

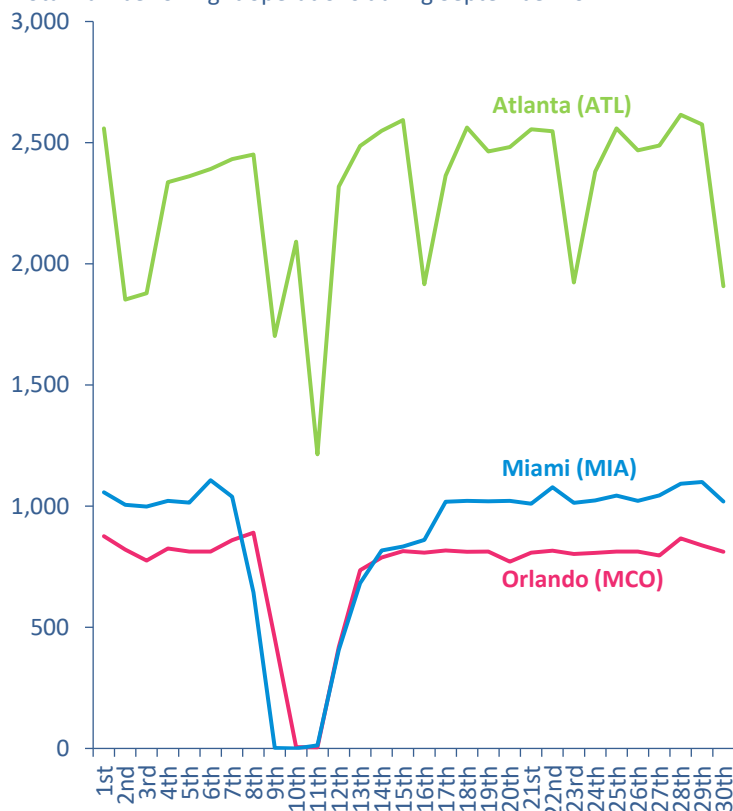


IATA ECONOMICS' CHART OF THE WEEK

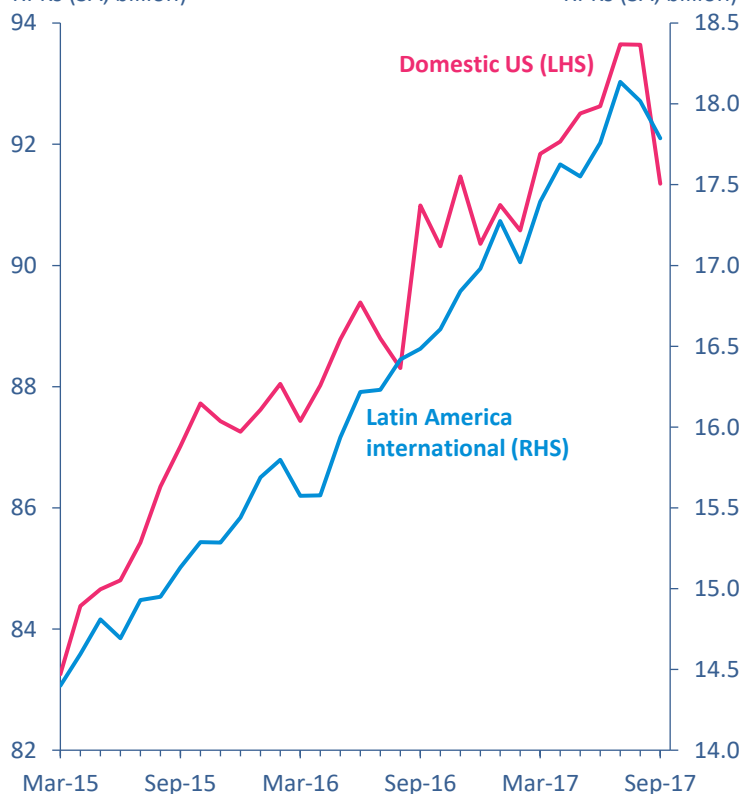
24 NOVEMBER 2017

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF HURRICANES IRMA AND MARIA ON AVIATION

Total number of flight operations during September 2017



RPKs (SA, billion)



Sources: FAA Opsnet, IATA Monthly Statistics

- The direct impacts of Hurricanes Irma and Maria on air passenger traffic in September were most visible in the domestic US market, which is the largest in the world. With Miami and Orlando airports being closed completely for a period early in the month, and traffic at Atlanta being affected partially too, total revenue passenger kilometres (RPKs) flown within the US fell by 2.4% in seasonally-adjusted terms relative to the August. This was the biggest monthly fall in the series since late-2008. Meanwhile, international RPKs flown by airlines based in Latin America also fell in month-on-month terms for the second time in a row, which was the first time this has happened in more than two years.
- With the domestic US market accounting for around 15% of industry-wide RPKs, the sizeable month-on-month decline seen in September fully accounted for the fall in total passenger volumes in the month. (The impact was offset partially by month-on-month increases in passenger traffic for airlines based in Asia Pacific and Europe.)
- As noted in a recently released [report](#), the economic and human impacts of Irma and Maria will persist for some time – potentially a number of years – in the most affected Caribbean islands, particularly those who depend heavily on travel and tourism. However, purely from an air transport perspective, the fact that airport operations in the major US airports returned largely to normal in the second half of September, as well as the fact that the biggest air passenger markets in the Caribbean were relatively unscathed, means that the impact at an industry-wide level is likely to be just temporary. Indeed, we expect the data from October to show that passenger traffic rebounded last month.
- For further analysis of the impact of 'shock' events on aviation, including a recent assessment of the impact of Hurricane Harvey, click [here](#).

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