

Trying to Minimize Weather Impacts at a Commercial Airline

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Anyone who regularly relies on airlines to get them from one location to another in a timely fashion can be frequently disappointed by weather disruptions, delays, and cancellations. Airline travel is by far the safest means of travel; however weather plays a huge role in strategic planning, operational efficiency, and the cost of doing business for all commercial carriers. Maintaining efficient airline operations is more than just having the weather observations above the required landing and takeoff minimums. All facets of potential weather impacts need to be monitored and incorporated into strategic planning decisions to provide our Customers the most efficient travel means possible. This presentation will provide insight into how weather information is used to make strategic planning decisions at Southwest Airlines to provide our Customers with the safest and highest level of service possible under the most challenging conditions.

PRESENTER'S BIO

Rick Curtis has been at Southwest Airlines for twelve years and serves as Chief Meteorologist for the Southwest Airlines Operations Coordination Center. He graduated with a B.S. in Meteorology from Lyndon State College. He concentrates on strategic weather forecasting, weather information integration into operational planning, weather instruction, and weather related strategic planning efforts at Southwest Airlines.

Past experience includes Account Management and Product Development at Sonalysts Inc. of Waterford, CT, Director of Weather Services at Surface Systems Inc. (SSI) of St. Louis, MO, and various technical and marketing positions at WSI Corporation of Andover, MA. While at SSI, Rick led a team of meteorologists' focused on forecasting efforts relating to airport operations and highway maintenance activities.

Rick is a member of both the American Meteorological Society and the National Weather Association.