

## 7.3 Airport Enplanements

### The Importance

An active airport provides easy movement into and out of a region. It also facilitates commerce and makes a region a more attractive business location. In addition, an active airport with affordable fares improves the quality of life by providing more recreational travel opportunities.

The Albany International Airport (AIA) has recently overhauled its facilities and attracted the low-cost carrier, Southwest Airlines. As a result, fares have dropped while the number of cities served by direct flights has increased.

### About this Indicator

This indicator measures the annual number of commercial airline enplanements at AIA, at the peer region airports, in New York State, and in the United States. It also measures the effect of the September 11, 2001 attacks on national and regional aviation by comparing 2000 enplanements with 2001 enplanements.

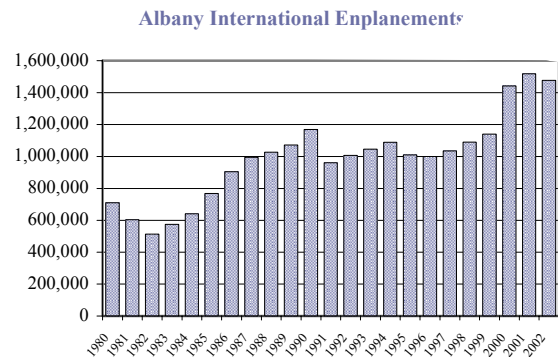
### Sources for this Indicator

- Federal Aviation Administration
- New York State Department of Transportation
- Albany International Airport

### Air Travel in the Capital District

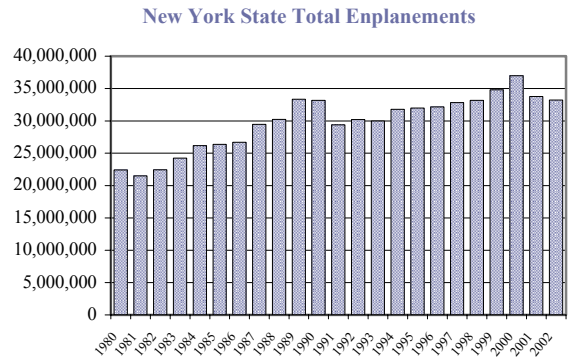
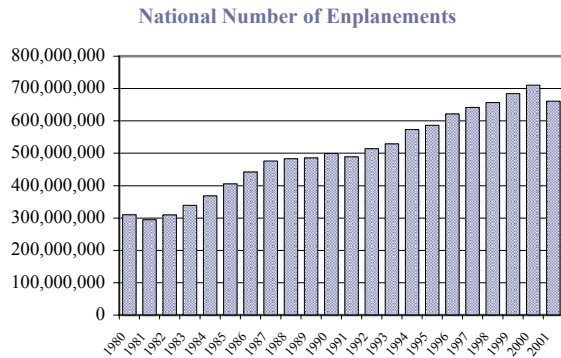
Two recent major changes have affected air travel in the Capital Region. During the 1990's, the Albany International Airport made a complete overhaul to the Airport facilities with new check-in, terminal, and gate facilities. Then, in 2000, Southwest Airlines brought its low-cost service to Albany. This resulted lower fares from all the airlines with service to Albany International Airport.

With the arrival of Southwest Airlines and the completion of the new terminal, enplanements at AIA increased dramatically in 2000. Southwest Airlines arrived at Albany in May of 2000 and provided service for the last seven months of 2000. With just those seven months of Southwest service, enplanements for 2000 were 31% higher than the 1999 level of 1,140,518 enplanements. With eight months of service before the effects of September 11, 2001, enplanements in 2001 were 37% above the 1999 baseline. During the calendar year before September 11, the number of enplanements hit 1,598,938, 44% higher than the 1999 total.



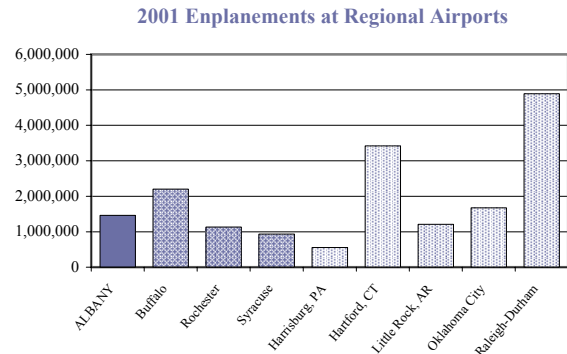
## 7.3 TRANSPORTATION

With the exception of the past three years, enplanements at the Albany International Airport have followed the State and National trends of increasing during good economic times and retreating moderately during recessions. During the past three years, the arrival of Southwest Airlines has made a considerable impact at the Airport.



Albany International Airport has less passenger activity than four of the peer regions. While passenger traffic has increased at AIA the Albany MSA does not have other large MSA's within an hour drive of the airport. This helps account for the large number of passengers at the Hartford and Raleigh-Durham airports, which are close to other metropolitan areas.

It is difficult to gage the impact of September 11 on passenger activity at AIA. The Airport did not complete a January to December calendar year with Southwest service before 9/11/01. As a result, we saw more enplanements in 2001 than 2000. However, when the calendar year prior to 9/11/01 is compared to the 2002 enplanements, there is a 7% decline. That level of decline is comparable to the national drop between 2000 and 2001 and previous drops during recessions.



Syracuse showed a significant drop in enplanements between 2000 and 2001. This could be due to the lower fares in Albany attracting people who might otherwise use the Syracuse airport.

