The project, a component of a \$30 billion capital improvement program, will reconfigure 4.4 miles of roadway with a goal to separate airport and local traffic. Work on ingress roadways is expected to be completed ahead of the 2028 Summer Olympics, and egress roadways by 2030, said airport owner/operator Los Angeles World Airports.

### 3. Additional \$20 Million Award for Duluth ATC Tower.

DOT awarded \$20 million toward replacing the air traffic control (ATC) tower at Duluth International, which will allow completion in a single construction phase rather than two, saving more than \$5 million. Funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act's Airport Terminal Program, the project, with an anticipated total cost of \$66 million, earlier received \$16.8 million. Built in the 1950s, the tower is the third-oldest in the country. The airport handled 150,000 flights last year including commercial, Air National Guard missions and flight training operations.

### 4. San Jose Mineta Offers Autonomous Rides To Travelers

San Jose Mineta is California's first commercial, international airport to have fully autonomous ride-hailing at its terminals, via Waymo. Passengers traveling to the Silicon Valley airport can hail a ride via the Waymo app upon landing. The vehicle will arrive at the Ground Transportation Center in Terminal A or B "to dispatch the passenger to the destination of their choice within the San Francisco Bay Area service area." Waymo operates a fully electric commercial fleet. Phoenix Sky Harbor was the first airport in the world

to offer Waymo rider-only autonomous vehicle service. Waymo recently began offering freeway access.

**5. UK Gov't Selects Heathrow Third Runway Proposal.**

"We're taking action where previous governments hesitated, and moving forward with Heathrow's third runway to drive economic growth, international investment and better connections," said UK Chancellor of the Exchequer Rachel Reeves, confirming with Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander that the airport's proposal will be the basis for an expansion project. Details such as length of the third runway, layout and infrastructure implications will be considered throughout the remainder of an Airports National Policy Statement review. Heathrow handled a record 23.4 million passengers in summer 2025.

**6. Schiphol Releases €10B Investment Plan.**

Amsterdam Schiphol released a 10-year, €10 billion master plan that includes construction of a new Terminal South, renovated piers and noise and sustainability initiatives. The one-terminal concept is retained. Workplace innovations will include baggage robots, underground systems for transferring bags and goods, and reducing exposure to ultrafine particles.

**7. Macquarie Acquires Stakes in Birmingham, Bristol Airports.**

Macquarie closed the acquisition of a 55% stake in Bristol Airport and a 26.5% stake in Birmingham, formerly owned by Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan. Bristol, the largest airport in southwest England, serves 10 million passengers a year with routes to 115 destinations. Birmingham handles 14 million passengers a year "in the heart of the country's Midlands," with 140 direct international routes across 41 countries. In October, Macquarie acquired an additional 50% stake in London City Airport bringing total ownership to 75%.

**8. Virgin Atlantic Heathrow Slots Collateral for Financing.**

Apollo-managed funds and affiliates completed a \$745 million senior secured financing of Virgin Atlantic's Heathrow slots. Proceeds will fund fleet investment and strengthen the carrier's balance sheet. The SkyTeam member is a joint venture partner with Delta and Air France-KLM.

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

#### 1. **DHS Amends Biometric Collection Rules.**

Under amended Department of Homeland Security (DHS) rules, Customs and Border Protection (CBP) can require collection of biometrics, including photographs, of foreign travelers entering and exiting the United States. Facial comparison technology is expected to be fully implemented at all commercial airports and seaports in three to five years. . . . The European Union (EU) launched a digital Entry/Exit System in October, capturing facial images and fingerprints from all non-EU travelers.

#### 2. **Southwest Expands Participation in TSA PreCheck Touchless ID.**

Southwest is expanding its participation in TSA PreCheck Touchless ID to Atlanta, New York LaGuardia, Portland, Seattle and Salt Lake City, after a successful pilot program at Denver. Rapid Rewards members who are enrolled in TSA PreCheck and hold a valid passport may opt in to Touchless ID on the Southwest app.

