

Teamwork key to Shuttle's performance

People in Florida aren't setting their watches by it—yet. But if they were. The Piedmont Shuttle would have those second hands moving about as on-time as possible.

Because today, when an airline's ability to fly on-time is one of its strongest marketing assets, The Piedmont Shuttle is a model for getting passengers to their destinations as scheduled. In fact, over the past six months, the Shuttle has averaged a 92 percent originating and 89 percent terminating on-time performance. That already exceeds the system-wide 90/75 percent goals for 1987 set by Piedmont's On-Time Performance Committee.

Bill McGee, senior vice president-marketing and chairman of the committee, said the Shuttle's performance is the result of hard work by crews, station and maintenance personnel in Florida, by scheduling, and by the very nature of the Shuttle's operations.

"Much of the Shuttle's on-time performance success is due to conscientious, dedicated Piedmont employees," McGee said. "But in addition, the Shuttle network has an advantage in both weather and scheduling. Because Florida's weather is usually good, delays are substantially reduced; and because all the Shuttle's aircraft remain in the state, it avoids delays caused by operations in other parts of the country."

teamwork

Ask Piedmont people in Florida what makes the Shuttle tick, and the answer is unanimous: teamwork. And the key to proper teamwork is good communications between all facets of our operations.

"Teamwork is the key," Ron Beeson, station manager-TLH, said. "On-time performance is something we work on every day."

For the 46 station employees at TLH, this includes cross-training in customer service and operations skills. Each agent alternates every other week in the two areas, which means that the station is never lacking for experienced employees in passenger and ground handling. In addition, before each push supervisors have short meetings with agents to discuss the flight and suggest improvements to speed ground handling.

As with all Shuttle cities, most of the F28 flights in TLH have relatively short turn-arounds. And when a flight experiences a rare inbound delay, that turnaround

time shortens even more. A good example was flight 792 on November 3 due in at 8:55 a.m. It was 13 minutes late inbound, but left as flight 775 on schedule at 9:40 a.m.

"We're going to do whatever it takes to get the job done," Beeson said.

Even at larger stations, such as MIA, The Piedmont Shuttle has an excellent on-time performance record. Station Manager Mike Blythe said the Shuttle's 29 daily departures at MIA are virtually a separate operation from the rest of the station, with employees repeatedly assigned to Shuttle flights for the most experienced, efficient handling of the inherently short turn times.

"We maintain a very high degree of communications among ourselves, and I think that's the key to it," Blythe said.

Part of that communicating includes weekly meetings with crew bases, maintenance and catering to discuss Shuttle operations. Any problems that might exist are raised, and solutions are quickly sought. Another plus for MIA's on-time performance is a "coordinator" at the station who does what

the word implies: he monitors and helps coordinate connecting flights.

Jim Nazarkewich, line maintenance manager-MIA, echos the importance of those meetings. "We discuss everything that involves delays," he said. "Our role in maintenance is to keep the aircraft safe, operational and on-time—in that order."

efficiency

Nazarkewich said that the current 27 maintenance employees in MIA work three shifts, with most preventative maintenance and inspections at night in MIA. But mechanics travel throughout the Shuttle system for on-site repairs and pride themselves in putting aircraft in "perfect working condition for operation the next morning."

As they do throughout our system, pilots and flight attendants on the Shuttle have significantly contributed to good on-time performance by making flights operate as efficiently as possible. For example, Kathy Pressly, base manager for the 106 flight attendants based in MIA, said that attendants try to do

their job quickly without sacrificing customer service. This efficiency is aided by cooperation with pilots and station personnel—who with the Shuttle flight attendants have "built up a clientele that's just phenomenal," she said.

Lloyd Turner, chief pilot of the MIA crew base, said that pilots often take advantage of "intersection takeoffs" in the F28, a maneuver which gets them on a runway at intersections while larger planes are still taxiing to a runway's beginning. The F28's comparatively smaller size also comes in handy at FLL, where the Shuttle can use runway 27 Left and be airborne within 60 seconds after leaving the gate while larger aircraft must taxi to runway 9 Left—about seven minutes away.

