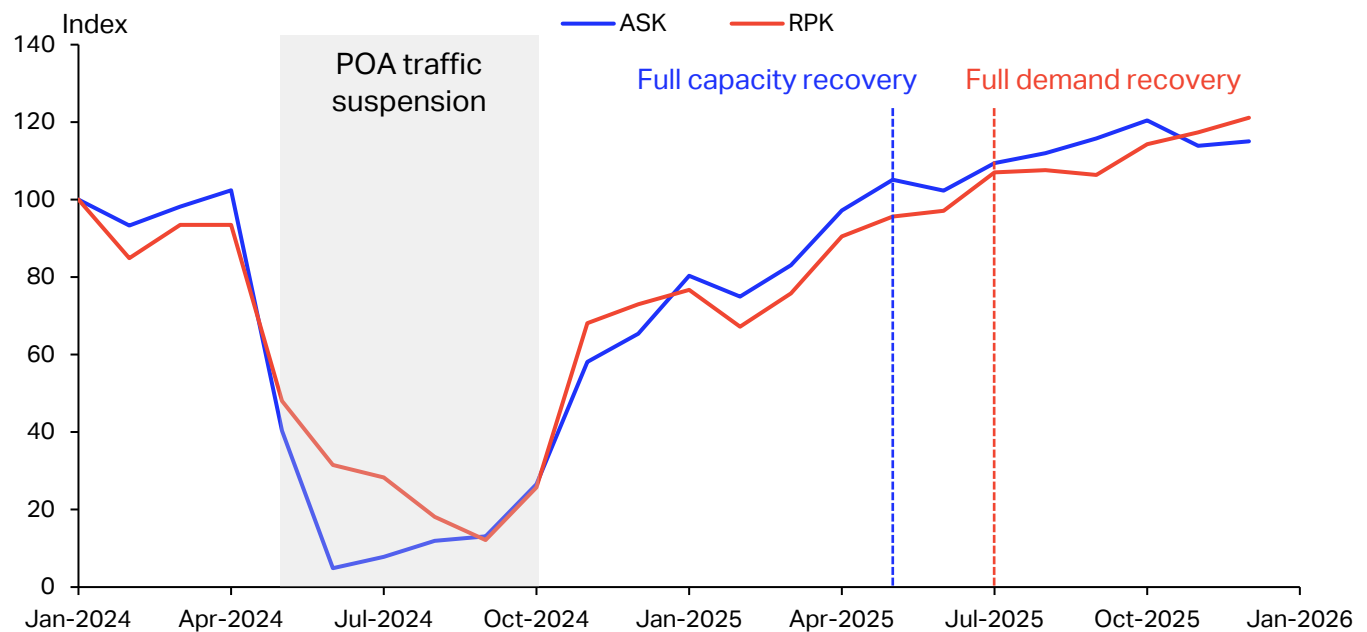


Chart of the Week

10 July 2026

How Porto Alegre Bounced Back After Brazil's Largest Airport Disruption

Capacity (ASK) and Revenue Passenger Kilometer (RPK) to and from Porto Alegre, Salgado Filho airport and Canoas Air Force Base, index, 2024 = 100



Source: IATA Sustainability and Economics, OAG and DDS.

- In May 2024, severe floods and landslides affected Rio Grande do Sul in southern Brazil. Considered the country's worst disaster in 80 years, the event severely disrupted the Porto Alegre-Salgado Filho International Airport (POA), the main airport in the region and one of the largest in the country. Under normal conditions, POA accounts for six million passengers to, from, and within Brazil (around 5.8% of the country's total). It plays an important role as a regional hub connecting with other airports in the south, and provides international services to Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. Flights to and from the airport were completely suspended for four months, as floodwaters covered the runway and damaged terminal infrastructure. As a temporary solution, the Brazilian Air Force enabled limited operations at the nearby Canoas Air Base. The POA airport operator announced a gradual resumption of operations from October 2024, with capacity returning to pre-flood levels eight months later. Passenger demand reached its lowest point in September 2024, and exceeded January 2024 levels in July 2025, lagging the full recovery in capacity by two months.
- Porto Alegre's experience shows that temporary disruptions in air travel capacity do not tend to cause a lasting impact on demand for air transport. The episode demonstrates that large external shocks often defer rather than permanently eliminate demand, if transport infrastructure can be restored in a timely manner. This lesson is particularly relevant today as airlines navigate disruptions linked to the conflict in the Middle East. Such events are supply-side shocks and do not reflect a fundamental weakening of demand for air travel. As connectivity is restored, traffic can be expected to recover relatively quickly, as evidenced by the experience in Porto Alegre.

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