#### 3. **Redesigned Pittsburgh International Checkpoint Opens.**

Eight automated screening lanes featuring larger bins, automatic conveyor return, and Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) bin tracking for processing of carry-on items are among features at the redesigned Pittsburgh International checkpoint. Sixteen Credential Authentication Technology units instantly compare an in-person real-time photo with an ID photo for secure identity verification; no photos are stored and passengers may opt for traditional manual verification. Computed Tomography scanners provide detailed 3D images of bag contents, allowing laptops, electronics and liquids of 3.4 ounces or less to remain inside carry-ons. A fully automated Checked Baggage Inspection System sorts and tracks checked bags from ticket counter through security screening and onto the loading area.

#### 4. **Apple Introduces Digital ID for Apple Wallet.**

Apple introduced Digital ID, enabling users to create an ID in Apple Wallet using information from a U.S. passport, and present the ID with an iPhone or Apple Watch. Digital ID acceptance will roll out first in beta at 250 TSA checkpoints for in-person identity verification during domestic travel, with additional acceptance use cases to come in the future.

## **IV. TECHNOLOGY AND EQUIPMENT**

### **1. IATA Tech News.**

More travelers are managing every stage of their journey using smartphones, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA) 2025 Global Passenger Survey, and they like the expanding use of biometrics and digital identity that enable more seamless airport processing. Cybersecurity remains a priority and “must be core to the end-to-end digital transformation of how we book, pay, and experience air travel. . . . According to IATA’s Domestic and International Passenger Integration Program (DIPIP) study, passenger experience and sustainability gains can be made by using biometric digital ID technology to manage the segregation of international and domestic departing passengers at airports where they are currently separated by physical barriers. A medium-sized airport serving 10 million passengers annually “could save up to \$80 million of future capital expenditure and considerable annual operational savings through the removal of duplicate facilities and improved operational flexibility.” Implementation of DIPIP in early phases, such as shared terminal areas and biometric identity verification, can proceed without major regulatory changes, provided close coordination among airports, airlines and border authorities is maintained. . . . IATA urged the International Telecommunication Union and national telecommunications regulators to ensure that 5G and future 6G networks operating near aviation frequencies do not impair radio altimeters and other avionic systems. IATA calls for future spectrum policy to consider key safety scenarios, including take-off, landing, taxi, and go-arounds; adverse weather conditions (turbulence and windshear); and emergency or off-nominal situations. Radio altimeters, which rely on spectrum availability, provide essential height information in all these conditions and support flight crews and automated safety systems. IATA also reaffirmed the importance of maintaining a minimum separation of 35 feet between aircraft and terrestrial 5G transmitters.

### **2. Sabre Launches AI Chat Solution.**

Sabre introduced SabreMosaic Concierge IQ, an artificial intelligence chat solution that helps travelers plan, book and manage trips in a seamless conversation. “Travelers chat naturally on their choice of platform (e.g. web, airline mobile apps, WhatsApp) to find and book tailored recommendations of the best routes, dates and stays within their budget without switching apps or waiting on hold,” says the company. The tool can create complete packages, combining hotels, ancillaries and third-party offers. Virgin Australia is the first airline to adopt Concierge IQ.

**3. Archer To Acquire Los Angeles Airport.**

Archer Aviation will acquire control of Hawthorne Airport for \$126 million in cash, to use as its operational hub for its planned Los Angeles air taxi network and as a test bed for its electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft. The airport is located near LAX and major Los Angeles destinations. Archer investors include United Airlines.

**4. Global Aircraft Emergency Signals Now Reach Rescue Services Directly.**

Autonomous Distress Tracking (ADT) information from aircraft worldwide is now being fed into the global Location of an Aircraft in Distress Repository (LADR), announced the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Eurocontrol and the French Mission Control Centre. In the event of an aircraft distress situation, LADR serves as a single point of access, notifying relevant stakeholders including aircraft operators, air navigation service providers, and search and rescue teams. LADR forms a core component of ICAO's Global Aeronautical Distress and Safety System (GADSS). It was developed and is hosted by Eurocontrol on behalf of ICAO.

