

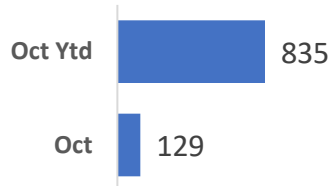
# ICE Air Flights

## October and October 2020 Year-to-Date

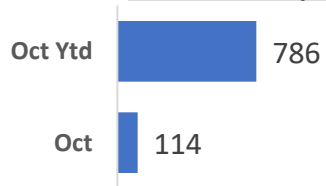
Total ICE Air Flights



ICE Air Deportation Flights



ICE Air Deportation Return Flights



ICE Air Domestic Flights



- November 5, 2020

**Questions and comments about this report can be directed to: Thomas Cartwright (author)**

**[thcartwright@gmail.com](mailto:thcartwright@gmail.com) +1.614.208.2791 (phone, WhatsApp, Signal)**

**Thomas Cartwright:** MS Financial Theory, University of Illinois. Retired EVP JPMorgan (38 years) with focus in management, strategic planning and analysis and financial management. For 3 years post retirement Tom performed strategic consulting assignments for Financial Industry leading clients. In retirement, Tom has dedicated his time to world refugee advocacy in the field and in Washington D.C. His work includes hands-on volunteering in refugee camps in Greece and our Southern Border. **S.C. : Senior Research Analyst:** BS Sociology, University of Chicago. 25 years of experience in strategic and business analytics at a Fortune Top 50 Company.

***Witness At The Border, an all-volunteer organization, shines a light on the cruelty and inhumanity of current immigration policy; we bear witness to the human rights abuse of asylum seekers and refugees. Witnesses hail from across the country and abroad.***

***From the Tornillo, TX and Homestead, FL Child Detention Centers to the Brownsville/Matamoros border, many have stood as witnesses in solidarity with the victims of these policies; to witness and report on the mass incarceration of innocent children and the practice of forcing asylum-seekers to wait in Mexico for their day in a tent court presided over by a remote judge on video, and to be faced with denial, without due process, of their legal rights to seek asylum and protection. To witness ICE Air fly those seeking protection from our country into danger and darkness, often in countries other than their own. Over 15,000 people follow Witness At The Border Facebook page.***

### **[ICE Air Research and Tracking Team:](#)**

**Karla Barber** ([witnessmpp@gmail.com](mailto:witnessmpp@gmail.com)) – Head of Tracking and Information Management, MS Management Information Systems, University of Texas, Dallas. Retired IT Manager Texas Instruments (22 years) with a focus on Business Process Re-engineering, Change Management, and Y2K Remediation. She is a Certified Sommelier, Certified Wine Educator, and the former National President of Women for WineSense. Since retiring in 2018 she has been a witness at the Tornillo, Texas and Homestead, Florida detention facilities for migrant children. She was a lead organizer for Witness at the Border in Brownsville TX/Matamoros MX and is actively tracking ICE flight movements via a ‘virtual’ witness effort.

**Joshua Rubin** ([Joshrubinofny@icloud.com](mailto:Joshrubinofny@icloud.com)), Joshua Rubin is the president of Rubin & Poor, Inc., a company that has developed testing software and performed data analysis since its founding at the beginning of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. He founded Witness Tornillo, which has since become Witness at the Border, a group dedicated to on the ground observation of the effects of U.S. immigration policy. His work is featured in the award-winning documentary “Witness at Tornillo.”

**Julie Swift** ([juliekswift@gmail.com](mailto:juliekswift@gmail.com)), is a former teacher, museum educator and exhibit coordinator with degrees in elementary and early childhood education. She is a Democratic precinct Chair in the border state of Texas where she lives. A social activist and member of many social and political groups, she is currently active with Witness at the Border on the ground and at the computer.

**<https://www.witnessattheborder.org> || [FaceBook: Witness at the Border \(formerly Witness:Tornillo\)](#) || [Twitter:@WitnessBorder](#)  
[Instagram: Witness At The Border](#)**

## **RECORD MONTH: DEPORTATION FLIGHTS, TOTAL FLIGHTS, AND EXPULSIONS UNDER TITLE 42**

We believe that the significant increase in deportation/expulsion (deportation) flights over the last two months of 26 (37%) in September and 33 (34%) in October are closely related to an increase in Title 42 (CDC Order) expulsions by air. [The number of expulsions](#) at the southern border increased from May to September by 28,283, or 1.4x, and deportation flights by 35, or 1.6x from May to September.

A reasonable assumption of what is driving the startling increase in deportation flights is that Mexico is feeling the strain of land expulsions in the [midst of a joint health and economic crisis](#) so they may be encouraging the US to expel more people by air. Although the ramp up is especially visible with flights to Haiti (up 9 to 12 in October) and Ecuador (up from 5 to 7 in October), it is also visible in increased flights to other countries including Guatemala and Honduras, each up 8 in October.

An example of the strain on border towns was [reported by volunteers in the town of Sasabe in Sonora](#), Mexico who reported that the **town of 2,500 was experiencing Border Patrol expulsions into their port of entry of 100 to 120 per day**. A town with no shelters, one store, and with a well-known presence of cartel activity. And the people expelled are reported to be from Northern Triangle countries in addition to Mexico. It is bad enough to expel people into large cities along the border, but in **these small towns there are no services of any kind available**. CBP will not disclose their decision-making processes or policies with regard to Title 42 expulsions. They respond to no one and are accountable to no one. There is no transparency, save an aggregate number on a rudimentary report.

This pressure on border towns from the sustained increase in encounters and related expulsions is no doubt spurring the **unprecedented cooperation of the [US, Guatemala, and Honduras to develop strategies to halt the humanitarian right to migrate](#)**. In October, officials from these countries met to “coordinate actions” to prevent new migrant caravans under the guise of combatting human trafficking and smuggling. This will likely lead to a continuing militarized approach to snuffing out caravans far from the US border similar to the actions last month against a [Honduran caravan in Guatemala](#) and Mexico. It is sadly ironic that disbanding a caravan has the opposite impact of the stated objective of providing safety for the migrants from traffickers and smugglers.

**That said, we should be clear that the vast majority of all expulsions must be occurring by land.** As mentioned above, from May to September, expulsions increased by 28,283 and deportation flights increased by 35. If we assume relatively full planes at 115 per plane, and an assumption that 80% on each plane are expulsions, the incremental flights would only account for about 4,000 of the increase in expulsions, **leaving about 24,000 (85%) of the increase in expulsions from May to September to be made by land. And to highlight the magnitude of expulsions, the reduction in all detention centers in the last 4 weeks was only about 1,900.**

In total, [through September, 197,000 people have been expelled by CBP](#) at the southern border since Title 42 (T-42) was invoked. During that time there have been 585 likely deportation flights to Latin America and the Caribbean. ICE will not disclose to us how many people are on a plane, or how many on the plane are being expelled or deported. But if we assume that throughout this period that there were 100 people per plane, and that between 60% and 80% on each plane were expelled during this time, **that would mean between 35,000 to 47,000 would have been expelled by air with 150,000 (75%) to 162,000 (82%) by land. People pushed into the border towns in [Mexico, in the midst of a pandemic](#)** that could be characterized as out of control in Mexico.

Moreover, based on 197,000 expulsions, and that [74% of encounters have been of Mexican nationals](#), it means that **around 39,000 to 42,000 people not native to Mexico, primarily natives of Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador**, have been expelled by land into a country in which

they most likely know no one and have no means of support or protection. As reported recently, **these include at least 200 unaccompanied children.**

To be sure, encounters may be overstated somewhat because they count attempts, not people, and the [recidivism rate is now near 37%](#), but by any account the impact on Mexican border towns is significant. **The impact of increased expulsions is also evident in the deportation departure cities.** Of the increase in deportation flights of 68 from May to October, 49, or 72%, of the increase can be attributed to US border town departures in Brownsville (+18), Laredo (+17), El Paso (+6) and San Diego (+8) where expulsions would originate.

**Because we believe expulsions are a major driver of the increased deportation activity, we will take some time to analyze CBP encounters at the southern border and expulsions for September, the latest data available. Please see the trend charts on pages 11 and 12 for a graphical representation.**

***Composition of encounters (54,771) by country of origin:*** [Of the 54,771 encounters](#) in September, 36,920 (67%) were from Mexico, with 5,919 (11%) from Guatemala, 4,853 (9%) from Honduras, 2,210 (4%) from El Salvador and 4,869 (9%) from other countries.

