

Monthly civil aviation statistics, January 2022

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Highlights

Major Canadian airlines carried 2.6 million passengers on scheduled and charter services in January. This was more than triple the number of passengers carried in January 2021, although just over one-third (37.9%) of the level reported in January 2019, prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With traffic at 6.6 billion passenger-kilometres and capacity at 12.0 billion available seat-kilometres, the passenger load factor (the ratio of passenger-kilometres to available seat-kilometres) was 55.6% in January 2022.

While up year over year, the \$948.0 million operating revenue earned was less than half (48.0%) of that earned before the pandemic in January 2019.

Reduced schedules to begin the year

After gaining momentum in the second half of 2021, recovery in the airline industry stalled in January 2022 as the emergence of the Omicron variant of COVID-19 prompted some Canadian carriers to cancel flights and reduce schedules. In December 2021, the Government of Canada required all travellers entering the country, regardless of the length of their trip, to provide a negative COVID-19 molecular test. In addition, citizens were advised against non-essential travel outside of Canada, putting a damper on winter travel plans.

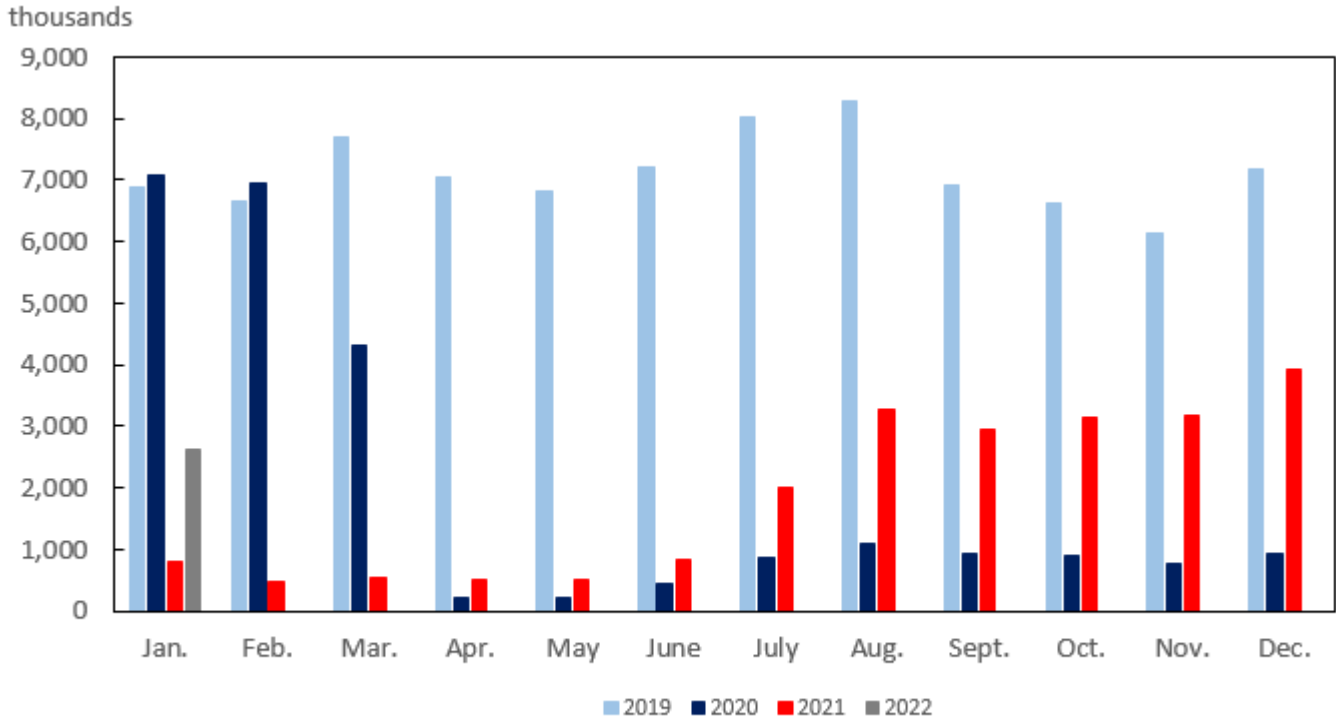
On March 11, 2020, COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. In the months that followed, Canadian air travel remained well below historical levels. Unless otherwise specified, comparisons for a given month are made with the same month in 2019 (also referred to as "pre-pandemic levels"), when airline activity levels were in line with historical trends.

Setback to air travel

Canadian Level I air carriers flew 2.6 million passengers on scheduled and charter services in January 2022, the lowest level since July 2021. This was 37.9% of the pre-pandemic level reported in January 2019, down from the 54.8% proportion in December 2021 (compared with December 2019).



Infographic 1 – Passengers carried by Canadian Level I air carriers, monthly, 2019 to 2022



Source: Monthly Civil Aviation Survey (5026), table 23-10-0079-01.

The number of passengers on both domestic and international flights declined in January. Seasonally, international volumes typically increase from December to January. However, the spread of the Omicron variant resulted in lower demand in January 2022, following nine consecutive months of increases in the international sector.