## V. **ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT**

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

The global average jet fuel price for week ending November 14 was \$97.67 per barrel, up 6.1% on prior month's average, and down 1.4% on prior year's average, according to the Jet Fuel Price Monitor, a joint IATA-Platts initiative.

### 2. **Aviation at COP30.**

ICAO shared perspectives and developments in aviation environmental protection at the 30th Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP 30), held in Belém, Brazil. In a joint statement, IATA, the governments of Japan and Malaysia and industry stakeholders urged the international community to accelerate coordinated climate action for aviation to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050. They highlighted the need for global solutions, emphasizing that ICAO remains the exclusive forum for addressing international aviation emissions, and cautioned against fragmented or unilateral measures.

### 3. **EASA, IATA Collaborate on Air Travel Emissions Calculations.**

European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) and IATA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore synergies between the EU Flight Emissions Label and IATA's EcoHub and CO2 Connect calculator. The goal is to streamline processes to make CO2 emissions data visible and consistent for passengers when booking flights. The Flight Emissions Label "provides a trustworthy framework for airlines to share flight emissions data with passengers transparently." IATA's EcoHub "is a comprehensive system for airline sustainability data management, reporting and compliance." IATA CO2 Connect collects airline operational data and calculates CO2 performance of flights.

### 4. **EC Unveils Sustainable Transport Investment Plan.**

The European Commission introduced the Sustainable Transport Investment Plan (STIP) to unlock investments in and scale up production of renewable and low-carbon fuels for the aviation and waterborne transport sectors. Measures are expected to mobilize at least €2.9 billion through 2027. . . . The plan addresses "long-standing weaknesses in the EU's aviation decarbonization strategy, but falls short of critical industry expectations," said IATA, which "stands ready to work constructively with the Commission to address these gaps and ensure that the STIP delivers a coherent, investment-ready framework." IATA asked the Commission to clarify timelines for

materializing key flagship actions, and said industry ambition to attain net zero carbon emissions by 2050 “can only be realized if policy frameworks are fully aligned with industry needs and the true scale of the challenge.”

**5. Singapore Introduces SAF Tax.**

Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore (CAAS) will introduce a sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) levy for origin-destination passengers and cargo shipments, and general- and business-aviation flights departing Singapore, effective October 1, 2026, applicable for tickets or services sold as of April 1, 2026. Economy class passengers will pay S\$1.00, S\$2.80, S\$6.40 and S\$10.40 to Bangkok, Tokyo, London and New York, respectively. The levy is set based on volume of SAF needed to meet the 1% SAF target for 2026 and projected price premium of SAF over conventional jet fuel and other associated costs, including cost of certification, blending and delivery. The levy varies based on distance traveled. . . . In other news, CAAS established the Singapore Sustainable Aviation Fuel Company (SAFCo) to centrally procure SAF for the Singapore air hub and support implementation of Singapore’s national SAF policy. The non-profit company is wholly owned by CAAS. Chair is Director General of CAAS Han Kok Juan. Tan Seow Hui is founding CEO.

## VI. U.S. CONGRESS

### 1. Bills Would Protect Aviation During Government Shutdowns.

The “Aviation Funding Solvency Act,” introduced by House Transportation leaders, would allow FAA to access the Aviation Insurance Revolving Fund to cover critical services during a government shutdown. The Fund covers war risk insurance claims by airlines when they are activated under the Civil Reserve Air Fleet (CRAF) program; interest has increased the balance to \$2.6 billion. . . . Bills introduced to ensure that federal workers are paid during a shutdown include the “Keep America Flying Act of 2026” and the “Shutdown Fairness Act” in the Senate, and the “No Taxation Without Operation Act,” the “Pay Our Homeland Defenders Act of 2026,” and the “Keep Air Travel Safe Act,” in the House. The “Aviation Funding Stability Act,” introduced by Senate Aviation Subcommittee Chairman Jerry Moran, would allow FAA to draw from the Airport and Airway Trust Fund during a shutdown to continue critical operations and pay air traffic controllers. . . . The Modern Skies Coalition, comprised of numerous industry groups, said: “Travelers, shippers and other users of the system pay nearly \$24 billion in taxes and fees every year for aviation operations, including ATC services, safety and security, and they deserve uninterrupted delivery of those services.”