***Composition of encounters (54,771) by family unit:*** The composition of the family unit mix in September was similar to August with single adults, unaccompanied minors, and family units at 86% (47,207), 7% (3,756) and 7% (3,808) respectively. Of the single adults, Mexicans made up 72% (33,856), slightly less than 76% in August. In January, single adults comprised 73% of encounters, compared to the 86% in September.

Of the increase in encounters from January of 25,566, the increase of single Mexican adults made up 81% (20,802).

***Encounter Increase (7,488):*** In September CBP encounters at the SW border increased 7,488 (16%) from August, following increases of 7,700 and 8,747 in July and August, respectively. Encounters in September were 1.9x higher (25,566) than January and 3.4x higher (38,589) than the low point in April.

***Encounter Increase (7,488) by family unit:*** Of the 7,488 increase, single adults made up 5,912 (up 14%), unaccompanied minors 758 (up 25%), and family units 1,221 (up 47%). An unexplained prior period adjustment accounted for -403.

***Encounter Increase (7,488) by country of origin:*** Of the 7,488 increase, encounters of people from Mexico accounted for 2,849; Guatemala 1,845; Honduras 892; El Salvador 759; and other countries 1,546, and a prior period adjustment of -403. Even though the largest increase based on the number of people was from Mexico, on a percentage basis, Mexico represented the lowest percentage increase at 8%, with El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras at 52%, 45% and 23%, respectively.

***Expulsions (48,327):*** In September, 88% (48,327) of those encountered by CPB at the southern border (54,771) were expelled. Although the absolute number of those expelled increased 5,585 (13%) in September, the percent of encounters expelled was slightly less than the 90% (42,742) in August.

***Unaccompanied Minor encounters (3,756) and ORR referrals (1,218):*** Had the expulsion rate remained at 90% another 1,095 (2% of 54,771) people would have been expelled. It appears 2/3 of the lower expulsion rate can be traced to the increased rate of unaccompanied minors (UM) being placed with ORR. In August 14% (423) of UM were referred to ORR while in September 32% (1,218) were referred. The increase in the percentage referred accounts for about 675 (18% of 3,756) fewer potential expulsions.

The ORR referral rate of encounters at 34% is still just a little less than 1/2 of what it was before Title 42, but it was up significantly from the April through July average of only 6% or 83 children per month.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

***IN OCTOBER, ICE AIR FLEW MORE LIKELY DEPORTATION / EXPULSION FLIGHTS (129) AND MORE TOTAL FLIGHTS (494) THAN IN ANY MONTH IN 2020, INCLUDING BOTH THE PRE-COVID AND IN-COVID PERIODS. DEPORTATIONS EXCEEDED FEBRUARY, THE HIGHEST MONTH WE RECORDED FOR DEPORTATIONS AT 100. TOTAL FLIGHTS EXCEEDED MARCH, THE HIGHEST MONTH WE RECORDED AT 489. For sake of ease we will refer to all deportation / expulsion flights as deportation flights.***

***ICE AIR DEPORTED PEOPLE TO 15 COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN IN OCTOBER. COSTA RICA RECORDED ITS FIRST DEPORTATION FLIGHT THIS YEAR. THROUGH OCTOBER, WE HAVE WITNESSED DEPORTATION FLIGHTS TO 19 COUNTRIES IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN.***

***DEPORTATION FLIGHTS IN OCTOBER OF 129 SIGNIFICANTLY ECLIPSED THE 70 IN AUGUST AND THE 96 IN SEPTEMBER. WE BELIEVE THE INCREASES IN FLIGHTS ARE BEING HEAVILY IMPACTED BY FLIGHTS CARRYING PEOPLE EXPELLED UNDER TITLE 42 (T-42). PLEASE BE SURE TO READ THE PRIOR SECTION "RECORD MONTH..." ON PAGE 3 FOR A COMPREHENSIVE DISCUSSION.***

## **OCTOBER AND OCTOBER YEAR-TO-DATE FLIGHT SUMMARY**

***In October, there were 494 likely ICE Air flights,*** up by 50 (11%) from the 444 in September, and up significantly from the 354 in August.

- 129 deportation flights, with 114 return legs, to 15 different countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 76 domestic flights connecting directly to deportation flights.
- 175 domestic shuffle flights between deportation locations.
- 251 domestic flights (connections and shuffle flights).

***Year-to date October, there were 4,109 likely ICE Air flights,*** 53% deportation related (deportation legs, connections and returns) and 47% shuffle flights around the US.

- 835 deportation flights, with 786 return flights, to 19 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 566 domestic flights connecting directly to deportation flights.
- 1,922 domestic shuffle flights between deportation locations.
- 2,488 domestic flights (connections and shuffle flights).

## OCTOBER FLIGHT INSIGHTS

October deportation flights of 129 were up significantly by 33 (34%) over September. Haiti contributed 9 to the increase (from 3 to 12) and Guatemala and Honduras, 8 each, and Ecuador 5 (2 to 7). There was only 1 more flight day in October than September.

Likely ICE Air flights deported people to 15 different countries in Latin America and the Caribbean.

- **October total flights** of 494 were 25 (9%) above the Pre-COVID average (1 Jan to 13 March). Deportation related flights were up 61 (24%) from the pre-COVID period while shuffle flights were down 36 (17%) from that period, most likely reflecting the immediate expulsions from US border towns not requiring movement to interior US cities.
- **The most frequent deportations** were to Mexico (38) followed by Guatemala (29), Honduras (23), and Haiti (12) with these 4 countries comprising 79% of deportations in October, with Northern Triangle countries at 47% and Mexico at 29%.
- **October deportation flights** were 29 (29%) above the pre-COVID average (100). The major contributors to the increase were flights to Mexico (primarily expulsions) of 33, followed by Haiti up 10, offset by decreases in the Northern Triangle countries of 20.
- **Haiti**: 12 deportation flights, up significantly from the 3 in each of August and September. Prior to August, flights were about every other week. We understand this [massive acceleration](#) in the midst of the pandemic to a country extremely ill-equipped to deal with the importation of COVID was the result of many T-12 expulsions by air. [At least in one CBP sector](#) there was a large increase in crossings by Haitians. If this was true across other sectors that could be a contributing factor to more expulsions by air. We understand from people on the ground that these flights have been quite full so it is likely that over 1,200 Haitians were returned in October.
- **Ecuador**: 7 deportations, up significantly from the 2 flights occurring in 5 of the 6 previous months. Like Haiti, we believe this increase may be the result of both more encounters and more expulsions under T-42 by air. All but 1 of the flights were coupled with a route to Honduras. [Through mid-October, 1,686 Ecuadorians](#) had been deported, many of them men under 30. And something we don't focus on enough is those who die in the desert or river during the arduous and dangerous journey. So far this year, there have been [20 requests for the repatriation of bodies](#) to Ecuador of those that were found and identified. 12 bodies have been returned to Ecuador and 8 are in process. According to press [reports in Ecuador](#) more deportees have been returned from the US this year than last year.
- **Dominican Republic**: Although the number of flights, 2, was consistent with prior months, the 20 October flight was noteworthy in that the [Dominican press reported](#) that the flight deported 5 Dominican women who were subject to the alleged unnecessary gynecological procedures at Irwin with promises of no immigration charges. One woman remained in US detention to fight her case in the US. The Dominican government negotiated the return to get these women out of detention in the US and they may be excluded from testifying. Rep. Adriano Espaillat helped facilitate the return.

- **Guatemala:** 29 deportation flights in October, up 8 (38%) from September and higher than any month since March. Moreover, October's flights were more than double the 14 flights in August. Since 26 April, Guatemala has required pre-flight COVID tests and now will accept those who have recovered from COVID as proved by the full medical records deportees carry with them to Guatemala. Despite this, based on [reporting by Dan Gonzalez of the Arizona Republic](#), at least 331 deportees tested positive from 13 March to 21 September. And, it must be noted that only about a quarter of returnees were tested.
- [In October, 2,421 people were deported to Guatemala from the US](#), including 372 children all but 10 unaccompanied. 19,130 Guatemalans have been deported year-to-date through October, including 1,378 unaccompanied children. Like the flights, the number of people returned in October was almost double the number returned in August of 1,346.
- The Foreign Ministry of Guatemala indicated to us that, in addition to the required testing and medical records, flights were escalated because their citizens were spending between 2-4 months in ICE detention and they felt that duration was a significant COVID risk. Ironically, they balanced the risk of COVID exportation below that of the US ability to control COVID in detention centers. Of course, neither option is a good one.
- **Mexico:** 38 flights in October, the same as September. Mexico is now regularly accepting 9 flights per week to interior cities. In October flights were to Mexico City (8), Guadalajara (9), Villahermosa (3), Morelia (4), Puebla (5), and Queretaro (9). With an estimate of about 115 people per flight this would be 4,350 returned by air in September. In September there were 4,706 returned by air, up 870 from August, or 123 per plane. Based on an expulsion rate of encounters at 88% this would mean that about 14% of Mexican expulsions (32,500) were by air (see page 10). These planes are full, so to increase the returns by air we would have to see additional flights.

