



# Airline Safety and Public Concern: Is Flying Really Safer?

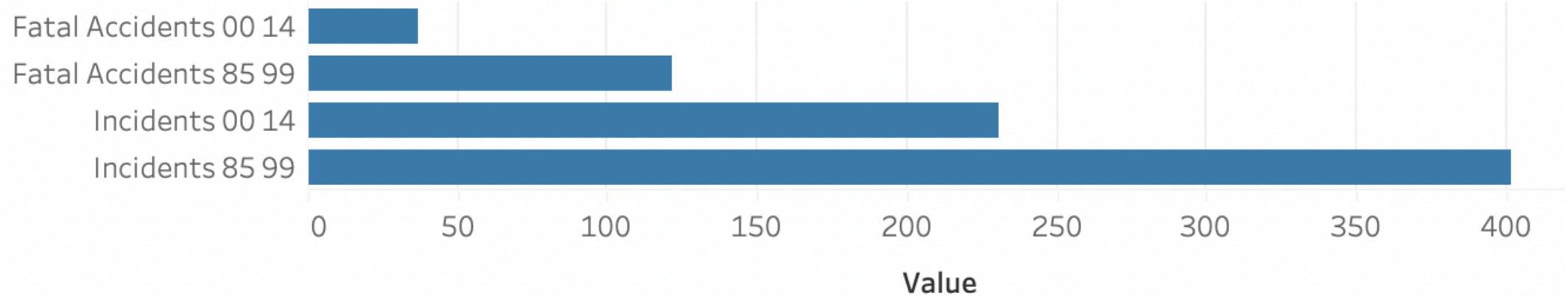
Megan Holford

DSC 640

Winter 2021-2022

There has been growing concern about air travel and particularly media sentiment wondering how safe it is. But data shows that air travel has become more safe than in previous years.

Comparison of Total Airplane Incidents to Fatal Airplane Accidents

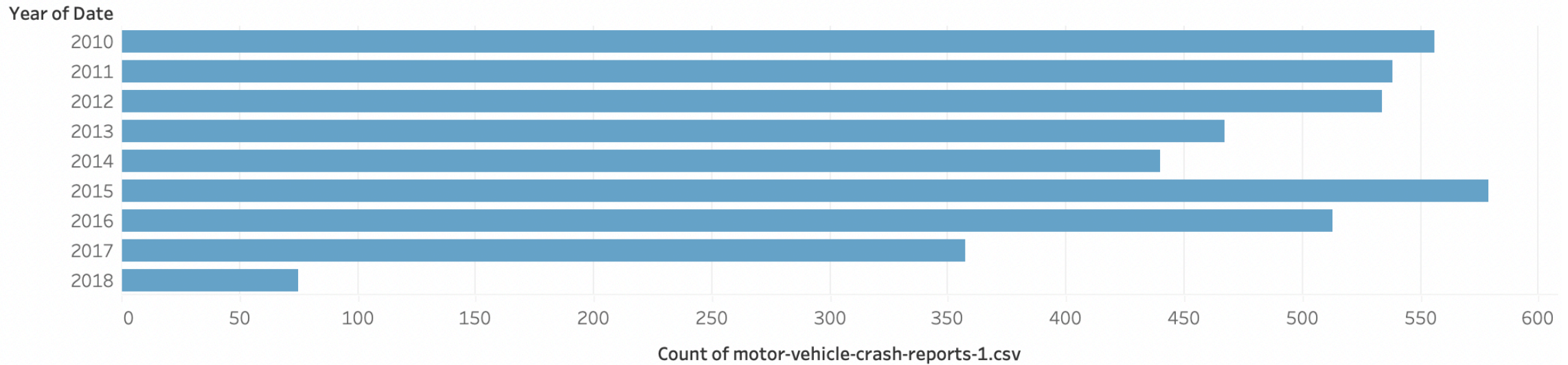


Based on this graph, we can see the total number of air travel incidents and fatal accidents from 1985 through 1999 and from 2000 to 2014. We can see the total number of both incidents and fatal accidents was reduced in 2000 through 2014 than in 1985 to 1999.

