

Data dictionary for the spreadsheets used in the New York Times media coverage study

http://www.airsafe.com/analyze/nyt_bias-data.pdf

There were two key spreadsheets, one containing information about aviation events and a second containing information from the New York Times Index (NYT) that provided details on which of those events were covered by the New York Times, and about the character of that coverage.

The NYT spreadsheet was unchanged, but the aviation events spreadsheet was updated to fill in missing data, to update data using more authoritative sources, and to delete information that was not relevant to the new study. While the data was updated, the variable names, which are the same as the column names, were unchanged.

Sources for the updated aviation events spreadsheet included the following:

- AirSafe.com - airsafe.com
- AirSafeNews.com - airsafenews.com
- Aviation Safety Network - aviation-safety.net
- Wikipedia
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_airliner_shootdown_incidents
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_aircraft_hijackings
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Airliner_bombings
- AvStop.com - <http://avstop.com/history/majorevents/hijackings.html>

Data locations

Both spreadsheets are available online:

- New York Times Index spreadsheet - http://www.airsafe.com/analyze/accident_nyt_data.csv
- Updated fatal events spreadsheet - http://www.airsafe.com/analyze/fatal_event_data.csv

In addition to the updated fatal events, there is also the fatal event information from the original study, which is available below:

- Original study fatal events spreadsheet - http://www.airsafe.com/analyze/flight_intl_data.csv

Overview of the variables

The NYT spreadsheet and the fatal events spreadsheet (both the original and updated versions), each row or record represented a combination of an aircraft and a particular aviation event. If an event involved multiple aircraft, there would be separate row for each aircraft.

The fatal event spreadsheet has 22 columns or variables, and the NYT spreadsheet has nine. The one variable that they have in common is the 'Accident.ID' variable, which is a unique value for each combination of the event and the aircraft involved in the event. While this study did not

cover any time period after 2000, if the spreadsheets included the events of 9/11, there would be four 'Accident.ID' values, one for each of the four aircraft that were hijacked that day.

About the New York Times index spreadsheet

Each record in this spreadsheet summarizes the coverage generated by a particular event. The variables, all of which are integer valued, are defined as follows:

- Published Record ID - The unique identifier assigned to each aviation event that is covered by the New York Times
- Accident ID - This is a unique identifier that is assigned to each aviation event. This is the only variable that is common to the New York Times and aviation events spreadsheets.
- Media Source - This is a unique identifier for the media source used. Note that for the New York Times study, the only source was the New York Times.
- Articles - The number of published written articles, photographs, or other graphics that mention the aviation event identified by the Accident ID value.
- Days - The number of different days with at least one article about the aviation event.
- Front Page Stories - The number of articles that were on the front page of the New York Times
- Front Page Days - The number of different days with at least one front page article about the aviation event.
- Longer Stories - The number of articles that were identified as being of medium or long length in the New York Times index.
- Longer Story Days - The number of different days with at least one longer article about the aviation event.

About the aviation events spreadsheet

Each record in this spreadsheet provides identification information about the aircraft involved in the event, the numbers of passengers and crew members, the number killed in the event, including the number of deaths to people outside the aircraft, other characteristics about the flight, and a short description of the event. All variables are either character or integer valued. Missing values are either 999 for integer variables, and blank for character variables. The variables are defined as follows:

- Accident ID - This is a unique identifier that is assigned to each aviation event. This is the only variable that is common to the New York Times and aviation events spreadsheets.
- Flt Intl Accident Date: Date of the accident. The original study used Flight International Magazine as the source for event data, and used that publication's date of the accident as the date for the spreadsheet. In the updated study, The date of the event may be changed to the local date at the time of the event should other sources indicated that the event happened at a different time than the one listed by Flight International.

- Carrier - The airline operating the aircraft involved in the aviation event.
- Aircraft - The aircraft model involved in the aviation event.
- Tail Number - The aircraft's registration number.
- Location - Location of the aviation event.
- Country of Accident - The country where the event took place.
- Country of Registration - The country where the aircraft is registered.
- NTSB Report # - The publication number of any NTSB accident investigation report associated with the aviation event.
- Fatal Crew - Number of crew members killed in the event. This number would exclude crew member who may have caused the event to occur.
- Fatal Pax - Number of passengers killed in the event. This would exclude stowaways under any circumstances, and any passengers, for example hijackers or saboteurs, who may have caused the event to occur.
- Fatal Other - Number of people killed who were neither passengers or crew members, and who were outside of the aircraft when the event occurred. This would exclude people outside of the aircraft, for example someone on the ground or in another aircraft, who may have caused the event to occur. It would also exclude people who would have been accounted for in another aviation event in the same spreadsheet, for example occupants of a second airliner in a midair collision.
- Total Fatal - This is the sum of 'Fatal Crew', 'Fatal Pax', and 'Fatal Other' when reliable values are available for all three. It has the value '999' if there is no reliable value for the total number of fatalities. Note that it is possible to have a reliable value for total fatalities while not having a breakdown of the status of those killed (passenger, crew, or outside of the aircraft).
- Total Crew - Total number of crew members on the aircraft involved in the event. This number would exclude crew member who may have caused the event to occur.
- Total Pax - Total number of crew members on the aircraft involved in the event. This number would exclude passengers who may have caused the event to occur.
- Total on Board - This is the sum of 'Total Crew' and 'Total Pax' when reliable values are available for these other two variables. It has the value '999' if there is no reliable value for the total number of people on board. Note that it is possible to have a reliable value for total on board while not having a breakdown of the number of passengers or crew members.
- Jet Transport - A jet powered aircraft model that is commonly used by one or more airlines.
- Passenger Flight - An airliner flight where members of the general public are allowed to be passengers.
- Scheduled - A scheduled passenger flight.
- Non-Statistical - An aviation event that is typically not used by the aviation industry to compute accident rates or considered to be a safety-related event. This class of aviation events usually includes events that happened due to deliberate actions of one or more persons either inside or outside of the aircraft.

- Front Page Study - An aviation event considered for inclusion in the original or revised study of media bias of the New York Times. These would include any event involving an airline passenger flight where one or more people inside or outside the aircraft, excluding hijackers, saboteurs, or stowaways, were killed. All airline events involving jet aircraft, or those involving propellor-driven aircraft typically used in airline service in the US, Canada, Japan, Australia, or the European Union.
- Circumstances - Short synopsis of the circumstances associated with the aviation event.