### 2. Senate Hearing on Effect of Shutdowns.

A Senate Aviation Subcommittee hearing titled “Flying on Empty: How Shutdowns Threaten Air Safety, Travel, and the Economy” examined the toll the government shutdown took on the ATC system, airline operations and training. . . . In his testimony, Nick Daniels, President of National Air Traffic Controllers Association (NATCA), noted that controllers and other excepted aviation professionals were required to work full time without pay, including mandatory overtime in many cases. The current continuing resolution expires on January 31. “We cannot continue to ask air traffic controllers and their families to bear the burden of policy disagreements in Congress.” . . . Chris Sununu, President and CEO of Airlines for America, called for urgent legislative action “to end the practice of using the traveling and shipping public as pawns during federal government shutdowns.” In the short term, he advised, Congress must pass the Fiscal Year (FY) 2026 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies (THUD) and Department of Homeland Security appropriations bills to make sure FAA, TSA and CBP are not subject to shutdown impacts for the rest of FY2026. And, Congress must enact solutions that will ensure that FAA, TSA and CBP are insulated from future lapses in appropriations, and that employees can work

uninterrupted and with pay. . . . Subcommittee Chairman Jerry Moran said he expects the Senate to soon consider the fiscal year 2026 THUD, passed by appropriators in July by a bipartisan vote. It provides DOT nearly \$26 billion and FAA nearly \$20 billion between operations and facility and equipment accounts, which fund air traffic control and modernization activities.

3. **André Carson Named Ranking Member of House Aviation Subcommittee.**

André Carson was named Ranking Democrat of the House Aviation Subcommittee, where he will help guide work “to fully implement the current FAA Reauthorization Act of 2024 and address emerging security threats, climate-related disruptions, workforce shortages, and aging infrastructure.”

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

### **1. U.S.–Mexico Airport Slot Dispute Ongoing.**

Mexico’s National Chamber of Air Transport (Canaero) called for dialogue between Mexican and U.S. authorities, after DOT revoked approval for 13 current or planned routes by Mexican carriers into the United States and canceled Mexican airlines’ combined passenger and cargo flights to the United States from Mexico City’s Felipe Angeles International Airport. DOT maintains that Mexico has not been in compliance with the U.S.-Mexico bilateral agreement since 2022. “By restricting slots and mandating that all-cargo operations move,” said DOT Secretary Sean Duffy, “Mexico has broken its promise, disrupted the market, and left American businesses holding the bag for millions in increased costs.” . . . Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum said bilateral discussions are ongoing.

### **2. Boeing Signs Agreements With Central Asian Countries.**

Boeing and Uzbekistan Airways announced conversion of options into a firm order for eight 787s, bringing the flag carrier’s total order to 22 Dreamliners. The agreement was signed at the C5+1 Summit in Washington, DC, and witnessed by senior government officials. The C5+1 enhances cooperation among the United States “plus” the Central Asian countries, according to the U.S. State Department. Other agreements signed at the Summit were with Kazakhstan flag carrier Air Astana for up to 15 Dreamliners, and Tajikistan’s national air carrier Somon Air for up to 14 Dreamliners and 737 MAX airplanes.

## VIII. EUROPE AND AFRICA

1. **Delta Plans New Transatlantic Routes for Summer 2026.**

Delta announced new transatlantic routes for summer 2026, including Boston to Madrid and Nice, Seattle to Rome and Barcelona, and New York to Sardinia, Porto and Malta.

2. **Alaska Adds Nonstops Between Seattle and Rome.**

Alaska increased Dreamliner summer services between Seattle and Rome Fiumicino from four times a week to daily, to begin April 28. Daily, year-round Seattle to London Heathrow service also begins in spring.

3. **JetBlue Adds Boston to Barcelona, Milan.**

JetBlue will begin daily seasonal Airbus A321 service from Boston to Milan Malpensa on May 11, and to Barcelona–El Prat on April 16, subject to receipt of government operating authority. JetBlue offers year-round service from Boston to London Heathrow, Paris and Amsterdam, and will re-launch summer service to Dublin, Edinburgh, London Gatwick and Madrid.

