



Department of Justice

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STATEMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE'S ANTITRUST DIVISION
ON ITS DECISION TO CLOSE ITS INVESTIGATION OF
THE MERGER OF DELTA AIR LINES INC.
AND NORTHWEST AIRLINES CORPORATION

WASHINGTON – The Department of Justice's Antitrust Division issued the following statement today after the Division announced the closing of its investigation of the proposed merger of Delta Air Lines Inc. and Northwest Airlines Corporation:

“After a thorough, six-month investigation, during which the Division obtained extensive information from a wide range of market participants—including the companies, other airlines, corporate customers and travel agents—the Division has determined that the proposed merger between Delta and Northwest is likely to produce substantial and credible efficiencies that will benefit U.S. consumers and is not likely to substantially lessen competition.

“The two airlines currently compete with a number of other legacy and low cost airlines in the provision of scheduled air passenger service on the vast majority of nonstop and connecting routes where they compete with each other. In addition, the merger likely will result in efficiencies such as cost savings in airport operations, information technology, supply chain economics, and fleet optimization that will benefit consumers. Consumers are also likely to benefit from improved service made possible by combining under single ownership the complementary aspects of the airlines' networks.

“The Division provides this statement under its policy of issuing statements concerning the closing of investigations in appropriate cases. This statement is limited by the Division's obligation to protect the confidentiality of certain information obtained in its investigations. As in most of its investigations, the Division's evaluation has been highly fact-specific, and many of the relevant underlying facts are not public. Consequently, readers should not draw overly broad conclusions regarding how the Division is likely in the future to analyze other collaborations or activities, or transactions involving particular firms. Enforcement decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, and the analysis and conclusions discussed in this statement do not bind the Division in any future enforcement actions. Guidance on the Division's policy regarding closing statements is available at <http://www.usdoj.gov/atr/public/guidelines/201888.htm>.”

Delta, based in Atlanta, is the third largest airline in the United States. In 2007, it collected \$19.1 billion in revenue for carrying 73 million passengers more than 126 billion miles. Delta and its domestic regional affiliates offer service to more than 300 destinations in 58 countries.

Northwest, based in Minneapolis, is the fifth largest airline in the United States. Last year, it carried approximately 53 million passengers 72 billion miles for total revenues of \$12.5 billion. Northwest serves 239 destinations in 21 countries in North America, Asia and Europe.

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