



What Trump's Air Traffic Initiative Means For Travelers

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"For too long, our country has tolerated unacceptable delays and long wait times on the tarmac," President Donald Trump said on Monday as he officially announced a plan to privatize air-traffic control.

Trump's plan notes:

"America's growing aviation system demands a new, independent, non-government organization to operate our Nation's airspace. The new entity should have access to capital markets in order to spur capital investment, technology adoption, and innovation faster, more effectively, and securely. Over the last 20 years, more than 50 countries have already successfully transitioned their ATC operations."

What Does This Move Mean For Travelers?

1. A Modernized System Should Cut Back On The Dreaded Airline Delays: While the current system does have a clean record, it uses extremely dated technology that even includes "physically passing paper strips with an individual's aircraft information and flight plan from controller to controller," according to ABC News.

Trump said the move should "reduce wait times, increased route efficiency and [create] far fewer delays."

2. Flights Will Be Safer: The Canadian airline system has been one of the models the United States has used when deciding how to approach privatizing their system. Chris Edwards, an editor at the Cato Institute, told Forbes, "Nav Canada runs one of the safest systems in the world, and it has won three International Air Transport Association (IATA) Eagle Awards as the world's best ATC provider."

The head of Nav Canada, John Crichton, believes, "This business of ours has evolved long past the time when government should be in it ... Governments are not suited to run ... dynamic, high-tech, 24-hour businesses."

Since Nav Canada privatized, it now handles 50 percent more traffic and has a higher safety rate.

3. Will It Reduce Or Raise Traveler Costs? While most domestic carriers support Trump's plan, **Delta Air Lines, Inc. DAL** is not fully convinced it would reduce costs for travelers. A study released by Delta highlighted:

“Proponents have claimed that privatization would lead to cost savings for consumers. But no evidence has yet been produced to show that privatization would reduce costs. In fact, nations that have privatized ATC have seen operational costs increase at a much higher rate than has been seen in the US under the FAA.”

However, it is notable traveler costs have fallen in Canada since they chose to privatize air traffic control.

Overall, this heavily-supported move should help drive the United States to create a much more efficient air traffic control should benefit both airlines and travelers.