

Airline Travel with Southwest - Safe as Always!

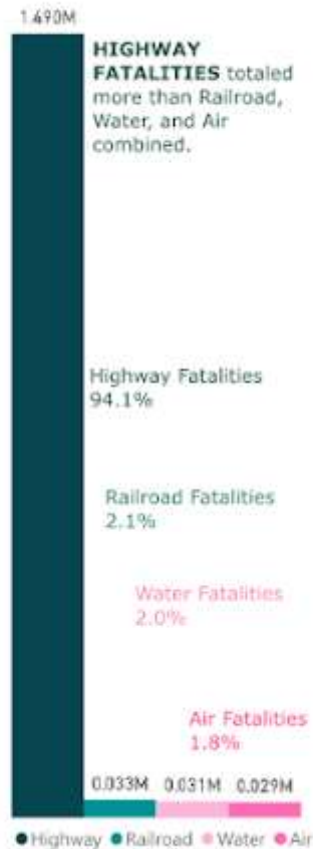
DSC 640 Project Task 3 Blog Post

February 04, 2023

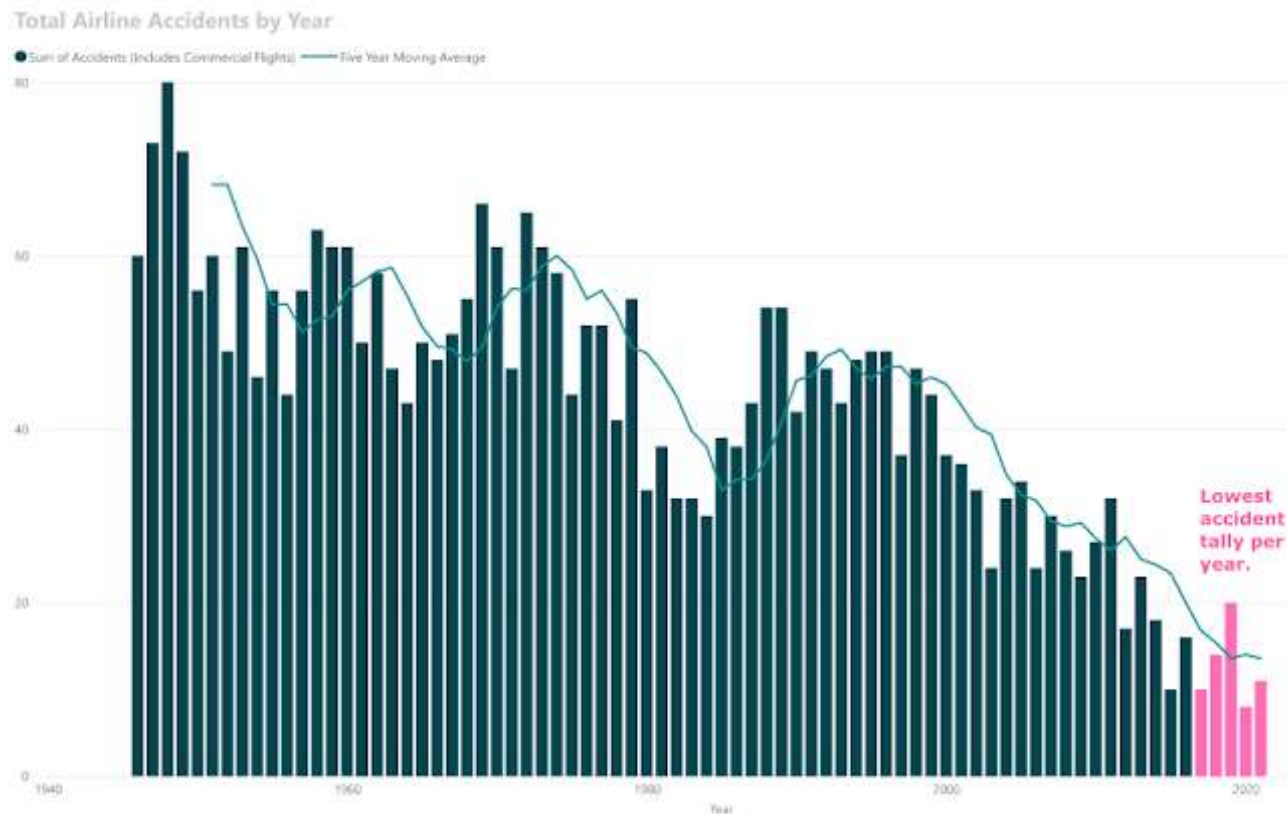
The media has recently portrayed airline travel as an unsafe mode of transportation. It is only fair that you, the public, are presented with the true facts surrounding airline travel. There are many obvious benefits of flying to a destination such as speed, comfort, and cost. However, the main benefit to focus on for this discussion is safety. On behalf of Southwest Airlines, this post will overview safety in several different aspects. First, it is essential to understand how airline travel compares to other modes of transportation in terms of fatalities. Second, the accident trends for airlines need to be understood over time. Third, let's review how Southwest Airlines stacks up amongst other airlines in terms of accidents and fatalities. Fourth, let's determine if there is a difference in the number of passengers that choose Southwest Airlines every year. Through a deeper analysis of the true facts, it will become clear that Southwest Airlines remains a great option for travel.

