MEXICAN AVIATION SUFFERS FROM ITS OWN GOVERNMENT'S DECISIONS: AIR INSIGHT

By restricting AICM, launching Mexicana without a strategy, and opening Tulum without generating new demand, they have distorted the market, leading the sector to an "induced decline."

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The Mexican government's decisions regarding aviation aren't building a stronger industry; they're systematically dismantling it from within, according to the Air Insight news site in an article published this week.

According to the text, state actions such as the forced development of Felipe Ángeles International Airport (AIFA), the inauguration of a rival terminal for Cancún in Tulum, the relaunch of Mexicana, and the artificial strangulation of Mexico City International Airport (AICM) have paved the way for "an induced decline."

In the case of cargo, the specialized media outlet maintains that in the first five months of the year, total volume in Mexico fell 6.3% and the international segment plummeted 7.6%, declines influenced by the decision to send cargo dedicated to AICM to AIFA.

The AIFA has also been an unprofitable decision for the national government, as although it reported profits of 414 million pesos (mdp) in the first quarter of 2025, it received a federal subsidy of 704 million pesos in the same period.

"To populate this airport, the government launched a campaign against AICM, decreeing drastic reductions in hourly operations, from 61 to 44. This artificial construction of supply at the market's preferred airport was the direct trigger for the punitive response from the United States," the article stated.

The actions taken by the U.S., specifically the Department of Transportation (DOT), required Mexican airlines to report their operations to and from that country for approval, while also threatening to strip the Aeroméxico-Delta alliance of its antitrust immunity.

Another case of cannibalization provoked by the authorities was the opening of the Tulum International Airport in 2023, under the administration of Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

While the terminal received strong demand from airlines such as American, Copa, and United after opening, many of these airlines canceled or shortened routes due to poor traveler response. The airport did not generate new demand; it only took away from Cancún, which reported a 14.9% drop in traffic in October 2024.

Regarding Mexicana, Air Insight states that 18 months after its return, it is a "commercially irrelevant and market-distorting entity," as it has less than 1% of the domestic market and only carried 180,000 passengers in the first half of the year.

> "Its seat occupancy rates hover between 30% and 48%, a catastrophic level in an industry that requires an average of 85% to be viable," the outlet reported, adding that the carrier is supported by opaque state subsidies.

By not seeking profit, Mexicana creates artificial pressure on prices and degrades the "financial health of the true pillars of the industry," resulting in a "costly and unproductive" project.

Since its return, the government has stated that the airline would not seek profit and would offer prices 18 to 20% lower than the competition. This year, it has received new aircraft (20 in total) and aims to achieve a 4.5% market share by 2028.

> “The pursuit of disparate political projects, in the absence of a strategic vision, has distorted the market, destroyed value, and pushed the entire sector into a state of elevated risk. Despite its fundamental strengths, Mexican aviation is in a precarious position, weakened not by market forces, but by the very policies that were intended to boost it,” the article concludes.

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