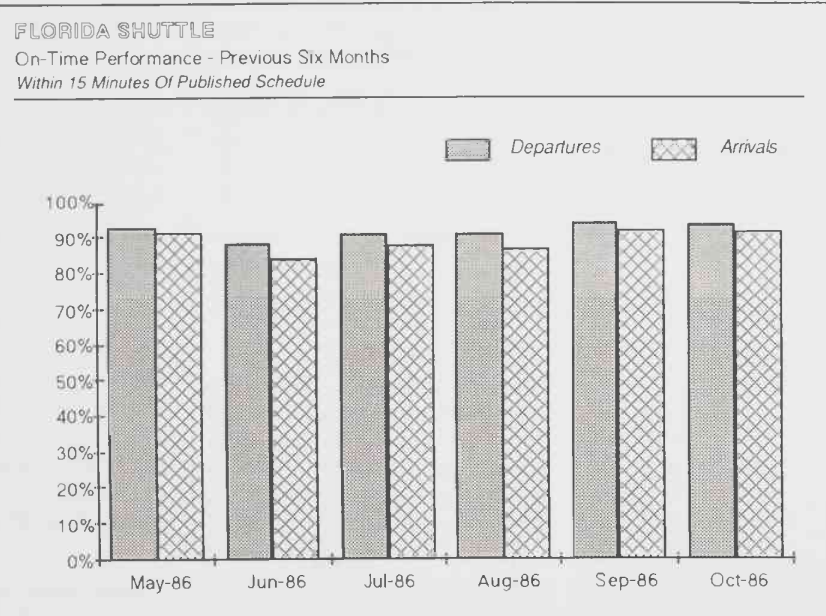
"Our pilots also visit control towers to discuss problems and solutions," Turner said. "So our crew members not only communicate, they're extremely conscientious, dedicated Piedmont employees."

pride

Throughout the Shuttle system, pride in a flight operation that boarded a million passengers in less than a year has combined with a caring about those passengers that has become one of Piedmont's best success stories. Rogers England, senior station agent-TLH, perhaps said it best when asked why the Shuttle works so well.

"Our people sincerely care about the passengers we put on our aircraft," England said. "After a flight takes off, there are two things we always ask: how many did we put on the plane, and did they leave on-time?"

With that kind of attitude spread over 132 daily departures in 12 Florida cities, it can only signal continued success for The Piedmont Shuttle—a success built on a solid foundation of on-time performance.



Henson to enter Florida market February 1; Will offer "Shuttle Link" to PI service

Henson, The Piedmont Regional Airline, will begin service to eight Florida cities with 32 daily departures on February 1. The new service, called the "Shuttle Link," will enhance our popular Piedmont Shuttle in the Sunshine State.

"It has long been our goal to bring high quality air service to intra-Florida markets that lack enough passengers for jet service. The capabilities of the Dash-8 aircraft and our affiliation with Piedmont will allow us to do this in 1987," Dick Henson, founder and chairman of the airline, said at a press conference held November 10 at Jacksonville, FL.

In addition, Henson has also applied for international authority to provide service between Fort Lauderdale and Treasure Cay and Marsh Harbour in the Bahama Islands. This authority must be obtained from the U.S. Department

of Transportation and the Bahamian government.

Henson will inaugurate its Florida service with flights to FLL, GNV, JAX, MLB (Melbourne), MIA, APF, MCO, and PBI. The Shuttle Link will use the popular 37-passenger deHavilland Dash-8, a roomy twin-engine propjet that cruises at 300 miles per hour. The aircraft feature flight attendant service, overhead storage bins, and on-board lavatories.

Henson plans to open a pilot and flight attendant crew base as well as a maintenance base at JAX, and the airline will have approximately 50 employees in the state when it begins service February 1. Piedmont will handle all reservations as well as most ticket counter sales and baggage handling.

Henson is the nation's fifth largest regional carrier in terms of passengers boarded. On its present

route system, which serves 30 airports in 11 states from New England to South Carolina, Henson will fly over 1.1 million passengers in 1986.

The new Piedmont Shuttle Link service, effective February 1, will include:

- three daily round-trip flights between JAX and MCO, JAX and PBI, and APF and MCO.
- two daily round-trip flights between MCO and MLB.
- one daily round-trip flight between APF and MIA, FLL and PBI, GNV and JAX, GNV and MCO, and MIA and MLB.

Service to the Bahamas, which is pending government approval, will include one daily flight from FLL to Treasure Cay, continuing to Marsh Harbour, and returning to FLL from Marsh Harbour.

on
December 15

number of departures:
1,235
miles flown daily: 427,846
ASMs (available seat miles): 51,735,438
number of aircraft in fleet:
159
average aircraft hop: 346.4
number of airports served:
87
daily block time flown:
1,429 hours, 16 minutes
next schedule change:
February 1