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New York Airways Collection - United States Senate, March 8-11, 1965

Extracted on Mar-29-2024 01:51:21

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an individual driver might consider as applying to an intercity trip; that is what really counts in the decision as to whether to fly or drive. According to a recent survey¹ the majority of motorists think of principally gas and oil when they consider costs of an auto trip. Only about one-fourth mentioned depreciation and such costs as repairs, tolls, insurance and lodging were rarely recognized as true costs. Per-passenger costs also vary with the number of occupants in the car; additional passengers can be accommodated at no additional operating costs. Studies of the Bureau of Public Roads indicate an average occupancy factor of 2.2 passengers in intercity travel.² Recognizing the costs of operating a car under various trade-in cycles and the fact that drivers are not aware of all costs involved, we believe that six cents per vehicle mile represents a reasonable representation of the way in which auto costs are regarded when modal decisions are involved. Applying the average occupancy factor of 2.2 gives an average per passenger mile cost of 2.7 cents. Although this figure could show a variation up to 10 cents, depending upon the individual situation, we believe that an air vehicle would have to offer costs in this area to obtain a major participation in short-haul, personal travel. Of course, a straight passenger-mile cost comparison disregards such costs as local transportation at destination in the case of common-carriage use and lodging and food costs on auto trips of sufficient length to require them. Unless the auto trip is of long duration, however, recognition of these costs tends to favor the automobile.

In view of: (1) these competitive cost and convenience advantages enjoyed by the private automobile, (2) the continuing growth in private car ownership which will increase 70 per cent from 1960 to 1975 and (3) the future development of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, we can see only very limited demand for vertical-life aircraft systems in the next 10 to 15 years, insofar as personal travel is concerned. The Interstate Highway System is not scheduled to be completed until 1972.

"The 41,000 mile system, for which the Federal Government is paying 90 percent of the \$41 billion cost, is scheduled for completion in 1972. The States are working toward the more immediate objective of having half the system mileage open to traffic by the end of 1964.

"When completed, the Interstate System, which will comprise slightly more than 1 percent of the total U.S. road and street mileage, will carry over 20 percent of the Nation's traffic. It is designed to handle safely and efficiently the traffic needs of 1975, when over 100 million motor vehicles are expected to travel more than a trillion miles a year.

"The network of controlled-access superhighways, stretching from coast to coast and border to border and serving all major cities, will save 5,000 lives annually, greatly reduce driving time and costs, and enhance the Nation's economy.

"Over 14,500 miles of the Interstate System are now open to traffic, including 9,100 miles built to standards adequate for 1975 and 3,100 miles capable of handling current traffic but needing further improvement to bring them up to 1975 requirements. Toll roads, bridges, and tunnels, included in the system as permitted by law, total 2,300 miles. In addition, 4,700 miles of the system are under construction and on 11,400 miles engineering work or right-of-way acquisition is in

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¹ The Domestic Travel Market. Opinion Research Corporation, Princeton, New Jersey, 1963.

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³ US Department of Commerce, Office of the Secretary, July 1961.

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