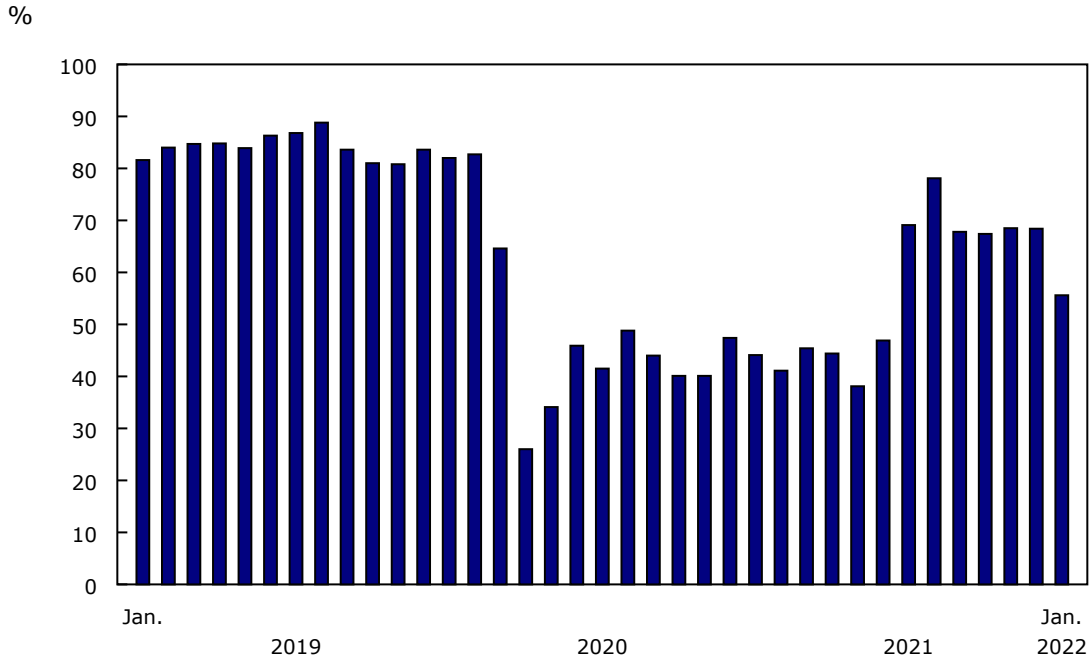
At 6.6 billion passenger-kilometres, traffic in January was 36.3% of the pre-pandemic level posted in January 2019, while capacity, at 12.0 billion available seat-kilometres, was 53.3% of the January 2019 level. As such, after remaining above 65% for the previous six months, the passenger load factor declined to 55.6% in January, well below the 81.6% reported in January 2019.

Each passenger travelled an average of 2,549 kilometres in January, down 4.1% from January 2019.

At 105,000, the number of flying hours in January was 52.5% of the pre-pandemic level.

Operating revenue earned by Level I carriers totalled \$948.0 million in January, representing 48.0% of the \$2.0 billion earned in the same month in 2019, pre-pandemic.

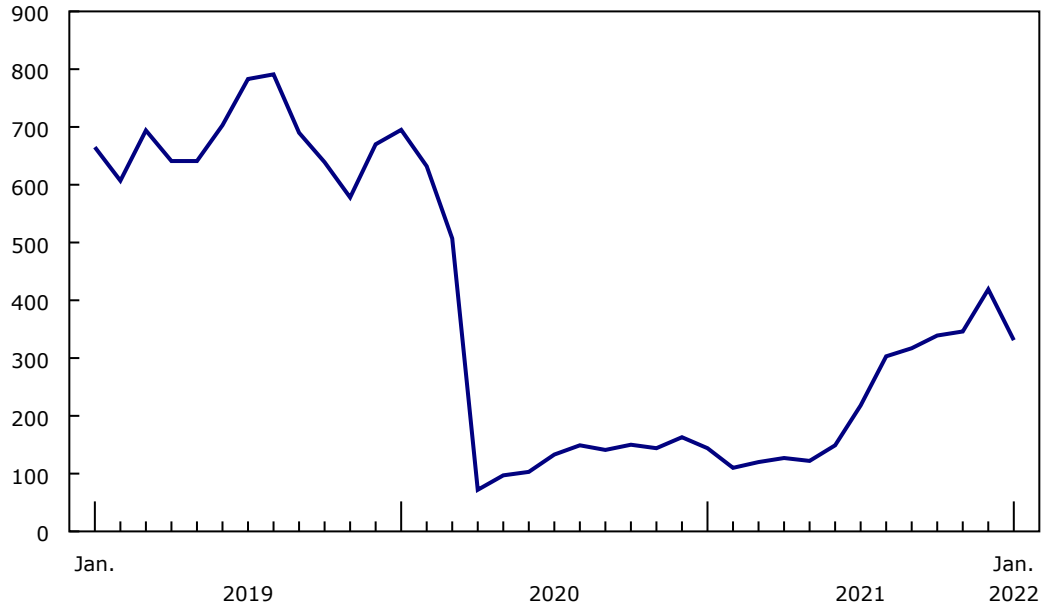
Chart 2
Passenger load factor, Canadian air carriers, Level I



Source(s): Table [23-10-0079-01](#).

Chart 3 Turbo fuel consumed, Canadian air carriers, Level I

millions of litres



Source(s): Table [23-10-0079-01](#).

Note to readers

The Monthly Civil Aviation Survey covers all Canadian Level I air carriers: Air Canada (including Air Canada Rouge), Air Transat, Jazz, Porter, Sunwing and WestJet (including Swoop, WestJet Encore and WestJet Link).

The average passenger trip length is calculated by dividing the number of passenger-kilometres by the number of passengers. Trips across Canada and around the world are included in this calculation.

The data in this monthly release are not seasonally adjusted.

Available tables: table [23-10-0079-01](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5026](#).

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; infostats@statcan.gc.ca) or Media Relations (statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca).