

AIRLINE SAFETY

A Real Concern or False Narrative?

February 2, 2024



What is the truth regarding Air Travel and Airline Safety?

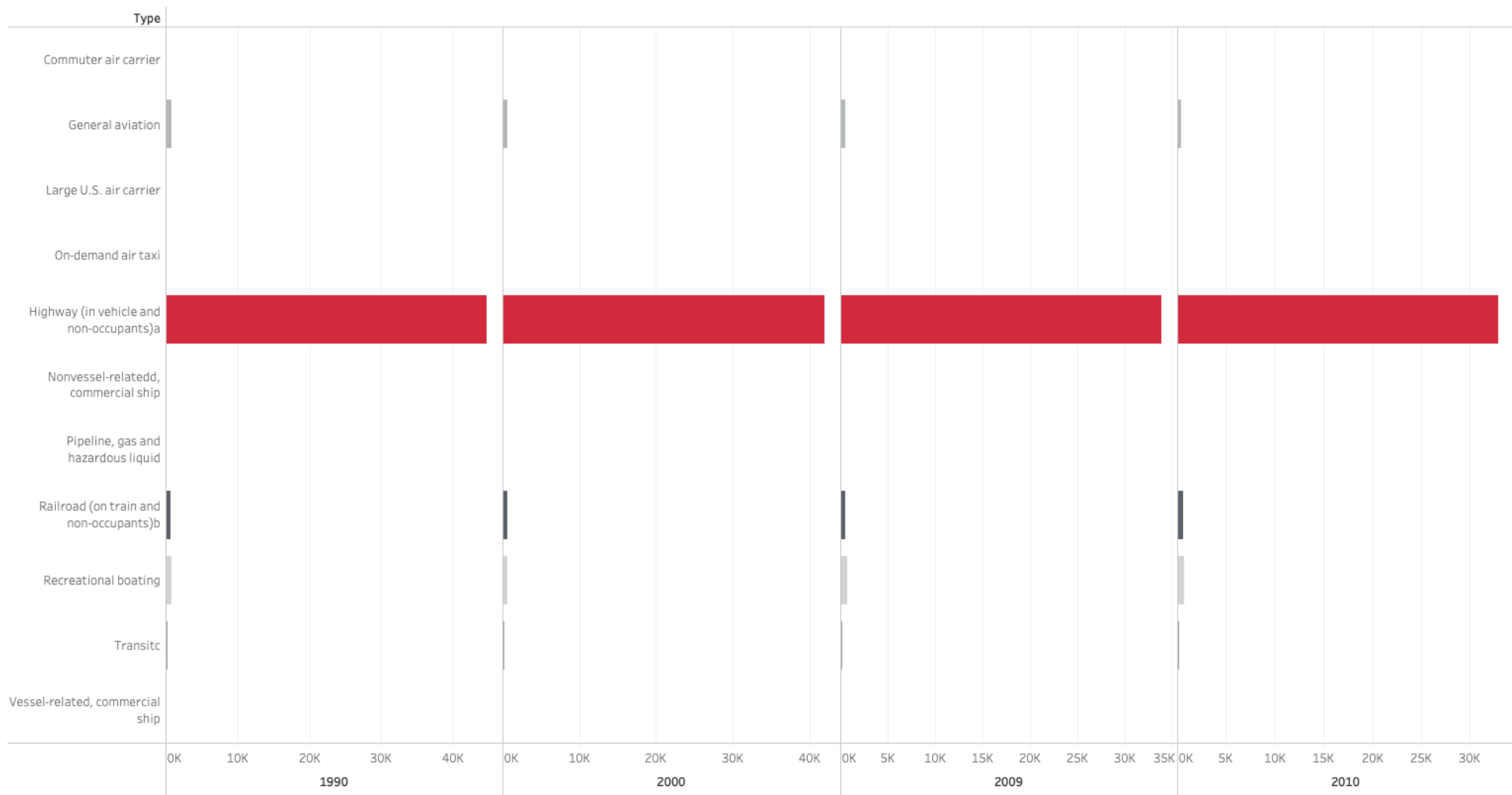
With the volume of air travel approaching pre-pandemic levels, there have been a lot of controversial news lately surrounding air travel and airline safety. There is this narrative (or truth?) that travelling by air is not as safe as what it's been painted to be.

So, Let's dive into the facts...

FACTS AND STATS

How does air transport compare with other modes of transportation?