From past conversations with spokespeople for CBP, we believe most of the air returns are Mexican nationals who are being expelled under Title 42 with a priority on those who have attempted crossing multiple times so that it will be more difficult for them to return to the border. As mentioned prior, the recidivism rate is around 37%. [In September, 11,831 Mexican Nationals were repatriated by land](#) (in addition to the 4,706 returned by air) to Mexico under the repatriation agreement between Mexico and the US. It is unclear under what agreement Title 42 operates. Our inquiry to ICE received no comment based on pending litigation. By air, based on Mexico reporting, it seems all returnees are accounted for under the agreement, but given the gap between [US reported expulsions](#) and [Mexico reported repatriations \(16,537\)](#), many returns seem to be outside of the repatriation agreement, perhaps 16,000 in September alone.

- **Honduras:** 23 deportation flights in October, up 8 (53%) from September, almost at the pre-COVID level. About 1/3 of the flights were coupled with a deportation route to Ecuador. Deportees to Honduras in September totaled 726, or about 48 people per plane. On a September year to date basis, [12,593 people have been deported from the US to Honduras](#), including 1,320 children. October data is not yet available, but we would estimate that over 1,000 people were returned in October. Through September, Mexico deported 1.5x more people than the US to Honduras (total 18,199).
- **El Salvador:** 8 deportation flights in October, same as September, and in line with the In-COVID period, but 4 below the pre-COVID period. In October, only 1 flight in the first week of October was coupled with a flight to Guatemala after 3 were in September. We found coupling of flights with Guatemala unusual in that Guatemala requires pre-flight testing so it is curious that they would mix Guatemalans with Salvadorans unless they were tested too, which was a possibility. We did let a contact in the Guatemalan Congress know about the

coupling last month. [In September, 406 people were deported from the US to El Salvador](#), or about 51 per flight, up from 270 in August (4 flights). Based on 8 flights in October with 50 people per flight, that would **be 400 people deported in October, consistent with September, leading us to think that may be by agreement.** Interestingly, based on IOM reporting, in [1Q 2020 Mexico deported 1,813 people to El Salvador, but since then virtually 0.](#)

- **[Costa Rica:](#)** The first observed deportation flight to Costa Rica of the year was in October. In 2019 the US deported 176 people to Costa Rica.
- **[Trinidad and the Bahamas:](#)** Experienced 1 deportation flight after none since June. In 2019 the US deported 106 people to Trinidad and 109 people to the Bahamas. It was [reported by Senator Menendez](#) that in 1Q the US deported people from Venezuela illegally through Trinidad into immediate danger.
- **[Africa: Cameroon and D.R Congo: \(Not included in flight totals as these are very difficult to identify\)](#)** We received information and then began to work with almost 100 advocates to track a deportation flight to Cameroon and DR Congo. We found the OMNI Air plane and with the help of The Dream Team in Dallas monitored the detention center, buses and plane and then **we tracked it from Dallas to Senegal (fuel) to Douala, Cameroon and to Kinshasa, DR Congo. 57 people were returned into imminent danger** in Cameroon and 28 in DR Congo. We were at least able to provide the times and locations of the landings (ICE discloses nothing) so [people could be on the ground](#) to try to meet the returnees and provide some safety as they could. Reports are mixed but many are still in “quarantine” and some interrogated, some jailed and some missing. **What is not mixed, are the reports of the danger they are in at the hands of the government, [as reported by Julian Borger of The Guardian.](#)** Many advocates and Members of Congress pressed ICE to stop the flight on humanitarian grounds but they were not moved. In 2019, 76 people were deported to Cameroon and 81 to the DR of the Congo. **We are anticipating another deportation flight to Cameroon** on or around 10 November based on what we are hearing.

**[There were no flights to:](#)** Guyana, St. Vincent-Grenadine, Panama, or Belize, which is not unusual for any month.

## **OCTOBER YEAR-TO-DATE FLIGHT INSIGHTS**

Year-to-date OCTOBER, there have been 835 likely deportation flights to Latin America and the Caribbean.

Likely ICE Air flights deported people to 19 different countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (and at least 5 countries in Africa to India and Pakistan)

- **[Flights to The Northern Triangle and Mexico](#)** (688) comprise 82% of all deportation flights. Flights to the Northern Triangle (509) comprise 61% of all deportation flights.
- **[The top 5 deportation destinations](#)** are Guatemala (221), Honduras (200), Mexico (179), El Salvador (88) and Ecuador (36), accounting for 87% of deportation destinations.

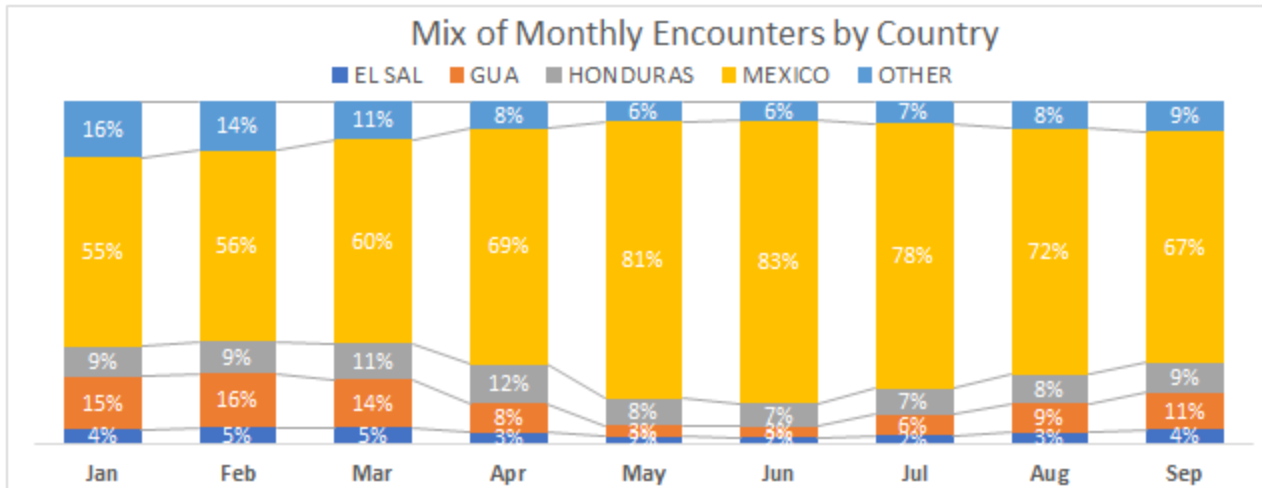
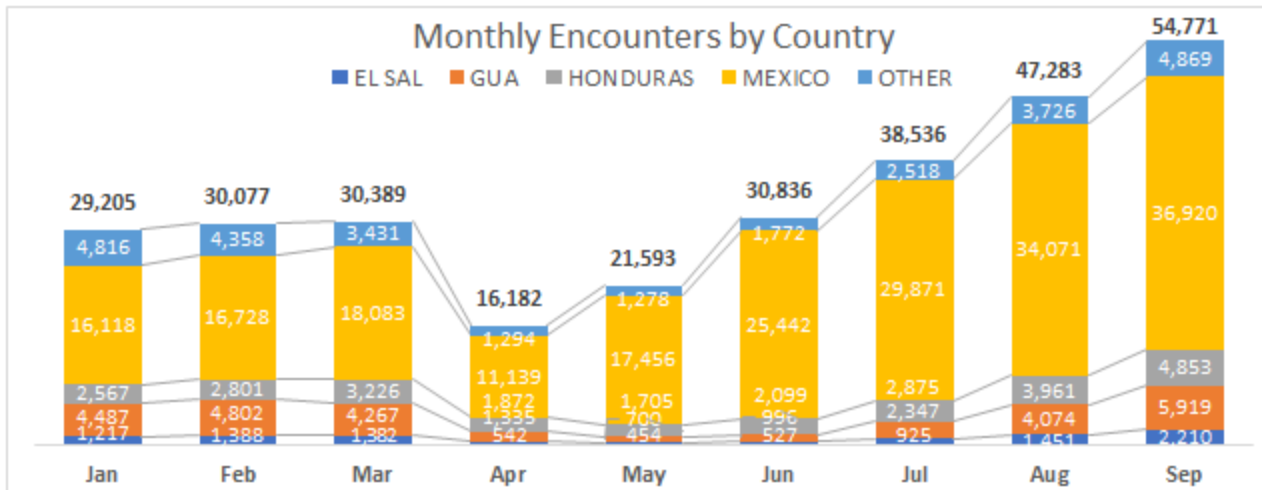