Comparatively, we can see how motor vehicle travel compares in the number of yearly incidents one city has.



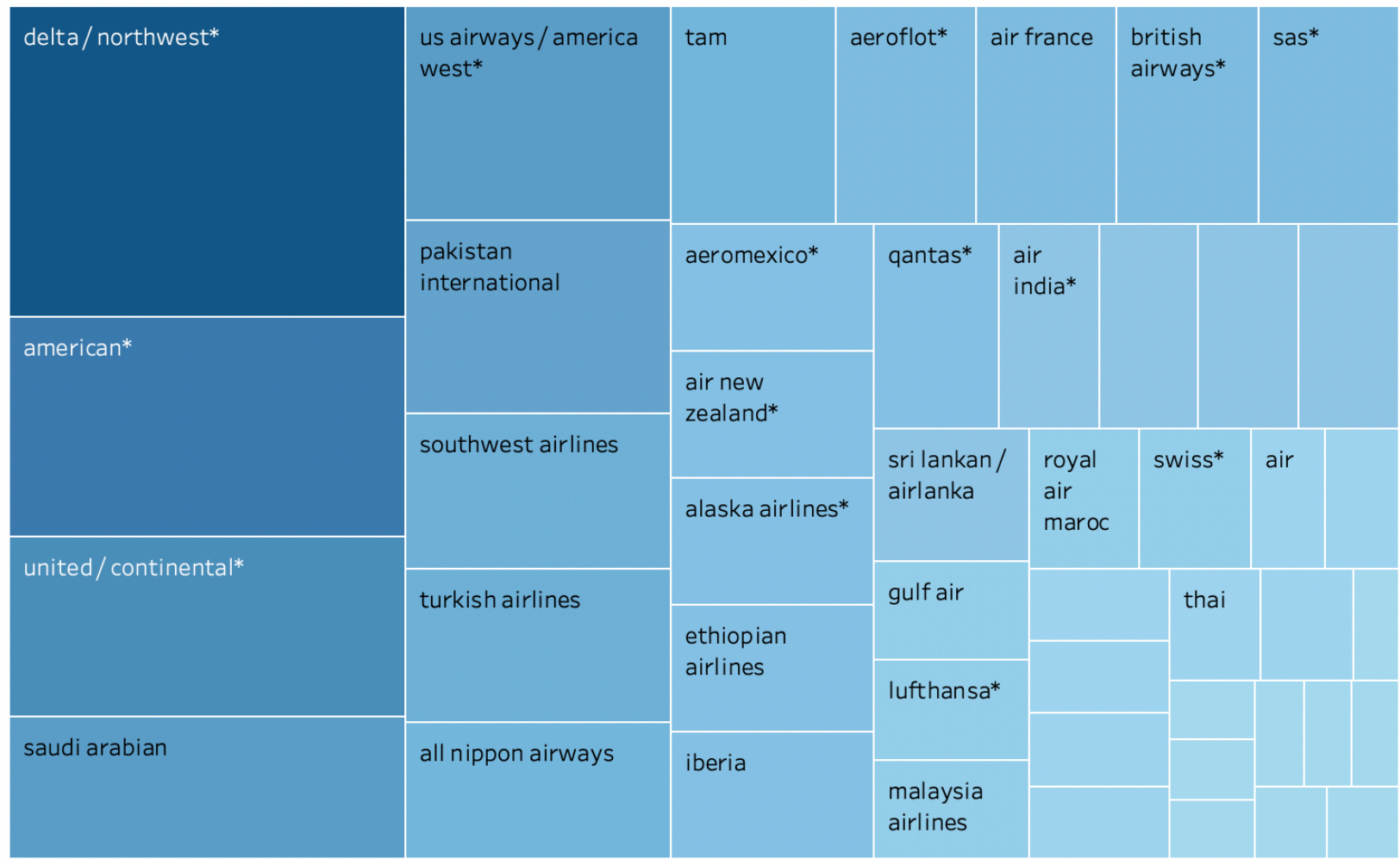
Number of Motor Vehicle Incidents by Year from 2010 to 2018 in Somerville, MA



This chart shows us the yearly number of motor vehicles incidents in one town every year. The number of yearly incidents for motor vehicles is significantly higher than those for airplanes.

