

# Trans States Airline's Contingency Plan for Lengthy Tarmac Delay

## OVERVIEW

Before delays occur, Trans States Airlines (Trans States) has a comprehensive plan designed to forecast and adjust to operational challenges and minimize lengthy delays while passengers are on board the aircraft. The System Operations Control (SOC) at Trans States' headquarters is responsible for the daily execution of this plan, while keeping in mind the health and safety of our customers.

The Department of Transportation's (DOT) tarmac delay rule establishes time limits for tarmac delays. Trans States' plan meets or exceeds all limits imposed by this ruling. Trans States has developed a detailed plan, with established trigger points, to account for those times when unforeseen constraints have caused taxi delays.

The following exceptions to the time limits apply to domestic and international flights:

- Safety or security reasons
- Air Traffic Control (ATC) advises the pilot-in-command that returning to the terminal would disrupt airport operations

## PLAN REQUIREMENTS

Trans States' contingency plan assures that Trans States has sufficient resources and will meet the requirements of the DOT for extended tarmac delays, including diversions. Delayed departure aircraft will begin to return to a gate or another suitable disembarkation point no later than three hours for domestic flights and no later than four hours for international flights after the main aircraft door has closed in preparation for departure. Trans States will not permit an aircraft to remain on the tarmac for more than three hours before allowing passengers to deplane for domestic arrival flights or more than four hours for international arrival flights after the aircraft has landed.

This plan ensures that Trans States will meet or exceed specified guidance as it pertains to provisioning, as follows: adequate food and potable water no later than two hours if the aircraft remains on the tarmac, unless the pilot-in-command determines that safety or security considerations preclude such service; operable lavatory facilities; medical attention; comfortable cabin temperature, and other customer comfort needs.

## RESPONSIBILITY

The System Operations Control (SOC) is responsible for the management and quality of the plan. The decision-making for this plan lies within the SOC. Airport Customer Service and Station Operations will carry out the plan at the station level while Flight Operations and In-flight Service complete the plan on the flight level.

## STATION PLAN

Trans States Airlines has contractual relationships with its mainline partners, United Air Lines ("United") and American Airlines ("American") that provides for coordination for the use of gates and associated facilities in delay situations. Both United and American have submitted independent plans to the DOT, and much of those plans will also apply to Trans States Airlines as the mainline partners provide all ground and gate operations employees and facilities under contractual relationships with Trans States Airlines.

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Trans States Airlines does not have gates or facilities at the airports that it serves. Trans States Airlines has coordinated response procedures with its mainline partners, United and American, to the extent practicable, to share facilities in the event of an extended delay. For each airport serviced by United and American, independent airport plans have been submitted to the DOT.

Stations will assure that diversions are given the same priority as other arrival taxi delays. All Stations have coordinated plans with Airport Operations and local governmental agencies (TSA and CBA where applicable) to meet the tarmac-delay rule's requirements. This consists of back-up methods for inoperative equipment, provisioning and servicing of aircraft, as well as gate or remote pad parking considerations (including sharing facilities and making gates available during an emergency)

## COMMUNICATION

Announcements are made beginning 30 minutes after the scheduled departure time (including any revised departure time that passengers were notified about before boarding) and every 30 minutes thereafter that they have the opportunity to deplane from an aircraft that is at the gate or another disembarkation area with the door open, if the opportunity to deplane actually exists.

Announcements will:

- Occur at least every 30 minutes while the aircraft is delayed
- Identify the reason for the delay, if known, and tentative departure time
- Inform customers of the ability to egress, if the opportunity exists, beginning 30 minutes after scheduled departure (including revised departure time) and every 30 minutes thereafter

Throughout the flight delay, communication between Trans States' SOC and the flight crew will be continual. Both the SOC and flight crew will monitor the general environment and "mood" of the customers at all times. Trans States will make decisions for the well-being of all customers aboard the affected flight.