

4-1-2004

Airline Quality Rating 2004

Brent D. Bowen
University of Nebraska at Omaha

Dean E. Headley
Wichita State University, dean.headley@wichita.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/aqrr>

Bowen, Brent D. and Headley, Dean E., "Airline Quality Rating 2004" (2004). *Airline Quality Rating Report*. Paper 17.
<http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/aqrr/17>

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.



2004

Airline Quality

Rating

Brent D. Bowen
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Aviation Institute

Dean E. Headley
Wichita State University
W. Frank Barton School of Business

April, 2004

Airline Quality Rating 2004

**Brent D. Bowen
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Aviation Institute
of Business**

**Dean E. Headley
Wichita State University
W. Frank Barton School**

April, 2004

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Dr. Brent Bowen holds the University of Nebraska Foundation Distinguished Professorship in Aviation and serves as Director of the Aviation Institute, University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO). Bowen also serves in the capacity of Director, Division of Aviation and Transportation Policy and Research, for the School of Public Administration at UNO. He has been appointed as a Graduate Faculty Fellow of the University of Nebraska System, where he supervises the nation's only doctoral program specializing in aviation administration. Bowen attained his Doctorate in Higher Education and Aviation from Oklahoma State University and a Master of Business Administration degree from Oklahoma City University. His Federal Aviation Administration certifications include Airline Transport Pilot, Certified Flight Instructor (Gold Seal), Advanced-Instrument Ground Instructor, Aviation Safety Counselor, and Aerospace Education Counselor. Dr. Bowen's research interests focus on aviation applications of public productivity enhancement and marketing in the areas of service quality evaluation, safety, and student recruitment and retention in collegiate aviation programs. He is also well published in areas related to effective teaching and gender issues in aviation education. Dr. Bowen is an active industry consultant, pilot, and former fixed-base operator and air carrier operator. He has been an invited expert witness before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Government Operations and has served on multiple occasions as an invited speaker and panelist at the National Academy of Sciences/Transportation Research Board. His professional affiliations include the University Aviation Association (Board Member), Council on Aviation Accreditation (Committee Chair), World Aerospace Education Organization (Past-President), International Air Transportation Research Society (Proceedings Editor and Network Committee Member), Aerospace States Association (Governor's Delegate), Alpha Eta Rho International Aviation Fraternity, and the Nebraska Academy of Sciences. Additionally, Dr. Bowen has authored/co-authored numerous successful funding proposals totaling awards exceeding \$20 million. He also serves as program director and principal investigator for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration funded Nebraska Space Grant Consortium and EPSCoR Program.

Dr. Dean E. Headley is Associate Professor of Marketing and Chair of the Department of Marketing and Entrepreneurship in the W. Frank Barton School of Business and Faculty Associate of the National Institute for Aviation Research at Wichita State University. He holds a Doctorate in Marketing and Statistics from Oklahoma State University, a Master of Business Administration Degree from Wichita State University, and a Master of Public Health Degree from the University of Oklahoma. Dr. Headley's research interests include methodology development for measurement of service quality, the connection between service quality and consumer behavior, consumer choice processes in service settings, and the effects of marketing activities on consumers and providers of services.

Dr. Bowen's and Dr. Headley's research on the Airline Quality Rating (AQR) has met with national and international acceptance and acknowledgment. The Airline Quality Rating has been featured on *ABC's Good Morning America*, *The Cable News Network*, *The Today Show*, *C-Span*, network news, in *USA Today*, in *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, and in numerous other national and international media. Bowen and Headley have served as invited expert witnesses before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Government Operations and have served as invited speakers and panelists for such groups as the National Academy of Sciences/Transportation Research Board. The work of Bowen and Headley has been recognized with awards from the American Marketing Association, the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University,

the Travel and Transportation Research Association, and others. The AQR research has been published in the Journal of Aviation/Aerospace Education and Research, Journal of Air Transportation, as well as other journals, proceedings, textbooks, and research monographs.

AIRLINE QUALITY RATING 2004

**Brent D. Bowen, University of Nebraska at Omaha
Dean E. Headley, Wichita State University**

Abstract

The Airline Quality Rating (AQR) was developed and first announced in early 1991 as an objective method of comparing airline quality on combined multiple performance criteria. This current report, the Airline Quality Rating 2004, reflects monthly Airline Quality Rating scores for 2003. AQR scores for the calendar year 2003 are based on 15 elements in four major areas that focus on airline performance aspects important to air travel consumers.

The Airline Quality Rating 2004 is a summary of month-by-month quality ratings for U.S. airlines that have at least 1% of domestic passenger volume during 2003. Using the Airline Quality Rating system of weighted averages and monthly performance data in the areas of on-time arrivals, involuntary denied boardings, mishandled baggage, and a combination of 12 customer complaint categories, airlines' comparative performance for the calendar year of 2003 is reported. This research monograph contains a brief summary of the AQR methodology, detailed data and charts that track comparative quality for domestic airline operations for the 12-month period of 2003, and industry results. Also, comparative Airline Quality Rating data for 2002 are included, where available, to provide historical perspective regarding performance quality in the industry.

The Airline Quality Rating (AQR) System

The majority of quality ratings available rely on subjective surveys of consumer opinion that are infrequently done. This subjective approach yields a quality rating that is essentially non-comparable from survey to survey for any specific airline. Timeliness of survey-based results can be a problem in the fast-paced airline industry as well. Before the Airline Quality Rating, there was effectively no consistent method for monitoring the quality of airlines on a timely, objective, and comparable basis. With the introduction of the AQR, a multi-factor, weighted average approach became available that had not been used before in the airline industry. The method relies on taking published, publicly available data that reports actual airline performance on critical quality criteria important to consumers and combines them into a rating system. The final result is a rating for individual airlines with interval scale properties that is comparable across airlines and across time.

The Airline Quality Rating (AQR) is a weighted average of multiple elements (see Table 1) important to consumers when judging the quality of airline services. Elements considered for inclusion in the rating scale were screened to meet two basic criteria; 1) an element must be obtainable from published data sources for each airline; and 2) an element must have relevance to consumer concerns regarding airline quality. Data for the elements used in calculating the ratings represent performance aspects (on-time arrival, mishandled baggage, involuntary denied boardings, and 12 customer complaint areas) of airlines that are important to

consumers. All of the elements are reported in the *Air Travel Consumer Report* maintained by the U.S. Department of Transportation.

Weights were originally established by surveying 65 airline industry experts regarding their opinion as to what consumers would rate as important (on a scale of 0 to 10) in judging airline quality. Also, each weight and element was assigned a plus or minus sign to reflect the nature of impact for that criterion on a consumer's perception of quality. For instance, the criteria of on-time arrival performance are included as a positive element because it is reported in terms of on-time successes, suggesting that a higher number is favorable to consumers. The weight for this criterion is high due to the importance most consumers place on this aspect of airline service. Conversely, the criteria that includes mishandled baggage is included as a negative element because it is reported in terms of mishandled bags per 1000 passengers served, suggesting that a higher number is unfavorable to consumers. Because having baggage arrive with passengers is important to consumers the weight for this criterion is also high. Weights and positive/negative signs are independent of each other. Weights reflect importance of the criteria in consumer decision-making, while signs reflect the direction of impact that the criteria should have on the consumer's rating of airline quality. When all criteria, weights and impacts are combined for an airline over the year, a single interval scaled value is obtained. This value is comparable across airlines and across time periods. In the spring of 2002, a nationwide survey of frequent flyers was conducted that allowed a revisiting of the weighting for the AQR elements. Analysis of the sample of 766 opinions showed no appreciable difference in the relative weights for the AQR elements. To maintain comparability across the years, the weights have been kept the same as originally established.

The Airline Quality Rating criteria and the weighted average methodology allow a focused comparison of airline domestic performance. Unlike other consumer opinion approaches that rely on consumer surveys and subjective opinion, the AQR continues to use a mathematical formula that takes multiple weighted objective criteria into account in arriving at a single, fully comparable rating for airline industry performance. The Airline Quality Rating provides both consumers and industry watchers a means for looking at comparative quality for each airline on a timely basis, using objective, performance-based data. Over the years, the Airline Quality Rating has often been cited as an industry standard for comparing airline performance. With the continued global trend in airline operations alliances, the argument becomes even stronger for the Airline Quality Rating to be used as a standard method for comparing the quality of airline performance for international operations as well.

Table 1

AIRLINE QUALITY RATING CRITERIA, WEIGHTS AND IMPACT

	CRITERIA	WEIGHT	IMPACT (+/-)
OT	On-Time	8.63	+
DB	Denied Boardings	8.03	--
MB	Mishandled Baggage	7.92	--
CC	Customer Complaints	7.17	--
	Flight Problems		
	Oversales		
	Reservations, Ticketing, and Boarding		
	Fares		
	Refunds		
	Baggage		
	Customer Service		
	Disability		
	Advertising		
	Discrimination		
	Animals		
	Other		

Data for all criteria is drawn from the U.S. Department of Transportation's monthly *Air Travel Consumer Report*. (<http://dot.gov/airconsumer/>)

The formula for calculating the AQR score is:

$$\text{AQR} = \frac{(+8.63 \times \text{OT}) + (-8.03 \times \text{DB}) + (-7.92 \times \text{MB}) + (-7.17 \times \text{CC})}{(8.63 + 8.03 + 7.92 + 7.17)}$$

What the Airline Quality Rating Tells Us About 2003

The Airline Quality Rating industry score shows an industry that is improving in quality relative to customer performance criteria. Of the ten carriers rated in both 2002 and 2003, only American Airlines and US Airways, show declines in their overall AQR scores for 2003. The AQR score for Delta Airlines in 2003 was virtually unchanged from their 2002 level. Northwest Airlines registered the largest improvement in AQR score over the past year. Four new carriers are included in the AQR (a total of 14) for 2003. AQR results for 2003 indicate that:

For 2003 the **overall industry** AQR score was slightly better than in 2002 despite decreased industry performance in three of the four areas. As an industry, the AQR criteria shows that on-time arrival percentage was down slightly (82.0% in 2003 compared to 82.1% in 2002), involuntary denied boardings per passenger served increased (0.72 per 10,000 passengers in 2002 to 0.86 per 10,000 passengers in 2003), mishandled baggage rates increased (3.84 per 1,000 passengers in 2002 versus 4.00 per 1,000 passengers in 2003), and consumer complaint rates improved (1.22 per 100,000 passengers in 2002 down to 0.67 per 100,000 passengers in 2003). Taken together, the AQR score for the industry improved from a level of -1.19 in 2002 to -1.14 in 2003. With three of the four rating categories (On-Time, Denied Boardings, and Mishandled Baggage) having poorer performance in 2003 than in 2002, the dramatic improvement in Customer Complaint rates (nearly a 50% reduction) is the reason for the small overall industry AQR score improvement.

AirTran Airlines (FL) is included in the AQR for the first time in 2003. On-time performance was among the lowest (78.1%) of the airlines rated. AirTran's denied boardings performance (1.45 per 10,000 passengers compared to an industry average of 0.86) was among the highest of the airlines rated. A customer complaint rate of 0.83 complaints per 100,000 passengers was also above the industry average rate of 0.67. The positive news is that their mishandled baggage rate of 2.84 per 1,000 passengers (second best to Alaska Airlines) is well below the industry average rate of 4.00 bags per 1,000 passengers.

Alaska Airlines (AS) had an improved AQR score for 2003. Consistent solid performance in the areas of on-time (78.0% in 2002 compared to 81.0% in 2003), involuntary denied boardings (1.17 per 10,000 passengers in 2002 compared to 0.81 in 2003), customer complaints (0.91 per 100,000 passengers in 2002 compared to 0.52 in 2003), and an industry best baggage handling rate (2.56 mishandled bags per 1,000 passengers in 2003 compared to 2.63 in 2002) helped Alaska Airlines stay near the top of the ratings.

America West Airlines (HP) showed improvement in their AQR score for 2003. On-time performance slipped slightly in 2003 (82.9% in 2002 to 82.0% in 2003). The rate of mishandled baggage improved from 3.55 in 2002 to 3.30 in 2003. Consumer complaints were reduced by nearly 50%, (1.63 in 2002 to 0.84 in 2003) for the third year in a row. Denied boarding rates increased, moving from 0.20 per 10,000 passengers served in 2002 to 0.40 in 2003.

American Airlines' (AA) AQR score for 2003 dropped slightly (-1.21 in 2002 to -1.24 in 2003). Their drop in AQR score reflects a decline in performance for on-time arrivals (81.7% in 2003 compared to 83.8% in 2002), mishandled baggage rates (4.27 in 2002 compared to 4.45 in 2003), and denied boardings rates (0.31 in 2002 compared to 0.59 in 2003). A 30% reduction in the rate of customer complaints (1.29 in 2002 to 0.88 in 2003) was not enough to overcome the combined negative effect of the other elements considered in the AQR.

American Eagle Airlines (MQ) had a denied boardings rate (0.38 for 2003 up from 0.19 per 10,000 passengers in 2002) that was among the industry best. The airline showed improvements in the rate of customer complaints (0.51 in 2003 compared to 0.60 per 100,000 passengers in 2002). On-time performance was 78.6% in 2003 compared to 79.1% for 2002. Their mishandled baggage rate was more than double the industry rate, but did show improvement for the year (8.42 per 1,000 passengers in 2003 compared to 9.81 per 1,000 passengers in 2002). This combination of gains and losses made American Eagle the second most improved airline for 2003.

ATA Airlines (TZ) is included in the AQR for the first time in 2003. On-time performance for the year, 80.0%, was near the industry average of 81.3%. ATA's denied boardings performance, 0.89 per 10,000 passengers, compared favorably to an industry average of 0.86 per 10,000 passengers. A customer complaint rate of 0.66 complaints per 100,000 passengers was also very close to the industry average rate of 0.67. Their mishandled baggage rate of 4.06 per 1,000 passengers is consistent with the industry average rate of 4.00 bags per 1,000 passengers as well. Overall, ATA performed in all areas rated at a level that is consistent with industry averages for 2003.

Atlantic Southeast Airlines (EV) is included in the AQR for the first time in 2003. On-time performance (75.4%) was the lowest of the airlines rated. Atlantic Southeast's denied boardings performance (7.86 per 10,000 passengers compared to an industry average of 0.86) was the worst (by a factor of 9 times) of the 14 airlines rated. Their mishandled baggage rate of 15.41 per 1,000 passengers is nearly four times the industry average rate of 4.00 bags per 1,000 passengers. The only bright spot for Atlantic Southeast is that their customer complaint rate of 0.59 complaints per 100,000 passengers was better than the industry average rate of 0.67 per 100,000 passengers.

Continental Airlines (CO) posted improved performance in two of the four AQR criteria. Better performance in mishandled baggage (3.11 in 2003 versus 3.14 in 2002) and consumer complaint rates (0.95 in 2003 compared to 1.37 in 2002) helped Continental. Increases in denied boardings (0.87 in 2002 to 1.06 in 2003) and poorer on-time performance (82.0% in 2003 compared to 83.5% in 2002) was enough to make their AQR score only slightly better in 2003 (-1.06 in 2003 versus -1.10 in 2002).

Delta Airlines (DL) AQR score for 2003 reflects improvement in on-time arrival percentage (82.3% in 2003 compared to 80.0% in 2002) and customer complaint rate (1.37 in 2002 compared to 0.78 in 2003). The negatives for Delta were a 17% increase in the rate of denied boardings (2002 rate of 1.11 compared to 2003 rate of 1.30) and an increase in the rate of mishandled baggage (3.57 in 2002 to 3.84 in 2003). This combination of improvements and decreases in performance combined to give Delta only a slight improvement (-1.26 in 2002 to -1.24 in 2003) in overall AQR score.

Jet Blue Airlines (B6) is included in the AQR for the first time in 2003. On-time performance (84.3%) was second best among the 14 airlines rated. Jet Blue's denied boardings performance (0.00 per 10,000 passengers) was the lowest of the airlines rated. A customer complaint rate of 0.31 complaints per 100,000 passengers was also the second best (to Southwest) of all airlines rated. Their mishandled baggage rate of 3.21 per 1,000 passengers is below the industry average rate of 4.00 bags per 1,000 passengers.

Northwest Airlines (NW) was the most improved airline in 2003. Their AQR score dropped from -1.39 in 2002 to -1.02 in 2003. Northwest posted improvements in three of the four areas of the AQR for 2003. The rate of mishandled baggage decreased from 4.52 per 1,000 passengers in 2002 to 3.42 per 1,000 passengers in 2003. On-time arrival performance moved from 80.8% in 2002 to 82.9% in 2003. An improvement in customer complaint rate from 1.45 per 100,000 passengers in 2002 to 0.95 per 100,000 passengers in 2003 was consistent with others in the industry. Denied boardings increased from 0.60 per 10,000 passengers in 2002 to 0.70 per 10,000 passengers in 2003.

Southwest Airlines (WN) recorded improvement in on-time arrival percentage (86.3% in 2003 from 82.6% in 2002), involuntary denied boarding rates (1.02 per 10,000 passengers in 2003 from 1.09 per 10,000 passengers in 2002), mishandled baggage rates (3.35 per 1,000 passengers in 2003 from 3.52 per 1,000 passengers in 2002), and customer complaint rates (0.33 per 100,000 passengers in 2002 compared to an industry best of 0.14 per 100,000 passengers in 2003). Southwest Airlines is consistently the airline with the lowest customer complaint rate in the industry (0.14 per 100,000 passengers in 2003 compared to an industry rate of 0.67 per 100,000 passengers).

United Airlines (UA) slipped in on-time arrival performance (from 84.0% in 2002 to 83.3% in 2003) and in mishandled baggage (3.76 per 1,000 passengers in 2002 compared to 3.93 in 2003). Performance regarding denied boardings (0.65 per 10,000 passengers in 2003 compared to 0.69 in 2002), and consumer complaints (0.83 in 2003 compared to 1.71 per 100,000 passengers in 2002) were improved for 2003. The rate of consumer complaints was reduced by half in 2003.

US Airways (US) showed noticeable improvement in only one of the four criteria tracked for 2003. Closer inspection reveals that US Airways performed worse in on-time arrival percentage (79.7% in 2003 compared to 83.4% in 2002) and mishandled baggage (3.55 per 1,000 passengers in 2003 compared to 2.95 in 2002). Denied boardings for 2003 (0.34 per 10,000 passengers) were virtually unchanged from 2002 (0.35 per 10,000 passengers). As with all other airlines rated, the customer complaint rate dropped (0.90 per 100,000 passengers in 2003 compared to 1.13 in 2002) for US Airways during 2003.