- **The most frequent deportation routes** were Brownsville to Honduras (72), Brownsville to Guatemala (62), Alexandria, LA to Guatemala (54), and Alexandria, LA to Honduras (41).
- **The most frequent deportation departures** were from Brownsville and Alexandria with 196 and 177, respectively, comprising 45% of all deportation departures. El Paso, Phoenix, and Laredo follow with 88, 71, and 59 flights, respectively, rounding out the top 5 with 71% of deportation departures.
- **Mexico flights have maintained elevated levels** with flights in March, April, May, June, July, August, September, and October of 5, 0, 8, 23, 29, 29, 38, and 38, respectively. In October, flights to Mexico represented 29% of all deportation flights. **It is very important to note that the primary reason for these flights is for expulsions under the CDC order (Title 42), and NOT traditional deportations from centers.**
- **A CBP spokesman told us that Mexico chooses the destination locations.** We asked Mexico Immigration and Nationalization about how destinations are chosen and they referred us to the Foreign Ministry which has yet to answer our inquiry. We assume the number of locations has expanded with the number of flights so as not to overwhelm any one location in the midst of the pandemic with an estimated 4,200 repatriated Mexican Nationals in September. **Our hypothesis is that the dominant reasons for deportations/expulsions by air is to relieve pressure on Mexican border towns and, equally important, to punish migrants for multiple crossing attempts (37% recidivism reported in July), something landing in the south of Mexico would help accomplish.**
- **CBP reported** that the number of single Mexican adults encountered increased significantly from 150,000 to 229,000 in FY2020 (Sept-Oct). Encounters of all Mexican Nationals increased to 253,118 from 166,458 in FY2020 as a result of a significant acceleration in recent months. **That's an increase of 52% while at the same time encounters from the Northern Triangle countries (Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador) will be down in the range of 82 – 84% in 2020. Likely reasons for the increase in encounters of Mexicans include escalating turf and drug wars and the impacts of COVID, both of which have contributed to the already challenging economic conditions in Mexico. Moreover, and perhaps counterintuitively, the CDC order (Title 42), that has put a tourniquet around the border for those who want to go through the asylum process, may be encouraging more Mexican nationals to cross. Expulsion does not carry the same penalty as deportation so recidivism has escalated with CBP reporting 37% of encounters are from repeat crossers.**
- **Cuba:** Based on statements by ICE, Cuba continues to deny landing rights for deportation flights based on the risk of COVID. This official denial began on 28 February. Unfortunately, because of tourist flights before that it was difficult to discern any charter deportation flights so to be conservative we have included none in this analysis. They continue to be on the ICE “recalcitrant country” list which generally means that countries who do not accept repatriations may be subject to visa restrictions. As of 19 September, there were 1,805 Cuban Nationals in detention, of which 1,043, or 58%, have final orders of removal, according to Ben Schamisso of Newsy. That said, we are reading reporting from Monique Madan of the Miami Herald of more movement of Cuban detainees and of potential coercion of document signing. American Airlines appears to be booking regular flights for December for regular flights, so we are watching carefully for a resumption of deportations.

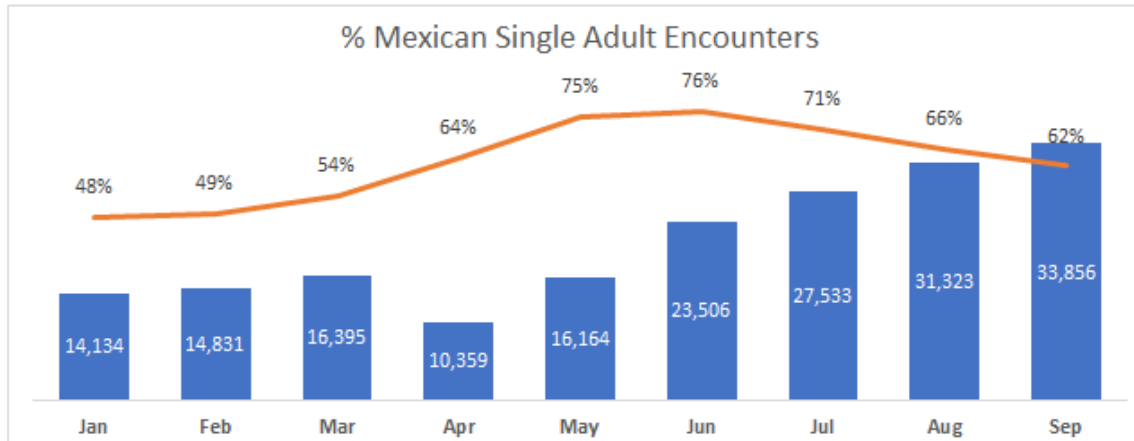
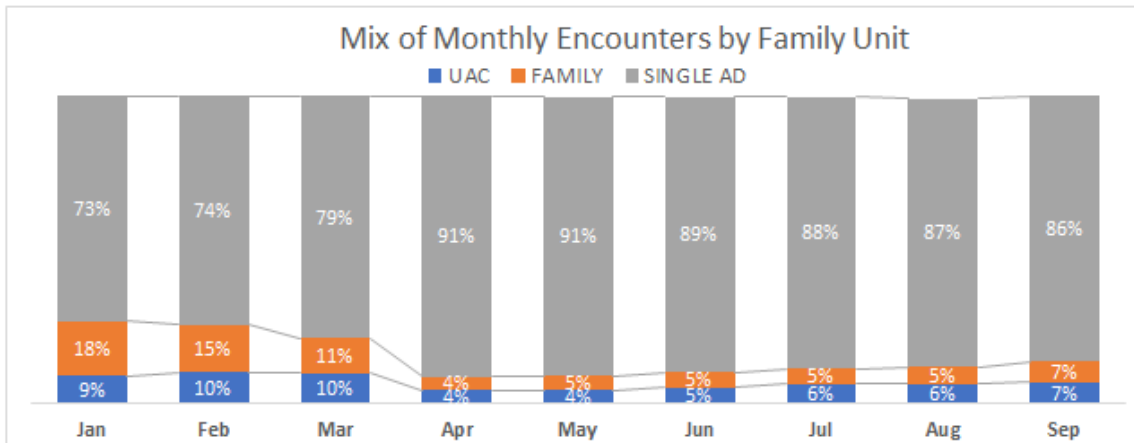
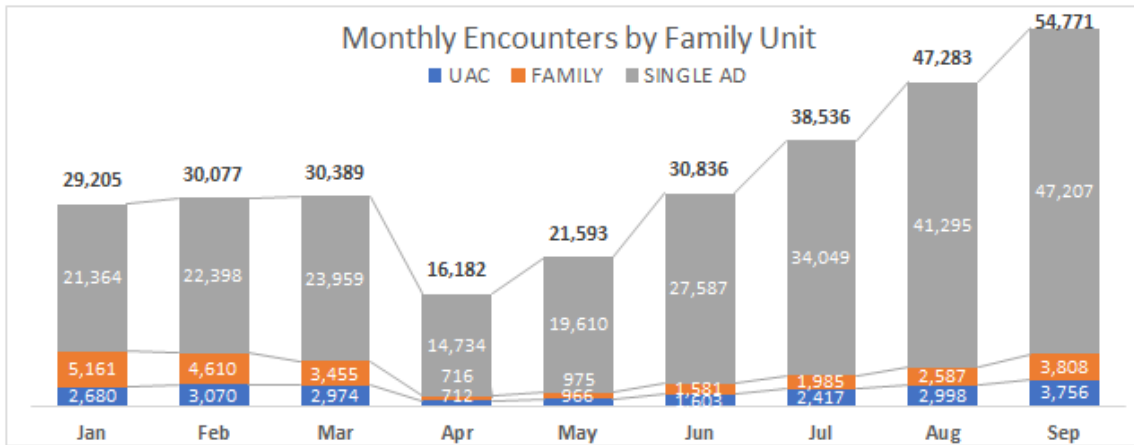
- **Brazil:** The 1 flight in October remained consistent with the in-COVID period. It is worth noting the continuation of deportation flights that [were rejected by Brazil from 2006 to October 2019](#) when the resumption was negotiated by the Foreign Ministry. We have recorded 15 flights through October.