# So, if there are more vehicle incidents than airplanes, why the sense of mistrust?

Total Number of Total Incidents by Airline from 2000 to 2014



This tree map shows the total number of incidents from 2000 to 2014 by airline. As we can see, many well known and popular US airlines make up a good portion of this chart, but these are the total incidents and are including non-fatal accidents as well. Even still, air travel has fewer accidents than vehicular travel.



We can see here that the number of fatalities and accidents had a decrease from the years 1985 to 1999 to the years 2000 to 2014, making air travel even safer than it used to be.

Number of Fatal Accidents  
per Airline 1985 to 1999

Airline	
aeroflot*	14
delta / northwest*	12
united / continental*	8
us airways / america west*	7
china airlines	6
american*	5
ethiopian airlines	5
korean air	5
air france	4
philippine airlines	4
thai airways	4
avianca	3
egyptair	3
garuda indonesia	3
pakistan international	3
royal air maroc	3
tam	3
turkish airlines	3
vietnam airlines	3
alitalia	2
lan airlines	2
saudi arabian	2
singapore airlines	2
aeromexico*	1
air india*	1

Number of Total Fatalities  
per Airline 1985 to 1999

Airline	
china airlines	535
japan airlines	520
korean air	425
delta / northwest*	407
air india*	329
avianca	323
united / continental*	319
saudi arabian	313
thai airways	308
egyptair	282
garuda indonesia	260
pakistan international	234
swiss*	229
us airways / america west*	224
vietnam airlines	171
ethiopian airlines	167
south african	159
iberia	148
aeroflot*	128
american*	101
tam	98
xiamen airlines	82
air france	79
philippine airlines	74
aeromexico*	64

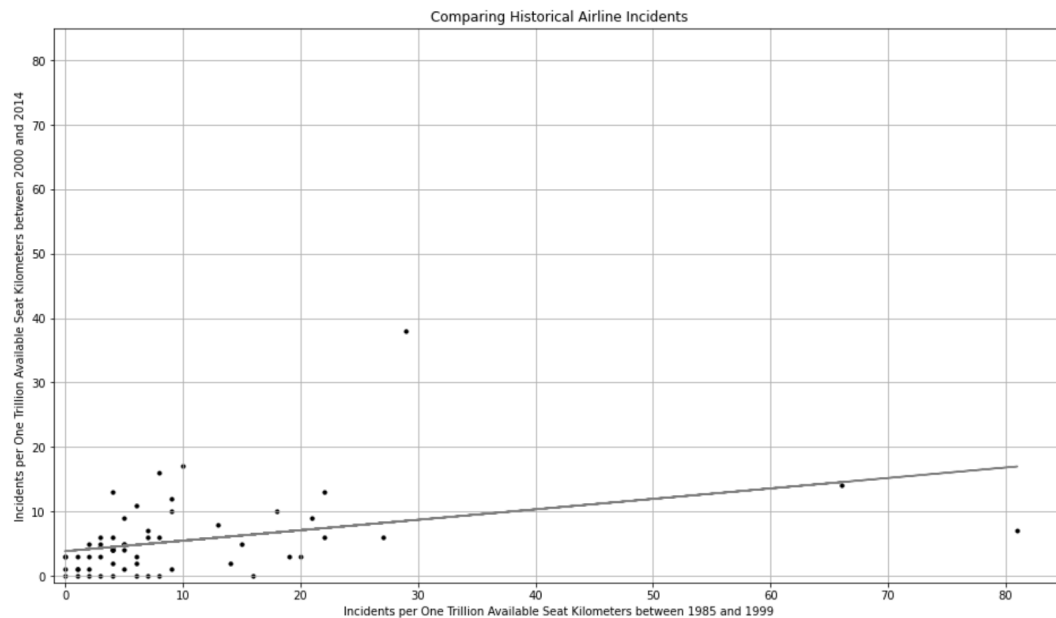
Number of Fatal Accidents  
per Airline 2000 to 2014

