Project 1 Proposal

“As the longest government shutdown in US history continues, Americans are restructuring their travel plans. National parks are either closed, trashed, or both, museum doors remain shut, and some people have even had to reschedule their weddings. But the place where perhaps the greatest number of people are feeling the effects of the partial shutdown is at the airport, which is stressful even when functioning at full capacity.” This comes from an article published on January 17th on Vox.com by Aditi Shrikant.

The most recent government shutdown spanned 35 days, from December 22, 2018 to January 25, 2018 and is the longest in history. Every sector of the US economy was impacted by the furloughing of government employees and resources or the essential services employees being expected to work with no pay. The financial and human impact will be the subject of research and study for years to come.

According to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, “air travel was strained as a result of air traffic controllers and Transportation Security Administration (TSA) agents working without pay. Travelers faced longer lines as some TSA agents did not report to work and security checkpoints were closed, while the absence of 10 air traffic controllers temporarily stopped travel at LaGuardia Airport and caused delays at several major airports.”

Our group’s goal was to help shed insight on the impact of the government shutdown on air travel and subsequent delays. To accomplish this, we sampled flight delay data within the shutdown period for two major international airports, Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta and Orlando International Airport, for one of the largest domestic airlines, Delta Air. Our expectation is that reduced staffing of TSA agents in security and air traffic controllers effect the volume and duration of flight departure delays.

Q: What data is available that might indicate how the government shutdown impacted the airports?

Although there are government data resources pertinent to air travel, and more specifically flight delays, this data is only current through November 2018. Our group turned to a commercial flight data service, Cirium Flightstats APIs, to obtain the data we needed.

Q: How can we source and visualize flight delay information across the USA, during the period of a government shutdown?

1) increase in number of delayed flights

2) increase in flight cancellations

3) length of flight delay

Works Cited

“Q&A: Everything You Should Know About Government Shutdowns.” Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, 27 Feb. 2019, www.crfb.org/papers/qa-everything-you-should-know-about-government-shutdowns.

Shrikant, Aditi. “Everything You Need to Know about Airports during the Government Shutdown.” *Vox.com*, Vox Media, 17 Jan. 2019, [www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/1/16/18183634/tsa-government-shutdown-travel-flying](http://www.vox.com/the-goods/2019/1/16/18183634/tsa-government-shutdown-travel-flying).