

Aviation professor expects boost in fliers for the holidays

November 2 2016, by Brian L. Huchel

Increases in summer airline travel could be an indicator of things to come for flying during the holiday season.

The countdown is on as the [airline industry](#) prepares for the influx of passengers beginning in the days before Thanksgiving and continuing through Christmas.

Sarah Hubbard, an assistant professor in Purdue University's School of Aviation and Transportation Technology, said a four percent increase in travel already this year is a substantial jump for the industry.

"Travel was up this summer. The number of passengers and the passenger miles of travel were higher in 2016 than we've seen in past years," she said.

In addition, she noted legislation passed by Congress during the summer helped shorten long lines and reduce security wait times. Airports and airlines have worked with the Transportation Security Administration to improve service. The TSA has collaborated with American Airlines, Delta Airlines and United Airlines to test new screening technologies and modernize security checkpoints at selected airports.

"Hopefully we won't see the dramatic wait times that we had late last spring, " she said. "But, of course, holidays are busy travel times so everybody should always allow some additional time."

Hubbard said delays can sometimes be airport-specific, pointing out that Indianapolis International Airport doesn't typically have the security delays experienced at larger airports such as Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, although a weather delay at a major airport can ripple through the system and cause delays at many other airports.

Technology is aiding travelers more, Hubbard said, with apps now available to help keep track of wait times at specific airports, as well as provide information about how to get through the airport terminal, and where to find specific food or other airport services.

"Technology has provided some innovation that hopefully will keep things in check," she said.

Provided by Purdue University

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