

Airline Reservations Triple-Headed Problem for Aeronautics Board

Overbooking of Flights, Failure To 'Show' Cited

Washington - UPI - The Civil Aeronautics Board is wrestling with a triple-headed problem having to do with airline reservations.

Problem one: Airlines which "overbook" flights - making more reservations for a flight than there are seats.

Problem two: Airlines which oversell flights - actually selling more tickets than there are seats.

Problem three: "No-show" passengers - people who make reservations but fail to show up for a flight without any cancellation notice.

Problems intertwined

These problems are very much intertwined. If it were not for the "no show" problem, there would be little trouble with overbooking and overselling. The blunt truth is that some airlines have been forced to overbook in sheer self-defense against no-shows. The CAB currently is conducting a "fact-finding, not disciplinatory" investigation of these three major headaches to see what, if anything, can or should be done.

The 12 major trunk carriers have submitted detailed accounts of their traffic for two seven-day periods. The most recent period hasn't been analyzed yet, but the first one provided eye-opening statistics. They showed that in those seven days, the airlines:

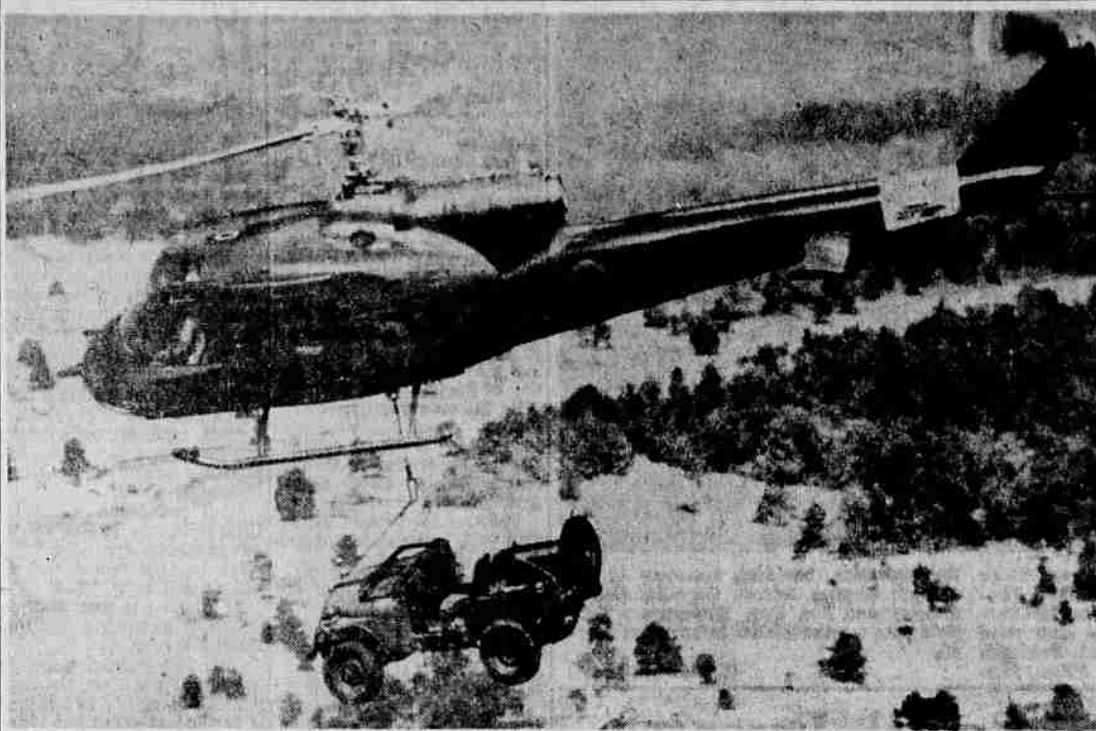
- Carried 723,000 passengers.
- Reported 71,000 no-shows.
- Overbooked 6,144 seats.
- Oversold 518 seats.

The 71,000 no-shows sum up the whole problem of overbooking and overselling. One out of 10 passengers simply failed to use a reservation and never let the airline know about it.

Penalty In Effect

Several years ago, the airlines put into effect a \$3 penalty against "no-shows" - the money was deducted from refunds on unused tickets if reservations had not been cancelled before flight time.

The penalty worked for awhile. The percentage of no-shows dropped from a peak of 14 per cent in 1956 to only 5 per cent the following year. But the penalty was abandoned in 1958 because (1) too many passengers resented it and (2) some airlines weren't



CARRIES BIG LOADS-The Bell turbine-powered Iroquois helicopter demonstrates its ability to carry big loads as it carries a 2,600 jeep. The helicopter has an artist's drawing of Australian military markings as this is the helicopter that the Australian government has ordered from Bell. The government has ordered \$4 million worth of the aircraft.

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(UPI Telephoto)

enforcing it. Since then, the no-show percentage has climbed to as high as 10 per cent of total reservations.

Mohawk Airlines considered the problem serious enough to recently propose that it would refuse refunds to no-shows who failed to show up for flights during peak traffic periods. The CAB turned down the proposal as "too harsh" but expressed sympathy with Mohawk's motives.

The no-show headache prompted a certain amount of deliberate overbooking, although only one airline has publicly admitted the practice. From long experience, the airlines can predict almost within one seat how many passengers holding reservations actually will show up for a specific flight on a specific day. And they overbook flights in accordance with how many cancellations and no-shows they can expect. One airline called this "SCOTS" - "scientific control of turnover space."