The data as represented by the chart below, shows the fatalities classified per transportation mode for select years from 1990-2010. Overwhelmingly, transport via highway have the highest number of accidents compared to other modes of transportation. Air transport, as supported by the data, is still by far one of the safest, if not the safest, mode of transportation.

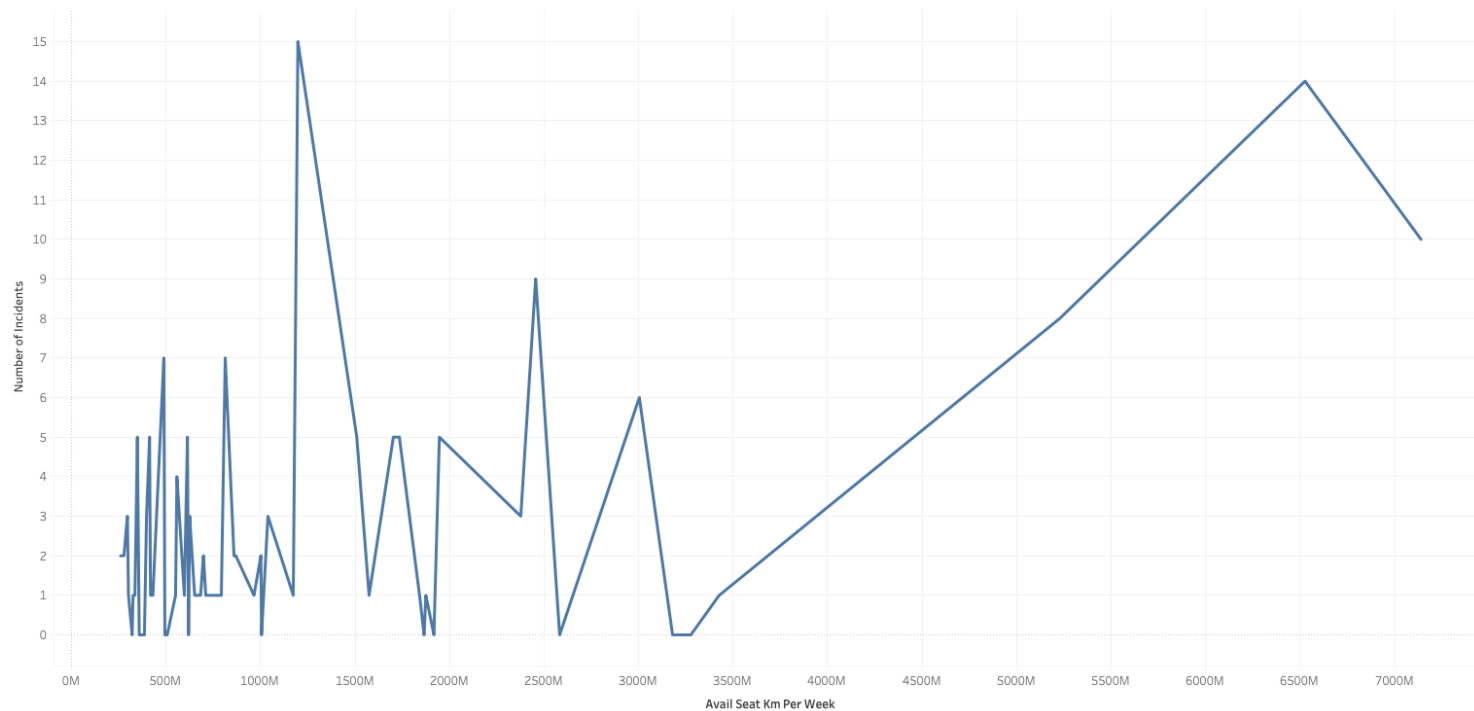


Transportation Fatalities by Mode: Select Years 1990-2010

Source: Bureau of Transportation Statistics

What are the chances of being in a fatal accident when flying?

Before diving into the chances of being in a fatal accident when flying, it is important to see how many airline incidents, fatal and non-fatal, occur based on a certain measure. The data below shows the number of airline incidents per available seat (km per week) from 1985-2014. Clearly, the number of incidents per available seat (km per week) is extremely low. If we were to round off the data within a decimal point or two, the value would be zero or approaching zero.

