

Association for Airline Passenger Rights (AAPR)

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Association for Airline Passenger Rights Hails DOT Tarmac Delay Rule Stellar Success; February 2011 Tarmac Delay Data Shows No Delays Longer than 3-Hours

Group asks airlines, “What Happened to Your Dire Predictions that Skies will Fall with Tarmac Delay Rule?”

WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 12, 2011) – The [Association for Airline Passenger Rights](http://www.flyfriendlyskies.com) (“AAPR”) today applauded the 3-hour tarmac delay rule enacted by the U.S. Department of Transportation (“DOT”) ten months ago, calling it a stellar success for airline consumers. Despite dire predictions by the airline industry, DOT’s common sense rule prohibiting U.S. air carriers from keeping an aircraft on the tarmac for longer than three hours without deplaning passengers, has ***not*** resulted in the “skies falling.” There were no flights with tarmac delays of more than three hours in February 2011.

Data filed with the Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS), a part of DOT’s Research and Innovative Technology Administration, showed there have been only 16 total tarmac delays of more than three hours reported from May 2010 through February 2011 by the airlines that file on-time performance data with DOT, compared to 664 reported from May 2009 through February 2010. In February, the carriers also reported that .0400 percent of their scheduled flights had tarmac delays of two hours or more, down from the .0600 percent reported in January 2011.¹

“When Secretary LaHood announced the 3-hour tarmac delay rule on December 21, 2009, airlines and their high powered lobbyists here in Washington made grim predictions that government ‘interference’ would result in massive delays and cancelled flights,” argued **Brandon M. Macsata**, Executive Director of the Association for Airline Passenger Rights. “They were not only wrong, but they were dead wrong.”

According to DOT, during February, when large parts of the country experienced severe winter weather, the carriers canceled 4.9 percent of their scheduled domestic flights, compared to 5.4 percent in February 2010 and 3.9 percent in January 2011. The number of canceled flights with tarmac delays of more than two hours increased only slightly, from 289 between May 2009 and February 2010 to 331 between May 2010 and February 2011. There were 19 canceled flights with tarmac delays of more than two hours in February 2011, down from 21 in February 2010.²

The regulation implemented key provisions of the Passenger Bill of Rights – and now allows stranded passengers to deplane after three hours on the tarmac. U.S. air carriers operating domestic flights are also required to provide food and water within two hours of being delayed, maintain working lavatories and when necessary, provide appropriate medical attention.

For more information about the Association for Airline Passenger Rights or the tarmac delay rule, please visit www.flyfriendlyskies.com or contact AAPR directly at info@flyfriendlyskies.com.

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¹ U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary, “No Tarmac Delays Longer Than Three Hours in February,” April 5, 2011.

² U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of the Secretary, “No Tarmac Delays Longer Than Three Hours in February,” April 5, 2011.

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About AAPR: The Association for Airline Passenger Rights is a 501(c)(4) tax-exempt, nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote fairer customer service and accessibility standards in the airline industry and to improve passenger satisfaction. AAPR was formed in response to growing dissatisfaction among American consumers toward the airline industry.