Airline	
american*	3
air france	2
delta / northwest*	2
ethiopian airlines	2
garuda indonesia	2
kenya airways	2
malaysia airlines	2
pakistan international	2
tam	2
turkish airlines	2
united / continental*	2
us airways / america west*	2
aeroflot*	1
air india*	1
air new zealand*	1
alaska airlines*	1
china airlines	1
egyptair	1
gulf air	1
philippine airlines	1
sas*	1
singapore airlines	1
taca	1
thai airways	1
aer lingus	0

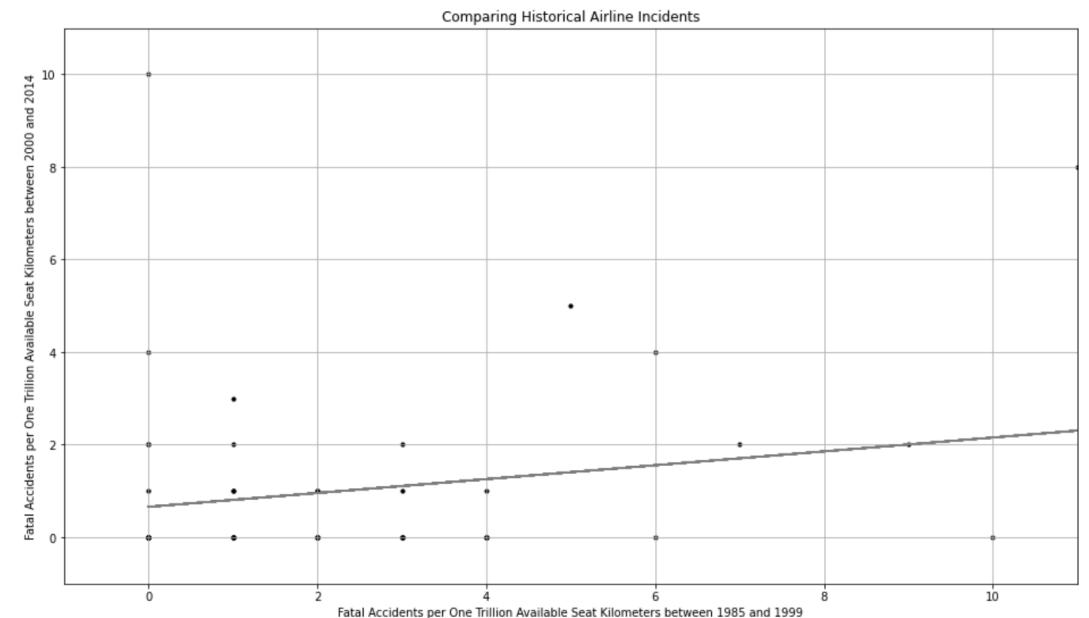
Number of Total Fatalities  
per Airline 2000 to 2014

Airline	
malaysia airlines	537
american*	416
air france	337
kenya airways	283
china airlines	225
tam	188
air india*	158
gulf air	143
sas*	110
united / continental*	109
ethiopian airlines	92
aeroflot*	88
alaska airlines*	88
turkish airlines	84
singapore airlines	83
delta / northwest*	51
pakistan international	46
us airways / america west*	23
garuda indonesia	22
egyptair	14
air new zealand*	7
taca	3
philippine airlines	1
thai airways	1
aer lingus	0

Based on the data, we can also look to see if there is a historical trend that may help predict future incidents or fatal accidents.



This is a graph representing the relationship of the number of incidents from 1985-1999 with 2000-2014.



This is a graph representing the relationship of the number of fatal accidents from 1985-1999 with 2000-2014.

Based on these graphs, we can see there is a slight correlation in the number of past incidents to future incidents, but there is no correlation showing for the number of fatal accidents.