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## **MEA Weekend Spurs Biggest Week of Travel at MSP in Seven Months**

MINNEAPOLIS-ST. PAUL – The annual Minnesota Educator Academy (MEA) break that wrapped up this past weekend spurred the biggest week of passenger travel at Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) since the first impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The four-day MEA weekend is usually one of the busiest travel periods of the year for MSP. On Thursday, Oct 15, nearly 17,500 passengers cleared Transportation Security Administration (TSA) checkpoints, making it the busiest day since the week of March 16. In the last week, which included the MEA break, MSP averaged 14,177 passengers through the checkpoints, a 20 percent increase over the previous week and 17 percent higher than the Labor Day holiday week, when MSP averaged 12,124 passengers.

Nationally, the TSA is reporting that for the first time since the pandemic, it cleared more than a million passengers through its checkpoints on Sunday, October 18.

“It’s encouraging to see the positive trend in passenger traffic. I believe it reflects the tremendous work MSP, other airports, the airlines, and our federal partners have done in implementing major health safety initiatives for passengers and the public,” said Brian Ryks, CEO of the Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC), which operates MSP. “I think there’s a pent-up demand to travel again, and it’s merging with the public’s increased confidence about traveling safely.”

MSP’s [Travel Confidently program](#), which launched in June, outlines actions the MAC has taken to help protect travelers and airport employees and to encourage travelers to take appropriate steps to protect themselves and those around them. Key elements include mandatory face coverings, a robust airport cleaning program, social distancing, increased hand sanitizing stations, and protective barriers at most customer service connection points.

In the last week, passenger traffic through MSP checkpoints has been trending to nearly 35 percent of 2019 levels. At the peak of the COVID-19 impacts in mid-April, passenger traffic was only 5 percent of 2019 levels at MSP.

MSP is currently averaging 300 total daily departures in October, up from 286 in September. Airlines are operating 136 routes, up seven routes from September. On Oct 25, Delta will restart service between MSP and Amsterdam (AMS), with four weekly flights. It will be the first transoceanic service to return to MSP since the pandemic began.

*The Metropolitan Airports Commission (MAC) owns and operates one of the nation's largest airport systems, including Minneapolis-St Paul International (MSP) and six general aviation airports. The MAC's airports connect the region to the world and showcase Minnesota's extraordinary culture to millions of passengers from around the globe who arrive or depart through MAC airports each year. Though a public corporation of the state of Minnesota, the organization is not funded by income or property taxes. Instead, the MAC's operations are funded by rents and fees generated by users of its airports. For more information, visit [www.metroairports.org](http://www.metroairports.org).*