

Flight or Flight

Have you begun planning the next trip? Is it going to be lounging on the white beaches of Mauritius or hiking the cloud kissing Alps, or strolling the streets of Paris gazing at the Eiffel tower with a buttery croissant in one hand, or rowing on a boat in the Niles?

Wherever you choose to go, the most convenient way to reach your dream destination is flying. In just a few hours, you can be on a different time zone, different climatic conditions, from sunlight to moonlight, from boredom to excitement, from burnout to rejuvenation.

But wait, did someone say flying is risky?

Yes, there have been fatal incidents in the past. For instance, In January 2021, a Boeing 737-200 Sriwijaya Air crashed, moments after taking off Jakarta, killing 62 people on board including the crew. In March 2022, another Boeing 737-800 China Eastern Airplane crashed killing 132 people on board.

But shouldn't we look at the whole picture before we jump into conclusions?

The first successful powered aircraft developed in 1903 has come a long way, in terms of efficiency, capacity and in terms of being a safe mode of transport. The number of airplanes flying in the sky has seen a dramatic increase in the last 40 years. Before the pandemic in early 2020, there were almost 40M flights departing an airport around the world. That is a huge amount considering the number rose from a mere 10M in just 40 years. Fig 1.

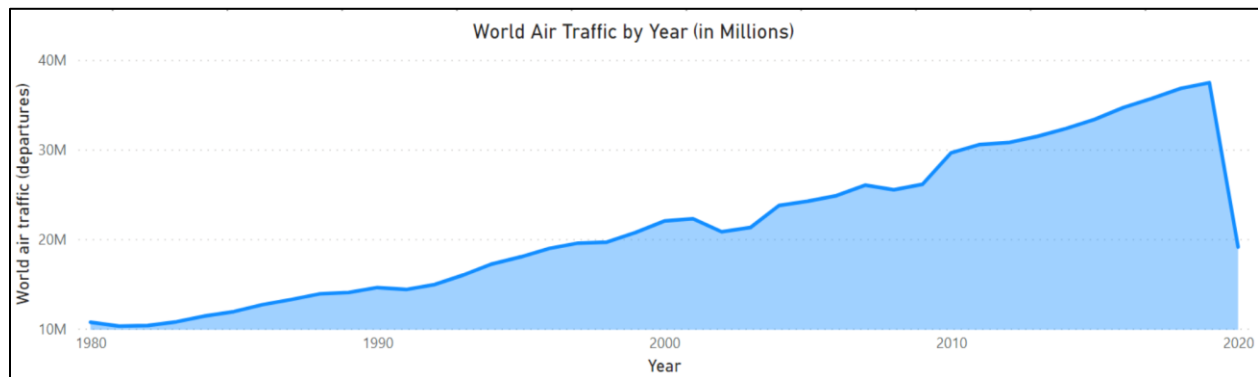


Figure 1: World traffic in Millions

Now compare that to the number of fatal incidents for every million flights in the past 40 years. Fig 2.

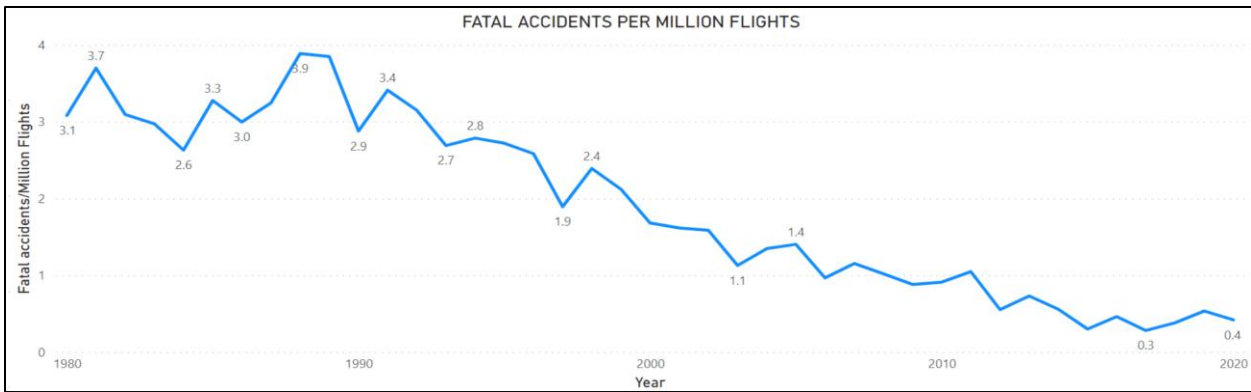


Figure 2: Fatal accidents per Million flights

In 2020, there were 0.4 fatal accidents for every million flights that were up in the air. Considering there are 40M flights around the world, this is a very miniscule number. This is only due to the advancements in aircraft technology over the years.