How does the number of fatalities compare across different modes of transportation? Since 1960, transportation fatality data has been collected by the Bureau of Transportation Statistics. The modes of transportation include Highway (busses, cars, motorcycles, etc...), Railroad (train), Water (boat), and Air (airplane). The Highway mode of transportation resulted in the most fatalities by far. In fact, there were more fatalities when traveling via Highway compared to Railroad, Water, and Air combined. Travel by Air only accounted for 1.8% of total fatalities which is the lowest compared to each mode. The visualization below shows the drastic difference.

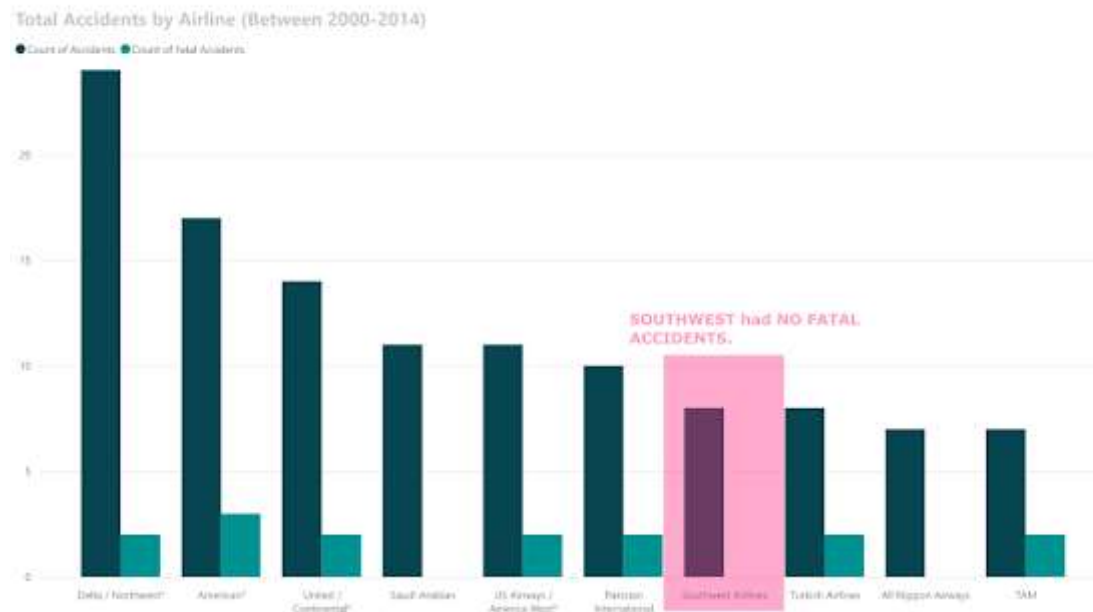
Transportation Fatalities by Mode (1960-2021)



