

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS
OFFICE OF AIRLINE INFORMATION**

**TITLE 14 CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS PART 234
TECHNICAL REPORTING DIRECTIVE #29 - MISHANDLED BAGGAGE**

ISSUE DATE: December 26, 2017

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2018

The Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) is issuing this Technical Reporting Directive to update the list of reporting air carriers, provide instructions for carriers on how to report Mishandled Baggage data for air transportation carried out in 2018, and make clear to reporting air carriers that the use of technologies to alert travelers when checked baggage arrives late does not relieve a carrier of its obligation to report those bags as mishandled.

This Technical Reporting Directive does not address changes to the reporting of mishandled baggage that will take effect on January 1, 2019, because of two final rules issued in November 2016. BTS will issue another Technical Reporting Directive on Mishandled Baggage in 2018 to address those changes.

For air transportation carried out from January 1, 2018, to December 31, 2018, the reporting carrier threshold for Mishandled Baggage remains at one percent of Industry Scheduled-Service Domestic Passenger Revenues; these reporting carriers only file Mishandled Baggage reports for flights that they operate; and the reporting matrix remains the Number of Mishandled Baggage Reports per domestic enplaned passengers.

- I. Introduction
- II. Applicability
- III. Reporting of Mishandled Baggage
- IV. Submission of Reports
- V. Record Retention

I. Introduction

Part 234 of the U.S. Department of Transportation's (Department's) Regulations, *Airline Service Quality Performance Reports (ASQP)*, requires certain U.S. air carriers to submit mishandled baggage information to the Department. These data are used to monitor each carrier's baggage handling, and to provide information to consumers. The mishandled baggage information is filed monthly by electronic means with the required certification and transmittal letter.

II. Applicability

1. Each reporting air carrier providing scheduled domestic passenger operations will file “Mishandled Baggage” data in 2018 for flights it operates if its share of the industry’s total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues is at least one percent, based on Form 41 data for the 12 months ending December 31.

2. For calendar year 2018, 13 air carriers reached the reporting threshold of \$906,261,000 in domestic scheduled passenger revenues (one percent of total domestic scheduled-service passenger revenues). The revenues were measured for the 12-month period ending December 31, 2016. These carriers must submit mishandled baggage data to the Department for calendar year 2018.

REPORTING AIR CARRIERS

Alaska
American
Delta
Envoy
ExpressJet
Frontier
Hawaiian
JetBlue
SkyWest
Southwest
Spirit
United
Virgin America

Changes in reporting air carriers will be made as necessary by the Director, Office of Airline Information (OAI) under authority delegated in §§ 385.19 of the Department’s regulations.

3. The reportable flight operations for which data must be submitted to the Department are all scheduled nonstop domestic passenger operations, including a mechanically delayed flight, to or from any reportable airport, operated by a reporting air carrier to or from any reportable airport.

4. In addition to any carrier included in paragraph II.2 of this Technical Directive, a carrier may voluntarily become a reporting carrier and submit Mishandled Baggage data for its reportable flights for every nonstop domestic passenger flight it holds out to the public pursuant to a published schedule, provided that the Director, Office of Airline Information (OAI) is advised beforehand. Such voluntary data must be submitted for a minimum of 12 consecutive months. The voluntary submission must meet the exact reporting specifications set forth in this directive. Volunteering carriers that wish to discontinue reporting after one year must advise the Director, OAI, a minimum of 30 days before discontinuance, so that the necessary changes can be made to the Department's data programs.

5. A reporting carrier described in section II.2 and a voluntary reporting carrier described in section II.4 must include all delayed baggage reports filed with the carrier in the monthly mishandled baggage reports it submits to the Department, regardless of how the passenger first learns that the bag is delayed. The Department is aware that some airlines are implementing new baggage tracking systems that alert passengers when their bags will be arriving late. These new systems benefit passengers by providing them prompt and up-to-date information about the status of their bags and by connecting them with their bags without needing to visit the baggage claim areas or the baggage service offices. When using these technologies, passengers are often advised to click on a link provided in the late bag notification to set up free delivery. By filling in the required information for baggage delivery, passengers are acknowledging the receipt of the notification that their bags are delayed and, in the Department's view, filing a mishandled baggage report with the airline. The use of new baggage tracking technologies to alert travelers when checked baggage arrives late does not relieve a carrier of its obligation to report those bags as mishandled.¹

III. Reporting of Mishandled Baggage

1. *ASQP – Mishandled Baggage Report Certification*

A certification statement for the Mishandled Baggage Report is required identifying an appropriate official of the reporting carrier. The certification statement will read:

I, (Name) and (Title), of the above named carrier, certify that the Mishandled Baggage Report file is to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, correct and a complete report for the period stated.

Month and Year of Data:

Number of Domestic Scheduled Passengers Enplaned:

Number of Mishandled Baggage Reports Filed:

Date:

Name (Please Print or Type):

Signature:

Once signed, the *Mishandled Baggage Report Certification* must be published as an electronic "portable document format" file format, for uploading to the eSubmit application.

The portable document format file **MUST BE** indicated when naming the file, by using the letters [PDF] or [pdf] following the file name, as the file name extension. You must have Adobe Reader software downloaded on your computer in order to "save as/print" your document as a 'pdf' file.