Unhappy Customers

Occasionally, however, this long-range projection breaks down and an airline finds itself with one or more unhappy

customers holding confirmed reservations with no seat space available.

A comparatively small proportion of overbooking is deliberate. Most cases stem (1) from clerical errors or (2) travel agencies which validate airline tickets without checking first to see if space is available. And there is plenty of room for error. During the one-week period analyzed by the CAB, the 12 major airlines reported handling 986,000 reservation requests and confirming 858,000 of them.

There also is a potential danger of overbooking in the normal reservations turnover - cancellations and other changes. One airline told the CAB that in a one-week period 40 per cent of its confirmed reservations were changed or cancelled - an obvious source for error. The industry average for that same week was nearly 30 per cent.

Electronic reservation systems are eliminating most of the unintentional overbooking. And it should be pointed out that overselling, not overbooking, is the most serious "crime." An airline usually can catch and/or correct an

overbooking incident before a flight takes off. But when too many tickets actually are sold there is real trouble.

CAB official E. Bruce Miller, who is handling the overbooking investigation, frankly admits sympathy with the airlines' problems.

"It's obvious that some of them take calculated risks in overbooking," he pointed out, "but they have a real economic headache with this no-show problem. At this stage

of the investigation, I couldn't begin to guess what we'll decide to do. We have to take the airlines' side of the story into account as well as the comparatively few passengers who are inconvenienced by overbooking and overselling."

There still is a humorous side to the whole problem. The CAB has heard of one airline which through a series of clerical errors oversold a Chicago to Washington flight by a whopping 18 seats.

It was the last flight of the day and all 18 extra passengers showed up along with all those holding the other reservations. The ramp agent let everyone on board and for a while the cabin looked like the Oklahoma land rush.

Finally an airline senior agent boarded the plane and made an announcement:

"Folks," he said, "frankly we've goofed and oversold this flight by 18 seats. But if 18 people will volunteer to get off, we'll give them \$50 each, treat them to dinner and a night club, put them up at a fine hotel and guarantee them space on the first flight tomorrow morning."

He was nearly knocked down in the rush.

Dr. McKinney Author Of Magazine Article

Ashland - "Is the Earth Science Curriculum Up to Date?" is the title of an article by Dr. William M. McKinney of the Southern Oregon college social science division, which has been accepted for publication by Frances J. Lanier, editor of "The Science Teacher."

"The Science Teacher" is published by the National Science Teachers association, Washington, D. C., and is one of the foremost magazines in the field of science education with a circulation extending to every state and to nearly every foreign country.

Wolf Hunters Howl at Special Bounty Laws

Sand Springs, Okla. - UPI - The 100,000 wolf hunters in the United States are a special breed, bent on howling when legislators take pot shots at their game.

To the hunter, the wolf (a general name for coyotes, prairie wolves and red foxes) is an animal that feasts on rabbits, rodents and dead flesh and lives to be hunted.

Many farmers disagree and say the wolf is a predator and kills chickens, sheep and young calves. The hunter admits some livestock are killed but blames perverted wolves, not the general breed.

Legislators, yielding to the farmers, pass laws which give bounties and allows poisoning and often they hire professional trappers to kill the wolves.

Wolf hunters balk at this legislation and say that only the perverted or killer wolf should be trapped, not the entire wolf population.

George Everett, managing editor of "Hunters' Horn," the wolf hunter's magazine, said, "Wolves are valuable in controlling the rabbit and rodent population. If the individual killer animal could be destroyed, the benefits would be greatly enhanced."

A Kansas State university

study shows the coyote is worth \$11 a year to the farmer for controlling rabbits that eat grass and hay and worth another \$10 for the control of rats and mice that eat feeds and grain.

"The average benefit derived from coyotes in controlling rabbits and rodents exceeds the average losses due to predation on poultry and livestock."

Although the wolf hunters uses such intellectual, documented arguments, his real purpose is to preserve the hunt.

Held at Night

It is held at night when the wolf is on the prowl. The dogs, high-bred American fox hounds, are loosed on the countryside and start sniffing their quarry.

When one hound hits a trail the wolf hunters' "music" starts.

The dog yelps and other dogs swarm on the trail and join the chase. As other hounds catch the scent, the "music" increases from the solo to the range of a cappella choir.

The chase ends when the coyote or prairie wolf is cornered, fought and killed. The

cagey red fox generally escapes the hound pack and retreats to its den for a chase some other night.

The main joy of the hunter is the "music" as he seldom sees a kill and the wolf's carcass is nearly worthless.

But the "music" is enough and when the legislators get together and start plotting against the wolf-wolf hunters are well-known for the howl they create.



Higher Salaries for Judges Approved

Salem - UPI - A bill to give Circuit Court judges and Superior Court justices what a supporter agreed is a "major raise" passed the House, 52-8, Wednesday.

Rep. John Dellenbaeck (R-Medford) said raises from \$15,000 to \$16,500 for Circuit Court judges and from \$16,000 to \$19,000 for Supreme Court justices are needed to attract and keep qualified men.

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63"	9.98	17.98	25.49	32.98	37.98	47.98	56.98
72"	10.49	18.98	25.98	33.98	38.98	48.98	57.98
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