4. **LOT Offers Warsaw-San Francisco Summer Service.**

LOT Polish Airlines will fly four times weekly from Warsaw to San Francisco. The Boeing 787 summer service begins May 26.

5. **Lufthansa, Air France-KLM, IAG Express Interest in TAP Stake.**

Lufthansa, Air France-KLM and IAG have expressed interest in acquiring a stake in TAP. Under privatization terms, Portugal will retain 50.1% of the airline's capital; of the remaining 49.9%, 44.9% will be allocated to a private investor and 5% to employees. Proposals were due November 22.

6. **Turkish to Acquire Stake in Air Europa, Sell Stake in Air Albania.**

Turkish Airlines agreed to acquire a 25% stake in Air Europa, with an investment of €300 million. Departures of the CEO of the Spanish leisure carrier, Jesús Nuño de la Rosa, and some board members, were announced by Juan José Hidalgo, Chairman of majority shareholder Globalia. Richard Clark was promoted to CEO. Turkish plans to sell its 49% stake in Air Albania.

7. **Dubai Airshow News.**

See Section IX, item 5.

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

### **1. Southwest, Philippine Airlines Launch Interline Partnership.**

Southwest and Philippine Airlines partnered to serve international travelers connecting through Los Angeles, Seattle, San Francisco and Honolulu, where Southwest operates nearly four dozen daily interisland arrivals and departures. PAL serves airports in Asia, Australia and the Middle East.

### **2. ANA To Suspend AirJapan Operations.**

All Nippon Airways will suspend its low-cost airline AirJapan operations on March 28, 2026. The unit launched in 2024; routes include Narita to Bangkok, Seoul and Singapore.

### **3. Cathay Pacific Will Buy Back Qatar Airways' Shareholding.**

Cathay Pacific signed an agreement to buy back Qatar Airways' shareholding, about 9.57%. Execution subject to certain conditions.

### **4. Chinese Airlines See Third-Quarter Financial Gains.**

China's "big three" groups (Air China, China Eastern and China Southern) delivered their first profitable nine-month results since the onset of Covid-19, reports airline industry analyst Cirium. China Eastern recorded a 19.4% increase in operating income and a 32.5% rise in net profit compared with third quarter 2024. The international market segment remains 20% below pre-pandemic levels, despite an improved economy and travel and visa policies. In first half 2026, Chinese carriers are expected to capitalize on increased capacity and supportive policies to boost yields and widen profit margins, potentially reducing losses or even returning to profitability, says Cirium.

### **5. Dubai Airshow News.**

The Dubai Airshow set a new record this year, with 1,500 companies from 47 countries and regions. Activity included a \$38 billion order for 65 Boeing 777-9s powered by GE9X engines and a \$3.4 billion order for eight Airbus A350-900s, from Emirates, which also signed agreements to establish manufacturing facilities, expand engine maintenance capacity, and achieve certification capability for aircraft modifications works. . . . Etihad agreed to order six A330-900s, three A350F freighters and seven A350-1000s. . . . flydubai signed MoUs for 75 orders and 75 options for the 737 MAX, and for 150 A321neos. . . . Gulf Air finalized a firm order for 15 Dreamliners with options for three more. . . . Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China (COMAC) displayed its C919 and C909 aircraft, as well as military products.

Air China Cargo signed a purchase agreement for six A350F freighters. . . . Joby Aviation completed an electric air taxi flight test, conducted daily demonstration flights, and announced additional vertiports for Dubai, to be built by Dubai's Road and Transport Authority (RTA) and Skyports Infrastructure. Joby has a six-year exclusive agreement with RTA to establish air taxi services. Saudi Arabia's General Authority of Civil Aviation (GACA) announced plans for rapid deployment of Joby's electric air taxi. . . . Ethiopian will purchase 11 Boeing 737 MAX jets, and six A350-900s. . . . Air Senegal will purchase nine 737-8s, with plans to launch new routes from Dakar to the Middle East and Americas. . . . Azerbaijan airlines Buraq Air and Silk Way West agreed to purchase 10 A320neo Family aircraft, and two A350F freighters, respectively. . . . Air Europa signed an MoU for up to 40 A350-900s. . . . And Air Algérie took delivery of its first A330-900.