¹ If a carrier submitted mishandled baggage data to the Department previously that did not include delayed baggage incidents where the passenger did not visit the baggage claim area or the baggage service offices, but instead, completed an online form, it must resubmit the updated mishandled baggage data with this information included.

While the file name is flexible and may be determined by the individual air carrier, the portable document format (pdf) file format is required, as outlined in Accounting and Reporting Directive No. 307 entitled, *Submitting Airline Data via the Internet*:

<https://www.bts.gov/topics/airlines-and-airports/accounting-and-reporting-directives>

Suggested file name: XX201003-234mbrCert.pdf

Suggested file name: XX201003-234mbr.csv

Sample Record Format: XX,2010,03,8004000,35000

2. ***ASQP – Mishandled Baggage Report (MBR) Data File***

Field Description	Data Type	Length	Comments	Sample Data
Carrier code	Character	2	Two letter IATA code	XX
Year of Data	Numeric	4	Year (CCYY)	2010
Month of Data	Numeric	2	Month (MM)	03
Number of Domestic Scheduled Passengers Enplaned	Numeric	Varies		8004000
Number of Mishandled Baggage Reports (MBRs) Filed with Carrier	Numeric	Varies		35000

Number of Domestic Scheduled Passengers Enplaned: All enplaned scheduled domestic passengers are counted, both revenue and non-revenue passengers are included in this total.

Number of Mishandled Baggage Reports (MBRs) Filed with Carrier: Carriers are required to report all domestic reports of mishandled checked baggage, including delayed, lost, stolen, pilfered, and damaged baggage. Carriers must count an MBR even when the MBR does not result in a claim for compensation.

What should be reported as an MBR?

Any report filed by a passenger regarding mishandled baggage, whether or not immediately recorded by the carrier, must be reported to DOT. An MBR resolved within 30 minutes, or with the arrival of the next flight, is still reportable to DOT, and should not be filtered out. The Mishandled Baggage Report sent to DOT should include, for example, reports filed by a passenger even if the passenger had agreed to a voluntary separation from his/her baggage, courtesy tracer reports, baggage improperly checked by skycaps, baggage claimed by the wrong passenger, and baggage delayed because of security.

Even if it was determined that the carrier was not at fault, an MBR must be counted in the carrier's submission to DOT if the passenger filed an MBR with the carrier. Also, carriers should include informal reports taken while a search was made of the carousels.

What should not be reported as an MBR to DOT?

Carriers should not include MBRs submitted for charter operations, MBRs submitted by code-share passengers that did not actually travel on a flight operated by the reporting air carrier (also, carriers must not report to DOT any MBR involving an itinerary where a code-sharing partner provides the final segment of the transportation), MBRs submitted for carry-on baggage, and MBRs submitted by international travelers even if the international traveler had a domestic leg on his or her trip, and MBRs submitted for non-domestic operations. Domestic operations encompass operations between the 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands and the possessions of the United States. Carriers should also exclude MBRs submitted by passengers travelling on separate tickets on different airlines, or on a single ticket for travel on different carriers that do not have a baggage transfer agreement.

IV. Submission of Reports

1. For more information regarding submission of reports refer to Accounting and Reporting Directive No. 307 entitled, *Submitting Airline Data via the Internet*:

<https://www.bts.gov/topics/airlines-and-airports/accounting-and-reporting-directives>

For assistance, carriers should e-mail ontime.support@dot.gov

The Air Travel Consumer Report is a product of the Office of Secretary's Aviation Consumer Protection Division. Questions concerning this publication should be directed to:

Mindaugas Lescinskas
Aviation Industry Analyst
Aviation Consumer Protection Division
Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings
Office of the General Counsel
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

202-366-9990

2. Due Dates. The due date for the Mishandled-Baggage Report is 15 days after the applicable reporting month, i.e., data for the month of March is due by April 15. If the 15th day falls on a weekend or Federal holiday, the due date will be the next workday.
3. Enforcement. Penalties for late filing or noncompliance with these reporting requirements will be assessed in accordance with 49 U.S.C. 46310.
4. Missing or Incomplete Records. Any carrier subject to this directive, which does not file the required data for any period, or files incomplete data, will submit a sworn statement of an

officer that the carrier was unable to provide the data because it did not have and could not obtain the necessary records. That statement, as well as the veracity of the information and the data submitted, will be subject to 18 U.S.C. 1001, regarding criminal penalties for false statements made to a government agency. The statement shall be filed with the Director, Office of Airline Information, at the address below, three days prior to the due date.

William Chadwick, Jr.
Director, Office of Airline Information
Bureau of Transportation Statistics RTS-42, E-34
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue SE
Washington, DC 20590

202 366-4405
Otime.support@dot.gov

5. Special Circumstances. Requests for waivers, exceptions, extensions, or other considerations shall be submitted in writing to the Director, Office of Airline Information, at the address in paragraph 4 above.

V. Records Retention

The Mishandled-Baggage Report is a statistical report. The record retention requirements for statistical reports are governed by 14 CFR Part 249, "Preservation of Air Carrier Records" of the Department's Regulations. Specifically, § 249.20-6 requires the information supporting a statistical report to be maintained by the carrier for three years.

Questions regarding this technical directive should be addressed to otime.support@dot.gov



W.A. Chadwick, Jr.
Director, Office of Airline Information
Bureau of Transportation Statistics
U.S. Department of Transportation