**Year-to-date, the busiest cities for combined departure and destination for domestic flights (connection and shuffle) are Alexandria (869), Brownsville (800) and Phoenix (519).**

- **The most frequent domestic flight routes** are consistent and are Alexandria LA to Brownsville (155), Brownsville to Alexandria (112), Phoenix to El Paso (89), San Antonio to Brownsville (79), and Miami to Columbus GA (72).
- **Alexandria LA** had a very balanced mix of flights originating to Central America with 54 to Guatemala, 41 to Honduras, and 34 to El Salvador, reinforcing their role as a major concentration point for detainees.



Customs and Border Patrol Encounters at the Southern Border.



Customs and Border Patrol Encounters at the Southern Border.

## TRACKING ICE AIR

**ICE Air contracted with the airline broker Classic Air Charters. They in turn subcontracted the flights to World Atlantic (Caribbean Sun) and Swift Air (nka iAero).** Flights on World Atlantic were substantially reduced in March and they have not flown an ICE Air flight since mid-March.

**ICE Air does not disclose information or data about their flights.** Our information is based on securing all flight information from the publicly available FlightAware application for World Atlantic and Swift. We then filter the flights to the likely ICE Air deportation and destination locations to identify, within a small margin of error, the deportation flights. **To do this we use the knowledge and experience we gained through tracking ICE Air for 8 months.** Any errors in our estimations we believe are small and certainly immaterial to the analysis that follows.

**The domestic analysis was particularly difficult in that both Swift and World Atlantic fly many more non-ICE Air charters domestically than internationally,** so establishing business rules to filter to just ICE Air flights becomes much more dependent on understanding the specific planes in the fleets used for ICE Air, the locations of detention centers, regular ICE Air flight patterns, and knowledge of other partners Swift and World Atlantic serve and their common destinations. **As such, the margin of error may be somewhat higher in this domestic analysis than the deportation analysis, but we are confident it is within a reasonable margin of error** and, since any errors would most likely occur randomly over time, that the comparative time period analysis is quite sound. In certain very limited cases, such as Cuba, our confidence was not high enough to determine regular flights from deportations so we excluded them all to be conservative. **A pre/early COVID domestic flights comparison can be found in our [“ICE Air 1,677 flights while COVID rages.”](#)**

## OUT OF SCOPE

- **Our pre/early COVID deportation detailed comparative analysis can be found in our [“ICE Air Deportations: Has COVID -19 Changed Anything?” published May 7, 2020.](#)**
- **The number of detainees in total or on any flight.** ICE discloses none of these numbers and there is no reasonable way to estimate. In April 2019 Phil Neff from the University of Washington Center for Human Rights published a piece that did analyze passenger data secured through a FOIA request in *“Hidden in Plain Sight: ICE Air and the Machinery of Mass Deportation.”* We understand that this piece may be updated and look forward to the analysis.
- **That said, we know from how the pandemic spreads that you do not need a plane load of infected people to seed and spread COVID. A few people carrying the virus can spread it quickly and devastatingly.**

## FLIGHT CATEGORIZATION

We have categorized ICE Air flight legs into 4 categories as follows:

- - **Deportation** – A flight from a domestic ICE Air location to an international deportation destination. They do not include flights from a domestic location to a domestic location on the border where detainees could be deported by land from that point, such as a flight from Alexandria to Brownsville where deportees may be bussed to be deported at the Gateway Bridge. There is no way to determine that the specific flight is for deportation or not. These flights are included in the domestic pool.
- - **Deportation Return** – A flight subsequent to a deportation flight that returns in one or more legs to the US. There are fewer deportation returns than deportations because in some instances there are multiple deportation destinations. For example, a flight from Brownsville to El Salvador to Ecuador to Brownsville would include 2 deportation destinations and 1 return.
- - **Deportation Connection** – A flight leg that is entirely domestic and occurs earlier the same day as a deportation flight for that same plane. For example, if a specific plane flies the route San Antonio to El Paso to Guatemala in the same day, then that would be 1 deportation connection (San Antonio to El Paso) and 1 deportation flight (El Paso to Guatemala).
- - **Shuffle** – A fully domestic flight that is not a deportation connection. Essentially flights facilitating movement between domestic detention centers.

## Total ICE Air Flights YTD 2020 – Deportation and Domestic

Flight Category	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Year to Date	% of Flights	Current Month		Current Month		Current Month	
													H/(L) Pr Mth	% H/(L) Pr Mth	H/(L) Pre-COVID Mth Avg	% H/(L) Pre-COVID Mth Avg	H/(L) In-COVID Mth Avg	% H/(L) In-COVID Mth Avg
1 Deportation	91	100	91	47	61	68	82	70	96	129	835	20%	33	34%	29	29%	51	65%
2 Deportation Connection Total Outbound	<u>61</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>49</u>	<u>45</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>566</u>	14%	<u>9</u>	13%	<u>11</u>	17%	<u>22</u>	41%
3 Deportation	152	166	142	84	110	113	143	123	163	205	1,401	34%	42	26%	40	24%	73	55%
4 Deportation Return	<u>88</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>786</u>	19%	<u>25</u>	28%	<u>21</u>	23%	<u>40</u>	54%
5 Total Deportation Related	240	259	225	128	167	182	225	190	252	319	2,187	53%	67	27%	61	24%	113	55%
6 Domestic Shuffle	191	210	264	152	192	204	178	164	192	175	1,922	47%	(17)	(9%)	(36)	(17%)	(11)	(6%)
7 <b>Total Flights</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>469</b>	<b>489</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>359</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>494</b>	<b>4,109</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>26%</b>
8 <b>Total Domestic</b> (Deport Connect + Shuffle)	<b>252</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>241</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>2,488</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>(8)</b>	<b>(3%)</b>	<b>(25)</b>	<b>(9%)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>5%</b>
9 # Week Days (non-Holiday)	21	19	22	22	20	22	23	21	21	22	213		1	5%	2	10%	0	1%

**NB: Each month we send our flight totals, by category, to ICE to confirm or deny that our results are within a reasonable range based on their records. Each month they choose not to confirm, and importantly, they choose not to deny our results. If anything changes this month we will update with a comment.**

