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Southwest Airlines Reports December Traffic

DALLAS, Jan. 6 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Southwest Airlines Co. (NYSE: LUV) announced today that the Company flew 5.8 billion revenue passenger miles (RPMs) in December 2008, a 1.1 percent increase from the 5.7 billion RPMs flown in December 2007. Available seat miles (ASMs) decreased 1.0 percent to 8.3 billion from the December 2007 level of 8.4 billion. The load factor for the month was 69.7 percent, compared to 68.2 percent for the same period last year.

For the fourth quarter 2008, Southwest flew 17.3 billion RPMs, a 1.4 percent decrease from the 17.5 billion RPMs recorded for the same period in 2007. Available seat miles increased 0.8 percent to 25.5 billion from the fourth quarter 2007 level of 25.3 billion. The fourth quarter 2008 load factor was 67.8 percent, compared to 69.3 percent for the same period last year.

For the year ended December 31, 2008, Southwest flew 73.5 billion RPMs, a 1.6 percent increase from the 72.3 billion RPMs recorded for the same period in 2007. Available seat miles increased 3.6 percent to 103.3 billion from the 2007 level of 99.6 billion. The year-to-date load factor was 71.2 percent, compared to 72.6 percent for the same period last year.

This release, as well as past news releases on Southwest, are available online at <http://southwest.com/?src=INVRINVDETR0000000090106>.

SOUTHWEST AIRLINES CO. PRELIMINARY COMPARATIVE TRAFFIC STATISTICS

	DECEMBER -----		
	2008 ----	2007 ----	CHANGE -----
Revenue passengers carried	6,787,773	7,003,152	(3.1)%
Enplaned passengers	7,964,829	8,079,893	(1.4)%
Revenue passenger miles (000s)	5,794,390	5,728,562	1.1%
Available seat miles (000s)	8,318,347	8,404,268	(1.0)%
Load factor	69.7%	68.2%	1.5 pts.
Average length of haul	854	818	4.4%
Trips flown	95,813	98,263	(2.5)%

FOURTH QUARTER

	2008 ----	2007 ----	CHANGE -----
Revenue passengers carried	20,799,765	21,757,154	(4.4)%
Enplaned passengers	23,974,845	24,875,699	(3.6)%
Revenue passenger miles (000s)	17,265,177	17,505,282	(1.4)%
Available seat miles (000s)	25,455,786	25,258,958	0.8%
Load factor	67.8%	69.3%	(1.5) pts.
Average length of haul	830	805	3.1%
Trips flown	292,392	295,370	(1.0)%

	YEAR-TO-DATE -----		
	2008 ----	2007 ----	CHANGE -----
Revenue passengers carried	88,540,941	88,713,472	(0.2)%
Enplaned passengers	101,920,598	101,910,809	-
Revenue passenger miles (000s)	73,491,687	72,318,812	1.6%
Available seat miles (000s)	103,271,343	99,635,967	3.6%
Load factor	71.2%	72.6%	(1.4) pts.
Average length of haul	830	815	1.8%
Trips flown	1,191,151	1,160,699	2.6%

SOURCE Southwest Airlines Co.