

Media Contact:
Tony Vicari
Director of Aviation
(970) 382-6052
tony.vicari@durangogov.org

Durango La Plata County Airport
1000 Airport Road
Durango, CO 81303
www.flydurango.com

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NEWS RELEASE

DRO Passenger Traffic Up 1.8% in 2018; Up 3.9% in December

Durango, CO: Passenger traffic at the Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) resumed its long-term growth trend in 2018, increasing by a healthy 1.8% over 2017. The facility welcomed 378,876 commercial airline passengers in 2018, an increase of 6,549 passengers over the prior year. DRO served 81,328 more passengers in 2018 than the facility served 10 years ago in 2009.

DRO also ended the year with strong 3.9% uptick in December passenger traffic after experiencing a slight decrease in December of 2017.

Load factor – the percentage of airline seats filled – increased by 3.7%, from 71.2% to 74.9%. The December 2018 load factor was especially strong, increasing 6.6% over 2017.

“2018 was a strong growth year for DRO despite the extended effects of the 416 Fire on the regional economy,” said Tony Vicari, director of aviation. “The number of enplaned – or departing – passengers at 190,373¹ marked our highest total since 2014, and was the third highest in our history. The rise in traffic comes, in part, from a strong demand for air service in our region and more aggressive pricing by the airlines on some key routes. Also, there is increasing awareness that flying from Durango is a better option than adding the time and expense of driving to Albuquerque or Denver to catch a flight.

“We anticipate that passenger traffic will continue to increase in 2019 based on additional demand created by United Airlines’ new seasonal routes to Chicago and Houston, and American Airlines’ new seasonal route to Chicago, all of which will begin in June. American’s seasonal service to Los Angeles will be back in June, as well.” Vicari added.

¹ The number of passenger enplanements – departures – combined with the number of passenger deplanements – arrivals – equal total passenger traffic. DRO passenger deplanements totaled 188,503 in 2018, a 1.4% increase over 2017.

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Other 2018 statistics:

- United Airlines was the market share leader at DRO with a total of 197,279 passengers in 2018. American Airlines had 181,597 passengers in 2018.
- Denver (DEN) continues to be the largest origin and destination market for DRO. Denver service is provided by United Airlines, which offers multiple flights to DEN on a daily basis. Dallas and Phoenix, respectively, are the second and third largest passenger markets for DRO.
- July was the busiest month at DRO with 37,653 total passengers. Passenger traffic at DRO generally spikes in the summer months, reflecting the onset of vacation season and of seasonal service additions by the airlines, now to Chicago, Houston, and Los Angeles.

About Durango-La Plata County Airport

Durango-La Plata County Airport (DRO) is the primary regional airport for southwest Colorado, northwest New Mexico, and the Four Corners region. DRO welcomed more than 378,000 passengers in 2018 and contributes \$280 million annually to the regional economy. DRO is served by two of the four largest U.S. airlines (American and United), offering nonstop routes to Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW), Denver (DEN), Phoenix (PHX) and seasonally to Chicago (ORD), Houston (IAH), and Los Angeles (LAX). For more information, please visit www.flydurango.com. Follow us on twitter.com/DROAirport and facebook.com/DROAirport.

DRO operates as an enterprise fund of the City of Durango, and generates self-sustaining revenue from airport tenants and users in the form of airline rent and landing fees, terminal concessions, ground leases and parking fees. The airport does not receive any local tax funding.

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