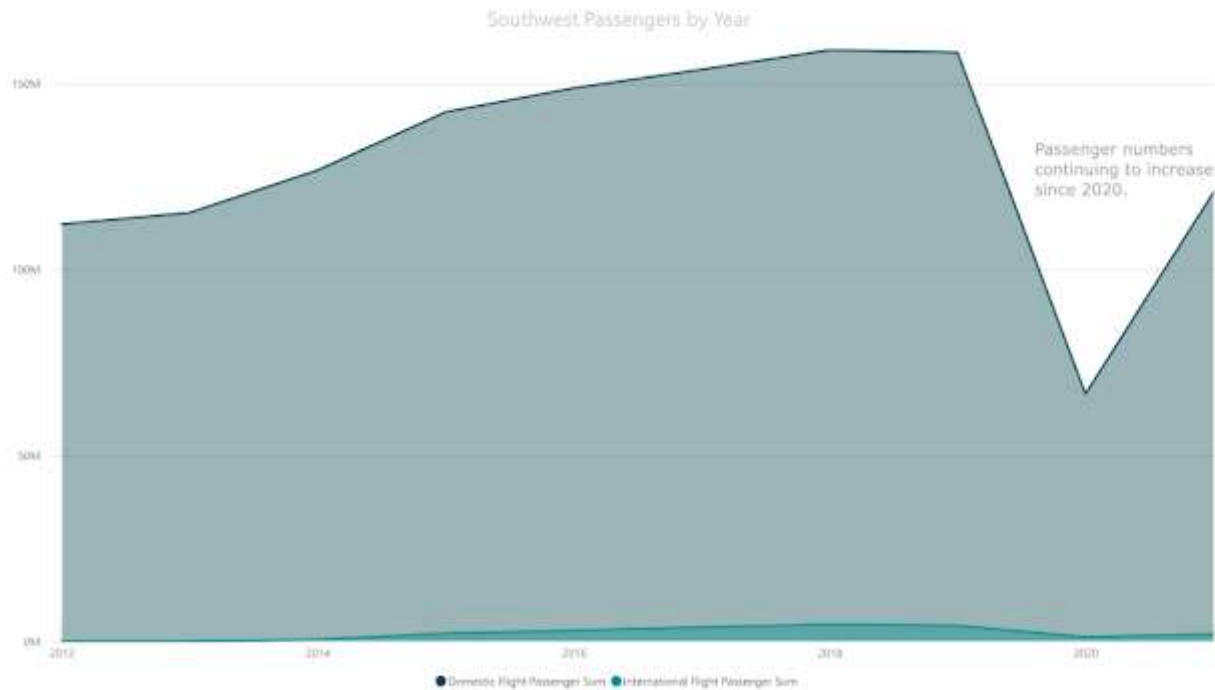
How have accident trends via airline travel trended through time? One of the best indicators whether something is improving or getting worse is through a trend over time. The Aviation Safety Network collects data on the number of accidents for airlines each year. Since 1946, the number of annual accidents has generally declined and is lower than ever before. The accident trend will continue to decrease over future years as technology continues to improve along with increased safety precautions. As seen in the below visualization, the airline accidents per year have decreased and are currently at an all-time low.



How does Southwest Airlines compare to other airlines in terms of accidents and fatalities? There is a difference between a fatal airline accident and a general airline accident. A fatal accident is defined as an accident in which one of the passengers died. A general accident can range across a variety of things, but did not result in any fatalities. Obviously, airlines strive to avoid both situations, however the fatal airline accidents are the worst-case scenario. Data was collected between the Years 2000-2014 and consolidated by fivethirtyeight. Southwest had eight accidents during this timeframe, however no accidents were fatal. Southwest plans to implement safety improvement projects to reduce the number of accidents moving forward. The visualization helps show where Southwest ranks.



Do passengers still trust Southwest Airlines? Millions of passengers put their trust in Southwest each year. In fact, the annual number of passengers increased each year up until the COVID-19 Pandemic in 2020. Since then, passenger numbers are starting to increase again for each year. Whether it is a domestic or international flight, Southwest can get you to where you want to go safely. The visualization below helps show the annual trends.



Now let us recap everything reviewed in this post. Travel via air has resulted in the lowest number of fatalities since 1960 when compared to other modes of transportation like Highway, Railcar, and Water. The number of airline accidents has steadily declined since 1946 and is currently at an all-time low. Southwest did not have a fatal accident between 2000-2014 and recorded eight total accidents during this timeframe. The number of passengers entrusting Southwest to safely arrive at their destination increased annually up until 2020 (COVID-19 Pandemic). Since 2020, passenger numbers are continuing to increase for both domestic and international travel at Southwest. When booking travel options in the future, continue with the safe and trusted choice in Southwest Airlines.

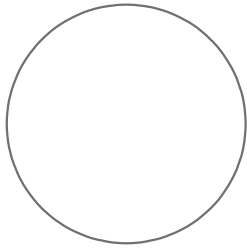
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