Previous Airline Quality Reports

Bowen, Brent D., Dean E. Headley and Jacqueline R. Luedtke (1991), Airline Quality Rating, National Institute for Aviation Research Report 91-11, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1992), Airline Quality Rating Report 1992, National Institute for Aviation Research Report 92-11, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1993), Airline Quality Rating Report 1993, National Institute for Aviation Research Report 93-11, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1994), Airline Quality Rating Report 1994, National Institute for Aviation Research Report 94-11, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1995), Airline Quality Rating Report 1995, National Institute for Aviation Research Report 95-11, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1996), Airline Quality Rating 1996, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1997), Airline Quality Rating 1997, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1998), Airline Quality Rating 1998, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (1999), Airline Quality Rating 1999, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (2000), Airline Quality Rating 2000, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (2001), Airline Quality Rating 2001, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (2002), Airline Quality Rating 2002, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

Bowen, Brent D., and Dean E. Headley (2003), Airline Quality Rating 2003, W. Frank Barton School of Business, Wichita, Kansas.

For more information contact either:

Dr. Dean E. Headley, Associate Professor
W. Frank Barton School of Business
Wichita State University
301 Clinton Hall
Wichita, KS 67260-0084

Dr. Brent D. Bowen, Director
Aviation Institute
University of Nebraska at Omaha
Allwine Hall 422
Omaha, NE 68182-0508

Office: (316) 978-3367
E-mail: dean.headley@wichita.edu

Office: (402) 554-3424
Email: unoai@unomaha.edu

Detail of Airline Performance

Since the Airline Quality Rating is comparable across airlines and across time, monthly rating results can be examined both individually and collectively. The following pages outline the AQR scores for the industry and for each airline by month for 2003. For comparison purposes, results are also displayed for 2002 where available. A composite industry chart that combines the airlines tracked is shown at first, with individual airline performance charts following in alphabetical order.

Airline Quality Rating Scores

	2003*		2002**		2001***		2000	
	AQR Score	Rank	AQR Score	Rank	AQR Score	Rank	AQR Score	Rank
Air Tran	-1.05	8	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
Alaska	-0.74	2	-0.95	2	-1.19	1	-1.54	2
America West	-0.89	4	-1.08	4	-1.75	7	-3.43	10
American	-1.24	11	-1.21	6	-1.58	6	-2.08	6
American Eagle	-2.10	13	-2.42	10	-2.14	10	N/A	-
ATA	-1.17	10	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
Atlantic Southeast	-5.76	14	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
Continental	-1.04	7	-1.10	5	-1.77	8	-2.11	7
Delta	-1.24	12	-1.26	7	-1.48	5	-1.47	1
Jet Blue	-0.64	1	N/A	-	N/A	-	N/A	-
Northwest	-1.02	6	-1.39	9	-1.38	3	-1.83	5
Southwest	-0.89	3	-1.00	3	-1.42	4	-1.64	3
United	-1.11	9	-1.27	8	-1.97	9	-3.01	9
U.S. Airways	-0.96	5	-0.85	1	-1.24	2	-1.74	4
Industry	-1.14		-1.19		-1.60		-2.05	