**6. Boeing Signs Agreements With Central Asian Countries.**

See Section VII, item 2.

## **X. AMERICAS**

### **1. Delta-Aeromexico JV Wins Temporary Reprieve.**

A U.S. appeals court granted a stay requested by Aeroméxico and Delta relating to the DOT September 15 final order terminating their antitrust immunity and withdrawing approval for their Joint Cooperation Agreement. The termination would have become effective on January 1, 2026.

### **2. Alaska, Hawaiian Receive Single Operating Certificate.**

Alaska and Hawaiian received a single operating certificate as two separate brands, following integration of training, policies, procedures and manuals. This paves the way for combining scheduling and passenger service systems and integrating flight crew, airport and maintenance teams under joint collective bargaining agreements.

### **3. Republic, Mesa Complete Merger.**

The merger of Republic Airways and Mesa Air Group has been completed. Republic stockholders own 88% of the combined company's common stock and Mesa stockholders at least 6% and up to 12%, subject to final settlement of Mesa's pre-closing obligations. Republic will continue to support American, Delta and United under existing capacity purchase agreements (CPA); Mesa will support United under a new 10-year CPA. Republic and Mesa will maintain parallel operations while the combined company works to operate as a single carrier. Company will trade as RJET on NASDAQ Global Select Market.

### **4. Southwest Delays Extra-Legroom Retrofits for Holiday Season**

Southwest delayed extra-legroom retrofits of its Boeing 737-700 fleet to January, keeping additional seats available on each plane to meet holiday demand. More than 4,400 flights were scheduled to operate on the Sunday following Thanksgiving, including 21 unique routes operating on that day.

### **5. Spirit Begins Fort Lauderdale to Belize City Nonstops.**

Spirit Airlines is operating the only nonstop service between Fort Lauderdale and Belize City with three flights weekly. Service to Grand Cayman begins December 4. . . . Spirit reached agreements in principle with its pilot and flight attendants, as it progresses through Chapter 11 restructuring. Spirit's senior leadership committed to taking a salary reduction at a percentage not less than pilots' upon ratification. The company estimates annual savings from the agreements would achieve the target necessary for the next draw under its debtor-in-possession financing.

**6. Robert "BJ" Neal Named President of Allegiant.**

Allegiant Chief Financial Officer Robert Neal was named President, effective immediately. He will continue to serve as CFO while taking on broader leadership responsibilities across the organization, said CEO Gregory Anderson. Neal has been with Allegiant since 2007.

**7. Avianca Announces Leadership Transition.**

Avianca created the position of President for Gabriel Oliva. CEO Frederico Pedreira will step down on February 28. "We continue to strengthen Avianca's leadership team while simultaneously executing the succession plan designed for our talent," said Adrian Neuhauser, CEO of parent company Abra Group. Abra also owns Gol and has a strategic investment in Wamos Air. Chilean carrier SKY Airline is expected to join the Group.

**8. Sunrise Suspends Port-au-Prince Flights.**

Sunrise Airways suspended flights from Port-au-Prince "for strictly security-related reasons," after a plane landing at Toussaint Louverture was struck by bullets amid Haitian gang and political violence. Sunrise has flown domestic and regional scheduled and charter service since 2010; destinations include Miami and Fort Lauderdale. Sunrise service between Miami and Cap-Haïtien is still operating. U.S. airlines have not served Port-au-Prince since Spirit, JetBlue and Southwest planes were hit by gang gunfire while trying to land in November 2024. No injuries were reported in these incidents.

**9. New Pacific Ceases Operations.**

Alaskan charter operator New Pacific Airlines has ceased operations as of November 26 due to continued losses. President & CEO, Thomas Hsieh, announced the shuttering in an internal email to employees.

**10. Southwest, Philippine Airlines Launch Interline Partnership.**

See Section IX, item 1.

**11. Dubai Airshow News.**

See Section IX, item 5.