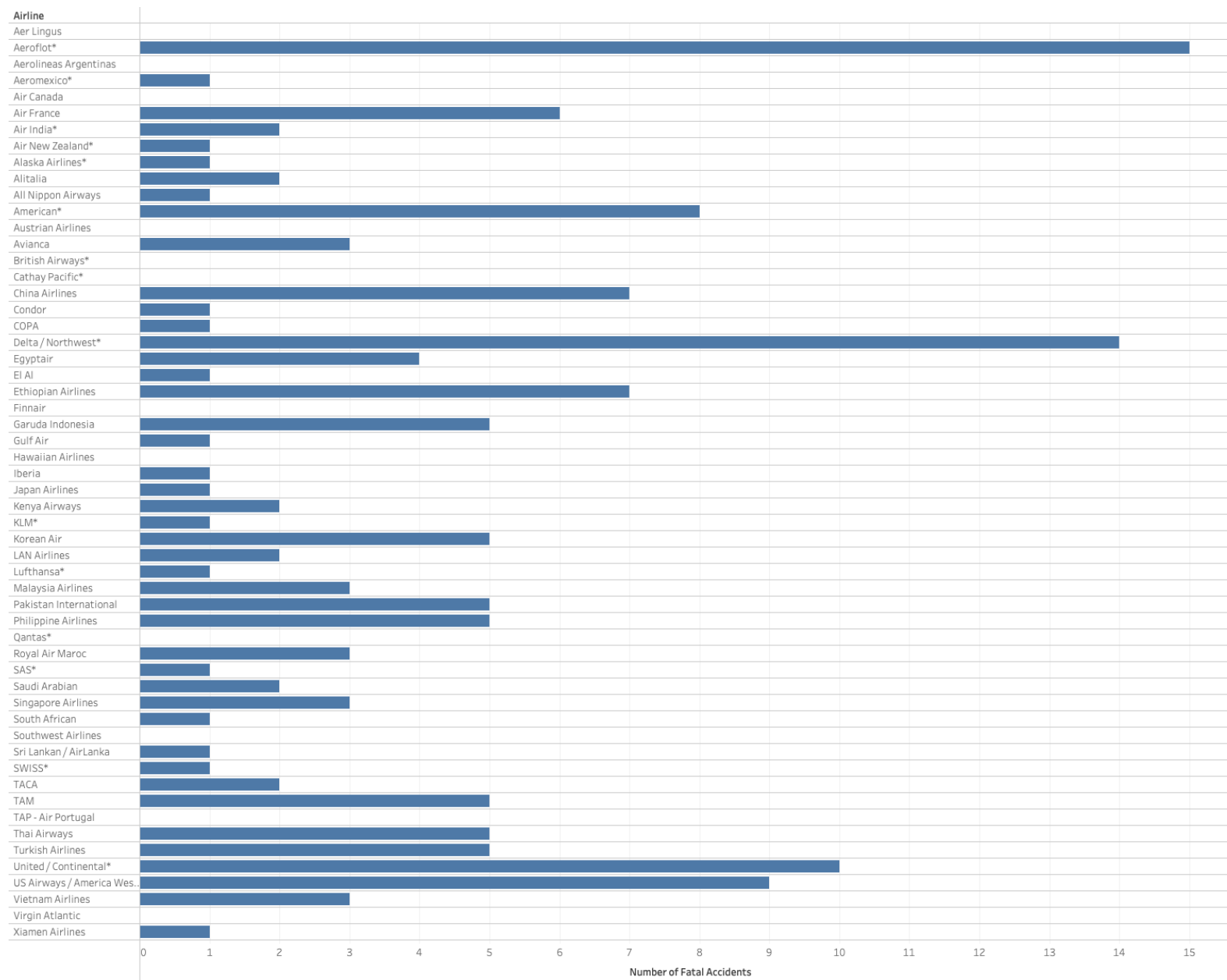


Airline Incidents per available seat (km per week): 1985-2014

Source: airline-safety.csv

Now to answer the question regarding your chances of being in a fatal accident when flying, let's look at the number of fatal accidents from 1985-2014.

A look at the data for different airlines from 1985-2014 shows that worldwide airline fatal accidents are extremely low. For example, for Aeroflot, which has one of the highest total numbers of fatal accidents within the period examined, averages out to 0.52 accidents per year. This measure is negligible if you compare it to how many road accidents occur not just for a year but every single day.



Worldwide Airline Fatal Accidents: 1985-2014

Source: airline-safety.csv

CONCLUSION

Is it possible to be in an accident when flying? **YES**

What's the likelihood of an airline accident? **Highly unlikely**

Is air transport unsafe? **NO, in fact it is by far, one of the safest modes of transportation.**

As with anything being presented, it is important to look at **FACTS AND STATS.**

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Sources:

1. airline-safety.csv
2. Bureau of Transportation Statistics. <https://www.bts.gov/>.