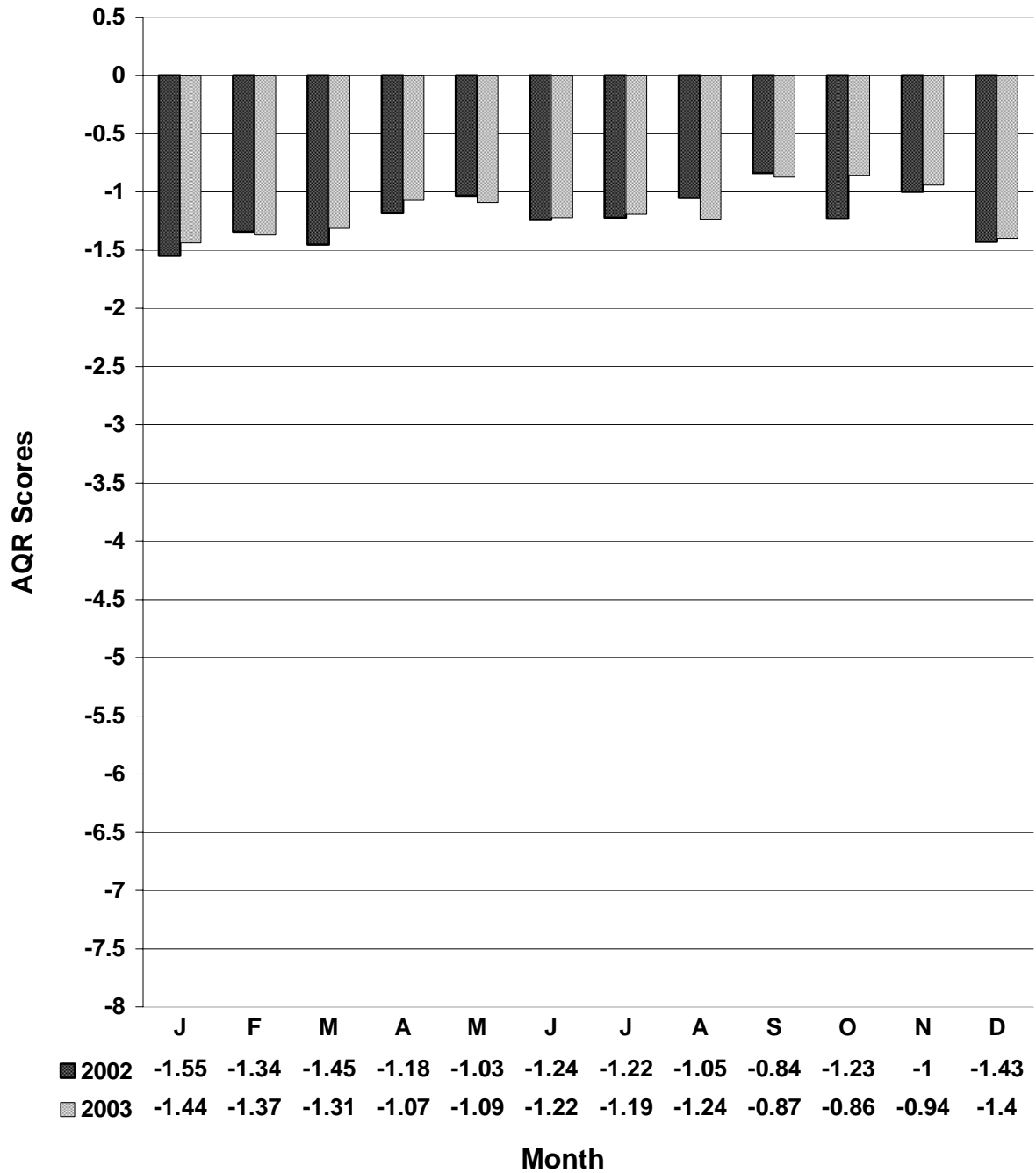
* Scores and Rankings for 2003 reflect the addition of Air Tran, ATA, Atlantic Southeast, and Jet Blue to the group of airlines tracked.