Pre-COVID = Jan 1 to Mar 13  
In-COVID = Mar 14 to Oct 31

# ICE Air Deportation Destination Cities YTD 2020

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Year to Date	% of Flights	Current Month		Current Month		Current Month	
														H/(L) Pr Mth	% H/(L) Pr Mth	H/(L) Pre-COVID Mth Avg	% H/(L) Pre-COVID Mth Avg	H/(L) In-COVID Mth Avg	% H/(L) In-COVID Mth Avg
<b>Deportation Destination Cities</b>																			
<b>1</b>	Guatemala City, Guatemala	42	45	33	10	7	7	13	14	21	29	221	26%	8	38%	(14)	(33%)	14	92%
<b>2</b>	San Pedro Sula, Honduras	27	24	19	18	23	19	18	14	15	23	200	24%	8	53%	(2)	(9%)	5	26%
<b>3</b>	San Salvador, El Salvador	11	11	14	8	9	6	9	4	8	8	88	11%	0	0%	(4)	(35%)	0	5%
<b>4</b>	Mexico City, Mexico	0	0	0	0	8	12	10	8	9	8	55	7%	(1)	(11%)	8	n/a	1	9%
<b>5</b>	Guadalajara, Mexico	2	7	5	0	0	5	9	8	9	9	54	6%	0	0%	4	73%	4	65%
<b>6</b>	Ecuador	2	4	10	2	2	2	2	3	2	7	36	4%	5	250%	2	35%	4	128%
<b>7</b>	Port-au-Prince, Haiti	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	12	32	4%	9	300%	10	500%	8	233%
<b>8</b>	Villahermosa, Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	6	7	8	4	3	28	3%	(1)	(25%)	3	n/a	(1)	(20%)
<b>9</b>	Queretaro, Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	9	17	2%	1	13%	9	n/a	7	297%
<b>10</b>	Santo Domingo, DR	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	17	2%	2	n/a	0	0%	0	25%
<b>11</b>	Managua, Nicaragua	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	0	1	3	16	2%	2	200%	1	88%	1	88%
<b>12</b>	Morelia, Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	3	4	14	2%	1	33%	4	n/a	2	114%
<b>13</b>	Belo Horizonte, Brazil	0	1	4	2	2	0	1	0	1	1	12	1%	0	0%	(1)	(38%)	(0)	(6%)
<b>14</b>	Puebla, Mexico	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	5	5	11	1%	0	0%	5	n/a	4	241%
<b>15</b>	Bogota, Colombia	1	1	1	0	2	1	1	0	2	1	10	1%	(1)	(50%)	0	25%	(0)	(6%)
<b>16</b>	Kingston, Jamaica	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	2	1	9	1%	(1)	(50%)	0	25%	0	7%
<b>17</b>	Callao, Peru	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	0%	1	n/a	1	n/a	1	150%
<b>18</b>	Manaus, Brazil	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	3	0%	0	n/a	0	n/a	(0)	(100%)
<b>19</b>	Nassau, Bahamas	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0%	1	n/a	1	n/a	1	275%
<b>20</b>	Piarco, Trinidad	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	2	0%	1	n/a	1	n/a	1	275%
<b>21</b>	Panama City, Panama	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0%	(1)	(100%)	0	n/a	(0)	(100%)
<b>22</b>	Timehri, Guyana	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0%	(1)	(100%)	0	n/a	(0)	(100%)
<b>23</b>	San Jose, Costa Rica	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0%	1	n/a	1	n/a	1	650%
<b>24</b>	Argyle, Saint Vincent	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0%	0	n/a	0	n/a	(0)	(100%)
<b>25</b>	Belize City, Belize	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0%	(1)	(100%)	0	n/a	(0)	(100%)
<b>26</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>27</b>	Mexico Total	2	7	5	0	8	23	29	29	38	38	179		0	0%	33	631%	16	72%
<b>28</b>	# Week Days (non-Holiday)	21	19	22	22	20	22	23	21	21	22	213		1	5%	2	10%	0	1%

Pre-COVID = Jan 1 to Mar 13  
 In-COVID = Mar 14 to Oct 31



## ICE Air Deportation Departure Cities YTD 2020

		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Year to Date	% of Flights	Current Month		Current Month		Current Month	
														H/(L) Pr Mth	% H/(L) Pr Mth	H/(L) Pre-COVID Mth Avg	% H/(L) Pre-COVID Mth Avg	H/(L) In-COVID Mth Avg	% H/(L) In-COVID Mth Avg
<b>Deportation Departure Cities</b>																			
<b>1</b>	Brownsville, TX	23	27	20	13	13	13	18	21	17	31	196	23%	14	82%	5	21%	13	76%
<b>2</b>	Alexandria, LA	18	17	13	13	14	18	22	11	24	27	177	21%	3	13%	9	53%	9	52%
<b>3</b>	El Paso, TX	9	10	11	5	3	5	11	14	11	9	88	11%	(2)	(18%)	(1)	(13%)	1	9%
<b>4</b>	Phoenix, AZ	15	18	8	0	4	10	4	2	6	4	71	9%	(2)	(33%)	(11)	(74%)	(0)	(9%)
<b>5</b>	Laredo, TX	6	4	4	1	2	1	6	6	10	19	59	7%	9	90%	14	265%	13	210%
<b>6</b>	San Diego, CA	0	0	5	0	4	6	5	5	12	12	49	6%	0	0%	10	650%	6	100%
<b>7</b>	Houston, TX	7	9	8	6	7	3	1	0	3	3	47	6%	0	0%	(5)	(63%)	(1)	(17%)
<b>8</b>	Miami, FL	4	5	8	2	0	3	3	1	2	4	32	4%	2	100%	(1)	(17%)	1	50%
<b>9</b>	Dallas, TX	5	3	4	0	2	2	5	4	1	0	26	3%	(1)	(100%)	(4)	(100%)	(2)	(100%)
<b>10</b>	San Pedro Sula, Honduras	0	1	0	0	3	2	3	2	2	10	23	3%	8	400%	10	2400%	7	241%
<b>11</b>	San Antonio, TX	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	4	20	2%	2	100%	3	400%	2	67%
<b>12</b>	San Juan, Puerto Rico	0	0	1	2	3	1	0	1	1	0	9	1%	(1)	(100%)	0	n/a	(1)	(100%)
<b>13</b>	Guatemala City, Guatemala	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2	7	1%	(1)	(33%)	2	400%	1	150%
<b>14</b>	Port-au-Prince, Haiti	2	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	7	1%	0	n/a	(2)	(100%)	(0)	(100%)
<b>15</b>	Belo Horizonte, Brazil	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0%	0	n/a	(2)	(100%)	0	n/a
<b>16</b>	Ecuador	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0%	0	n/a	(2)	(100%)	0	n/a
<b>17</b>	Harlingen/San Benito, TX	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	3	0%	0	n/a	0	n/a	(0)	(100%)
<b>18</b>	Manaus, Brazil	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	3	0%	1	n/a	1	n/a	1	150%
<b>19</b>	Other	1	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	2	3	10	1%	1	50%	3	650%	2	150%
<b>20</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>21</b>	# Week Days (non-Holiday)	21	19	22	22	20	22	23	21	21	22	213		1	5%	2	10%	0	1%