Of course, there’s no denying that even that miniscule number is scary. But do you think the other modes of transportation are then safer than flying? Consider this. 4000 people were killed in vehicular accidents in the year 2020, in Texas state alone. That more than the airplane fatalities from 2000-2014 which was just over 3000. Fig 3.

Would you then stop driving?

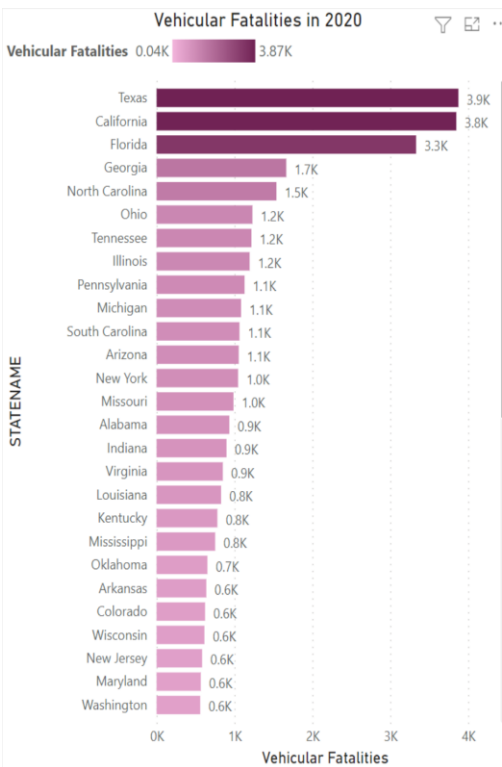


Figure 3: Vehicular Fatalities in US

In fact, Aircraft fatalities across the world is a mere 1.2% of vehicular fatalities in US alone.

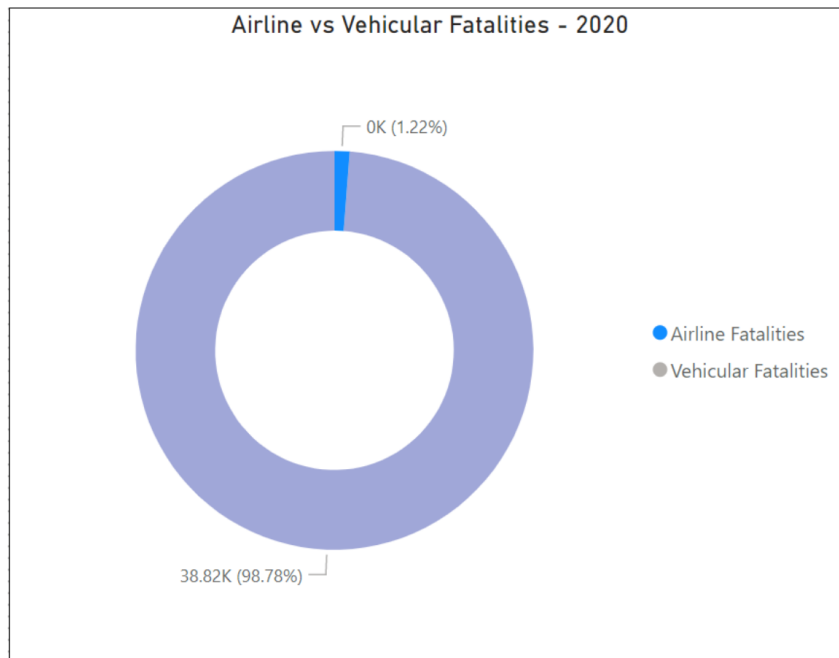


Figure 4: World traffic in Millions

Considering all this, isn't it obvious that aircraft is one the safe modes of transport, if not the safest?

So, what are you waiting for? Book that ticket and hop on the next flight to your dream destination. The service inside the flight is worth it too.

REFERENCES –

Accidents and Fatalities Pery Year -

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1SDp7p1y6m7N5xD5_fpOkYOrJvd68V7iy6etXy2cetb8/edit#gid=1448957446

Airline-safety

<https://github.com/fivethirtyeight/data/tree/master/airline-safety>

Fatality Analysis Reporting System

<https://www.nhtsa.gov/file-downloads?p=nhtsa/downloads/FARS/2020/National/>