** Rankings for 2002, 2001, and 2000 reflect the removal of TWA from the group of airlines tracked.

*** Scores and Rankings for 2001 reflect the addition of American Eagle to the group of airlines tracked.

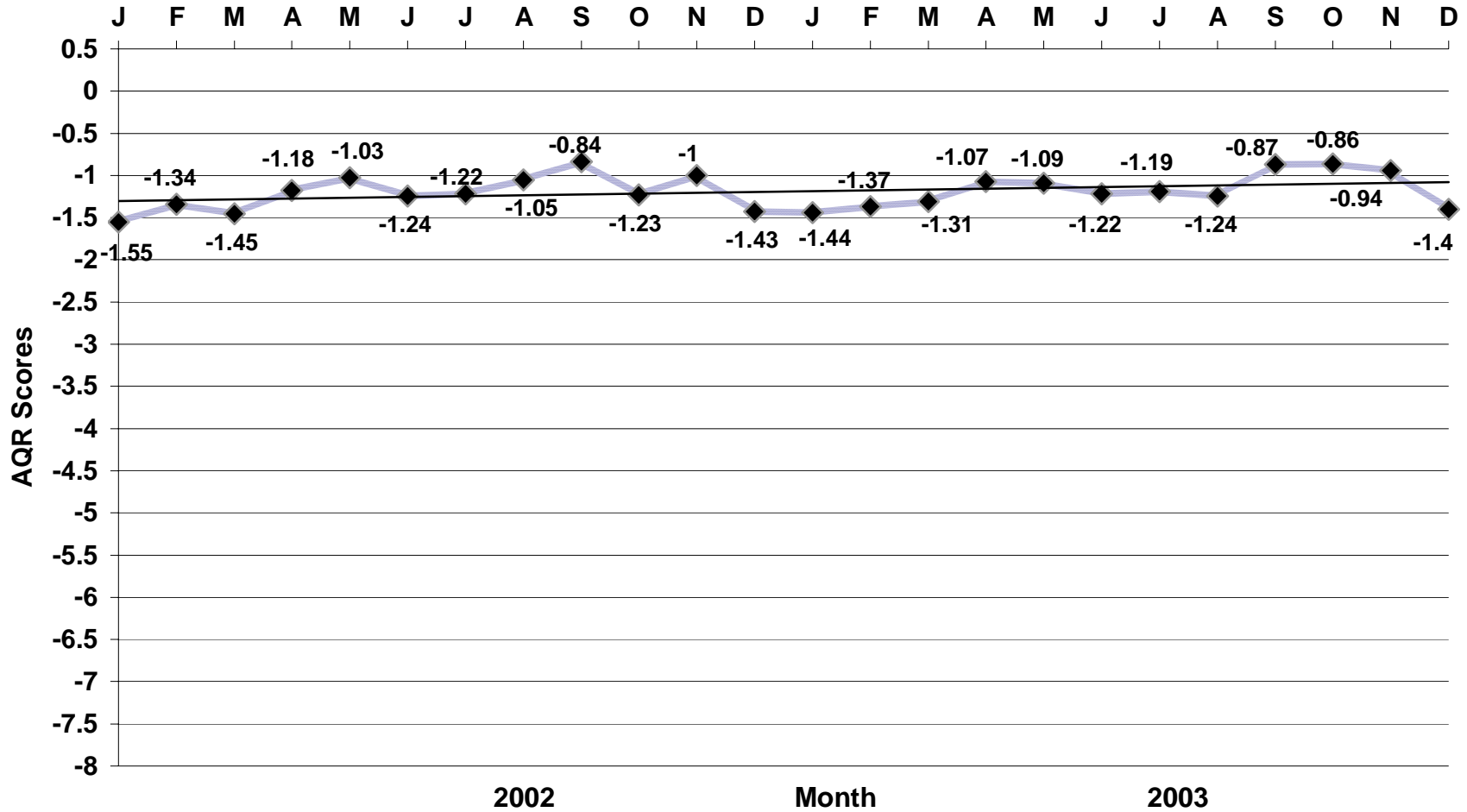