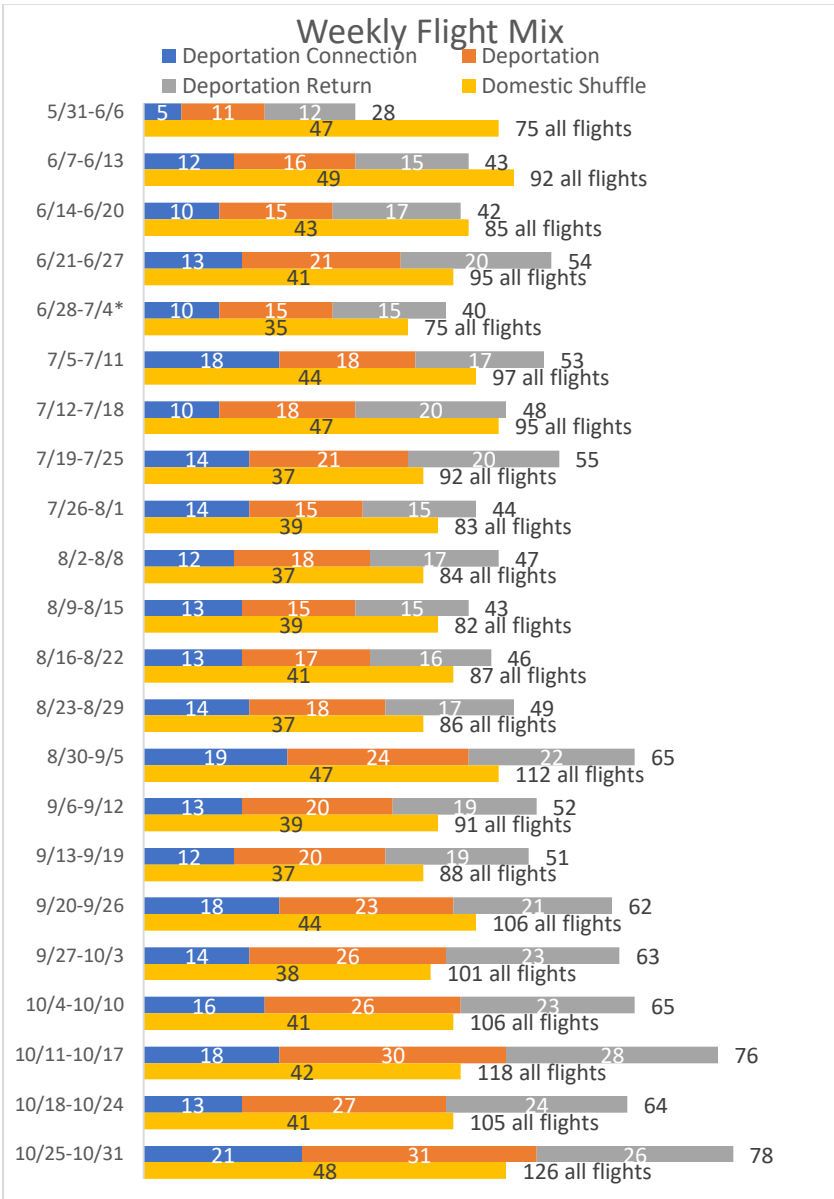
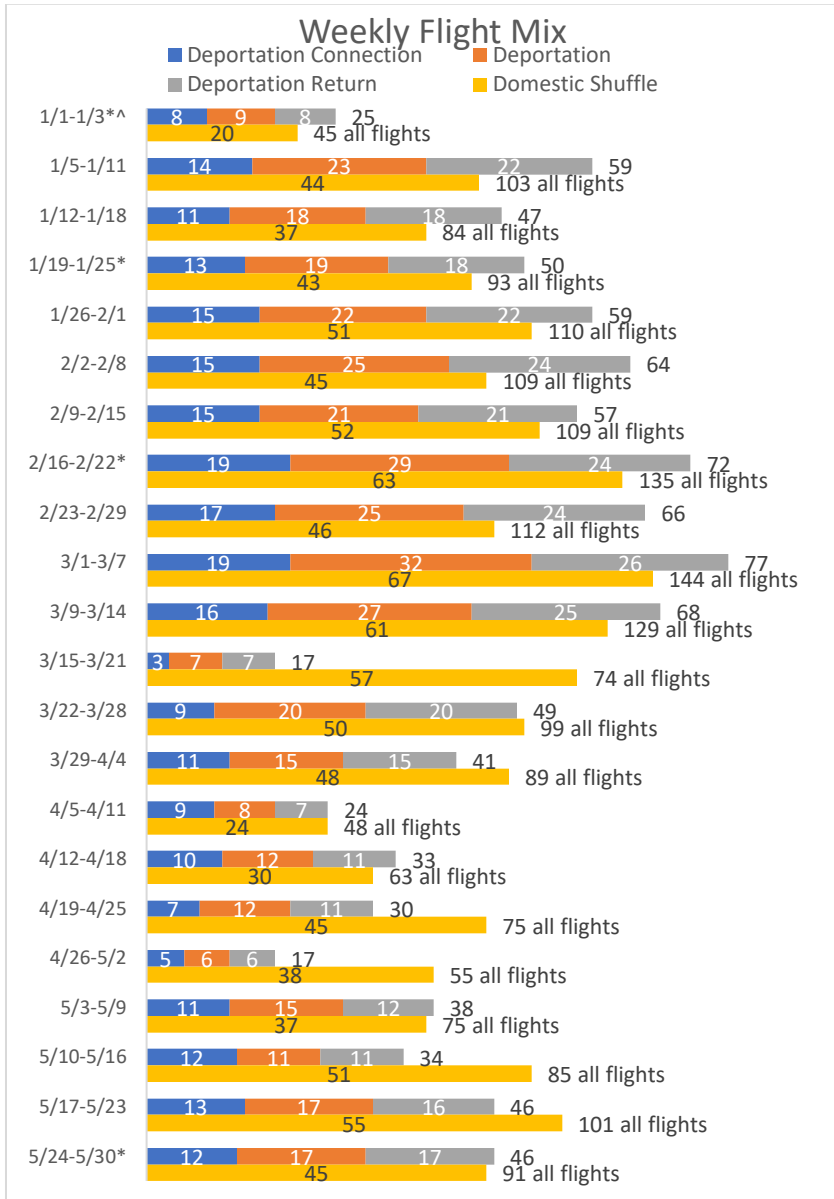
Pre-COVID = Jan 1 to Mar 13  
 In-COVID = Mar 14 to Oct 31

## ICE Air Flights: Pre-COVID and In-COVID

Flight Category	Total ICE Air						Deportation Destination Cities						Deportation Departure Cities				
	Pre-COVID		In-COVID		Total		Pre-COVID		In-COVID		Total		Pre-COVID		In-COVID		Total
	#	%	#	%			#	%	#	%			#	%	#	%	
<b>1</b> Deportation	250	21%	585	20%	835	<b>1</b> Guatemala City, Guatemala	108	43%	113	19%	221	<b>1</b> Brownsville, TX	64	26%	132	23%	196
<b>2</b> Deportation Connection	<u>162</u>	14%	<u>404</u>	14%	<u>566</u>	<b>2</b> San Pedro Sula, Honduras	63	25%	137	23%	200	<b>2</b> Alexandria, LA	44	18%	133	23%	177
<b>3</b> Total Outbound Deportation	412	35%	989	34%	1,401	<b>3</b> San Salvador, El Salvador	31	12%	57	10%	88	<b>3</b> El Paso, TX	26	10%	62	11%	88
<b>4</b> Deportation Return	<u>232</u>	20%	<u>554</u>	19%	<u>786</u>	<b>4</b> Mexico City, Mexico	0	0%	55	9%	55	<b>4</b> Phoenix, AZ	38	15%	33	6%	71
<b>5</b> Total Deportation Related	644	55%	1,543	53%	2,187	<b>5</b> Guadalajara, Mexico	13	5%	41	7%	54	<b>5</b> Laredo, TX	13	5%	46	8%	59
<b>6</b> Domestic Shuffle	528	45%	1,394	47%	1,922	<b>6</b> Ecuador	13	5%	23	4%	36	<b>6</b> San Diego, CA	4	2%	45	8%	49
<b>7</b> Total Flights	1,172	100%	2,937	100%	4,109	<b>7</b> Port-au-Prince, Haiti	5	2%	27	5%	32	<b>7</b> Houston, TX	20	8%	27	5%	47
<b>8</b> Total Domestic (Deport Connect + Shuffle)	690	59%	1,798	61%	2,488	<b>8</b> Villahermosa, Mexico	0	0%	28	5%	28	<b>8</b> Miami, FL	12	5%	20	3%	32
<b>9</b> # Week Days (non-Holiday)	50		163		213	<b>9</b> Queretaro, Mexico	0	0%	17	3%	17	<b>9</b> Dallas, TX	11	4%	15	3%	26
						<b>10</b> Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	5	2%	12	2%	17	<b>10</b> San Pedro Sula, Honduras	1	0%	22	4%	23
						<b>11</b> Managua, Nicaragua	4	2%	12	2%	16	<b>11</b> San Antonio, TX	2	1%	18	3%	20
						<b>12</b> Morelia, Mexico	0	0%	14	2%	14	<b>12</b> San Juan, Puerto Rico	0	0%	9	2%	9
						<b>13</b> Belo Horizonte, Brazil	4	2%	8	1%	12	<b>13</b> Guatemala City, Guatemala	1	0%	6	1%	7
						<b>14</b> Puebla, Mexico	0	0%	11	2%	11	<b>14</b> Port-au-Prince, Haiti	5	2%	2	0%	7
						<b>15</b> Bogota, Colombia	2	1%	8	1%	10	<b>15</b> Belo Horizonte, Brazil	4	2%	0	0%	4
						<b>16</b> Kingston, Jamaica	2	1%	7	1%	9	<b>16</b> Ecuador	4	2%	0	0%	4
						<b>17</b> Callao, Peru	0	0%	3	1%	3	<b>17</b> Harlingen/San Benito, TX	0	0%	3	1%	3
						<b>18</b> Manaus, Brazil	0	0%	3	1%	3	<b>18</b> Manaus, Brazil	0	0%	3	1%	3
						<b>19</b> Nassau, Bahamas	0	0%	2	0%	2	<b>19</b> Other	1	0%	9	2%	10
						<b>20</b> Piarco, Trinidad	0	0%	2	0%	2	<b>20</b> Total	250	100%	585	100%	835
						<b>21</b> Other	0	0%	5	1%	5	<b>21</b> # Week Days (non-Holiday)	50		163		213
						<b>22</b> Total	250	100%	585	100%	835						
						<b>23</b> Mexico Total	13	5%	166	28%	179						
						<b>24</b> # Week Days (non-Holiday)	50		163		213						

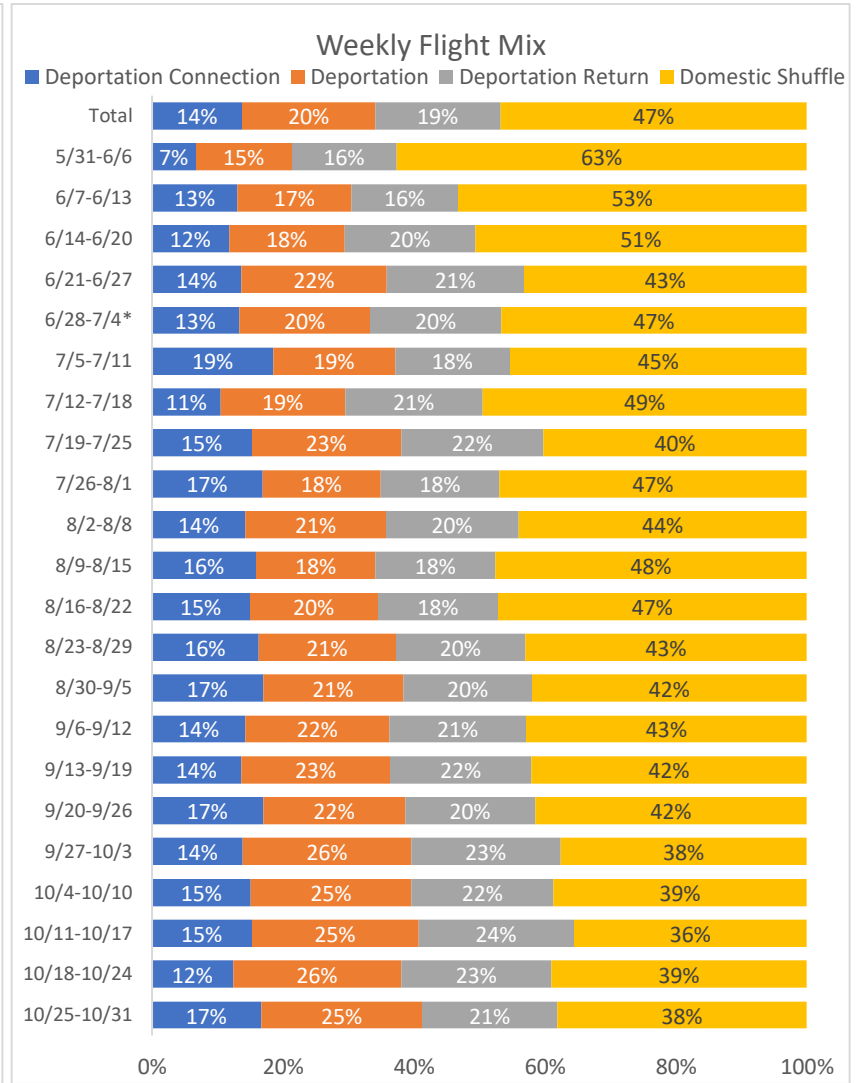
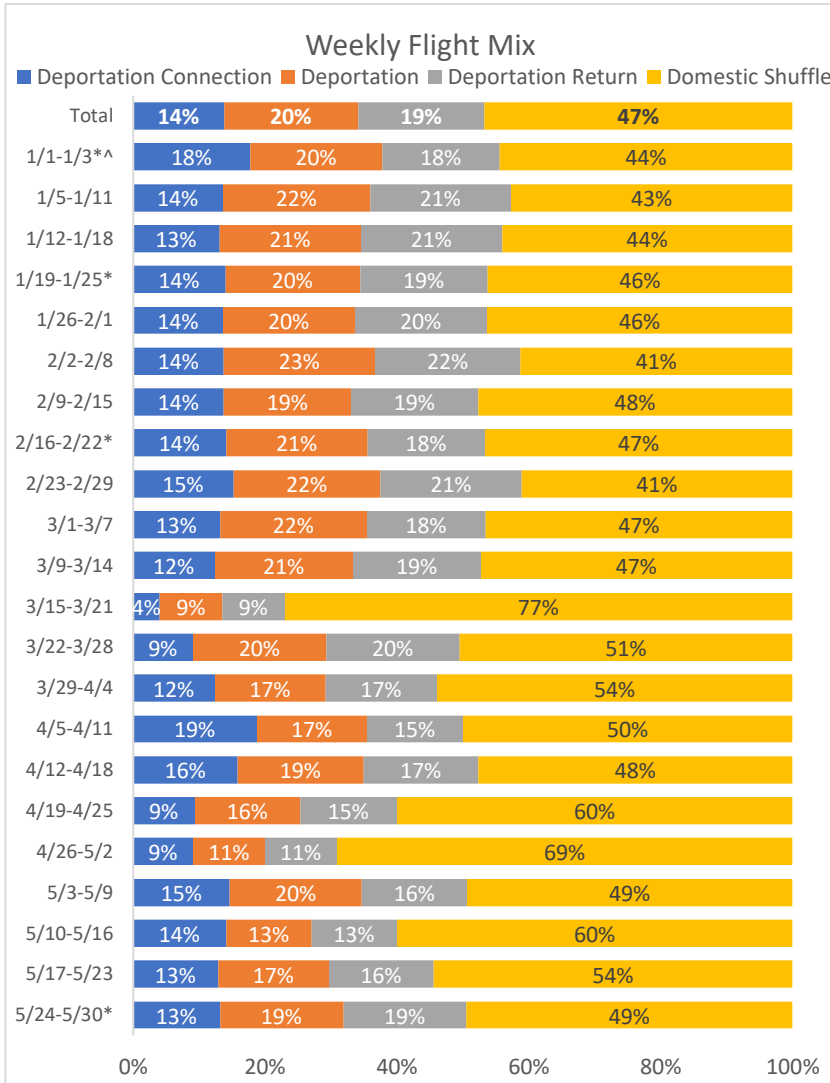
Pre-COVID = Jan 1 to Mar 13  
 In-COVID = Mar 14 to Oct 31

# ICE Air Weekly Flight Mix - #



^ short week  
\* Holiday

# Ice Air Weekly Flight Mix - %



^ short week  
\* Holiday

# ICE Air Domestic YTD 2020

## Destination City

	Alexandria, LA	Brownsville, TX	Phoenix, AZ	El Paso, TX	Columbus, GA	Miami, FL	San Diego, CA	Laredo, TX	San Antonio, TX	Houston, TX	Richmond, VA	Other	Total	% of Total
Alexandria, LA		155	34	9	9	36		3	9	12	1	156	424	17%
Brownsville, TX	112		16	18	13	40	1	29	40	7		105	381	15%
Phoenix, AZ	40	20	1	89	1	3	64	1	3	1	1	109	333	13%
San Antonio, TX	46	79	4	6	23	3	5	26		8		12	212	9%
Miami, FL	28	15	9		72		1		4	3	1	7	140	6%
Columbus, GA	44	39				13			2	20		7	125	5%
El Paso, TX	19	8	49		1	3		1		1		9	91	4%
San Diego, CA			44	5		5				1		6	61	2%
Richmond, VA	43					1			1			1	46	2%
Omaha, NE		4										41	45	2%
Harrisburg, PA	5	38										2	45	2%
Other	108	61	29	44	5	11	37	39	9	4	43	195	585	24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>171</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>650</b>	<b>2,488</b>	<b>100%</b>
% of Total	18%	17%	7%	7%	5%	5%	4%	4%	3%	2%	2%	26%	100%	

# ICE Air Deportation YTD 2020

	Destination City												Total	% of Total
	Guatemala City, Guatemala	San Pedro Sula, Honduras	San Salvador, El Salvador	Mexico City, Mexico	Guadalajara, Mexico	Ecuador	Port-au-Prince, Haiti	Villahermosa, Mexico	Queretaro, Mexico	Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	Managua, Nicaragua	Other		
Brownsville, TX	62	72	4	19	1	1	4	17	9		4	3	196	23%
Alexandria, LA	54	41	34			5	9			9	10	15	177	21%
El Paso, TX	31	7	1		39	4		6				0	88	11%
Phoenix, AZ	38	16	4		8			5				0	71	9%
Laredo, TX			24	8			10					17	59	7%
San Diego, CA				28	5				8			8	49	6%
Houston, TX	16	23	8									0	47	6%
Miami, FL	11	5				3	7			2		4	32	4%
Dallas, TX	1	22	3									0	26	3%
San Pedro Sula, Honduras	2					18						3	23	3%
San Antonio, TX	5	8	5				2					0	20	2%
Other	1	6	5	0	1	5	0	0	0	6	2	21	47	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>835</b>	<b>100%</b>
% H/(L)	26%	24%	11%	7%	6%	4%	4%	3%	2%	2%	2%	9%	100%	