Airline Quality Rating

U.S. Airline Industry by Month



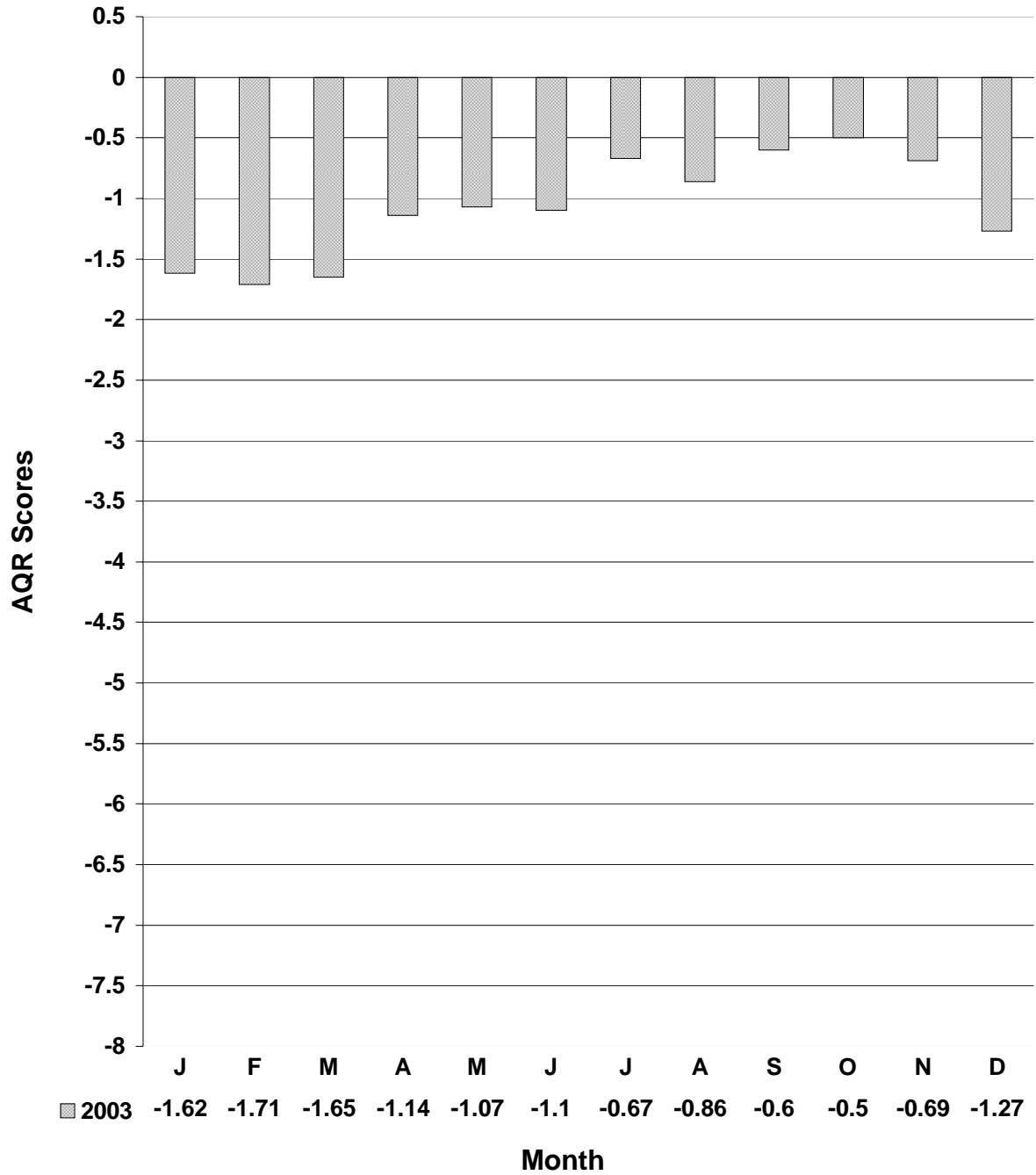
Airline Quality Rating

U.S. Airline Industry 2002 - 2003



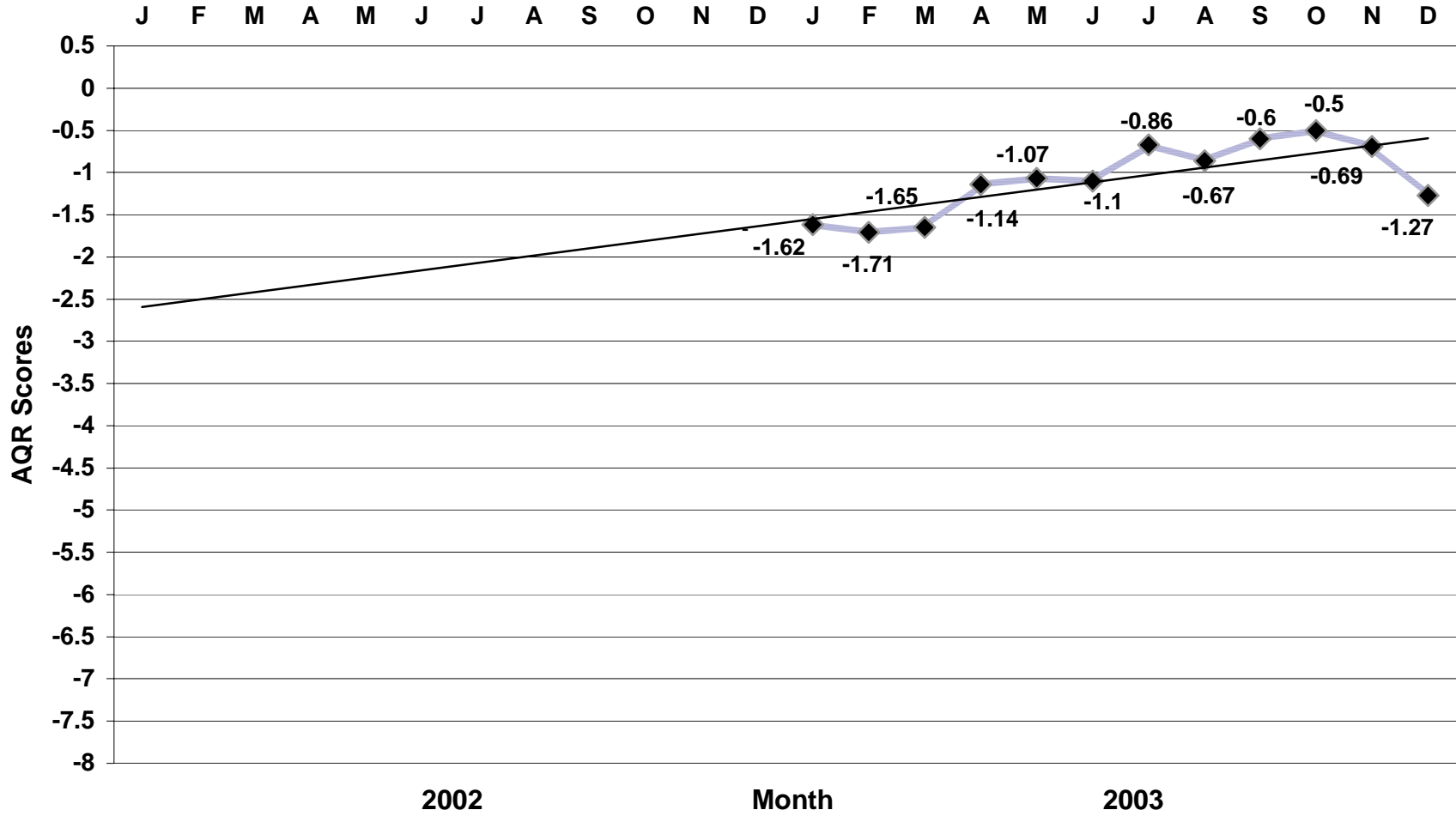
Airline Quality Rating

AirTran Airlines by Month



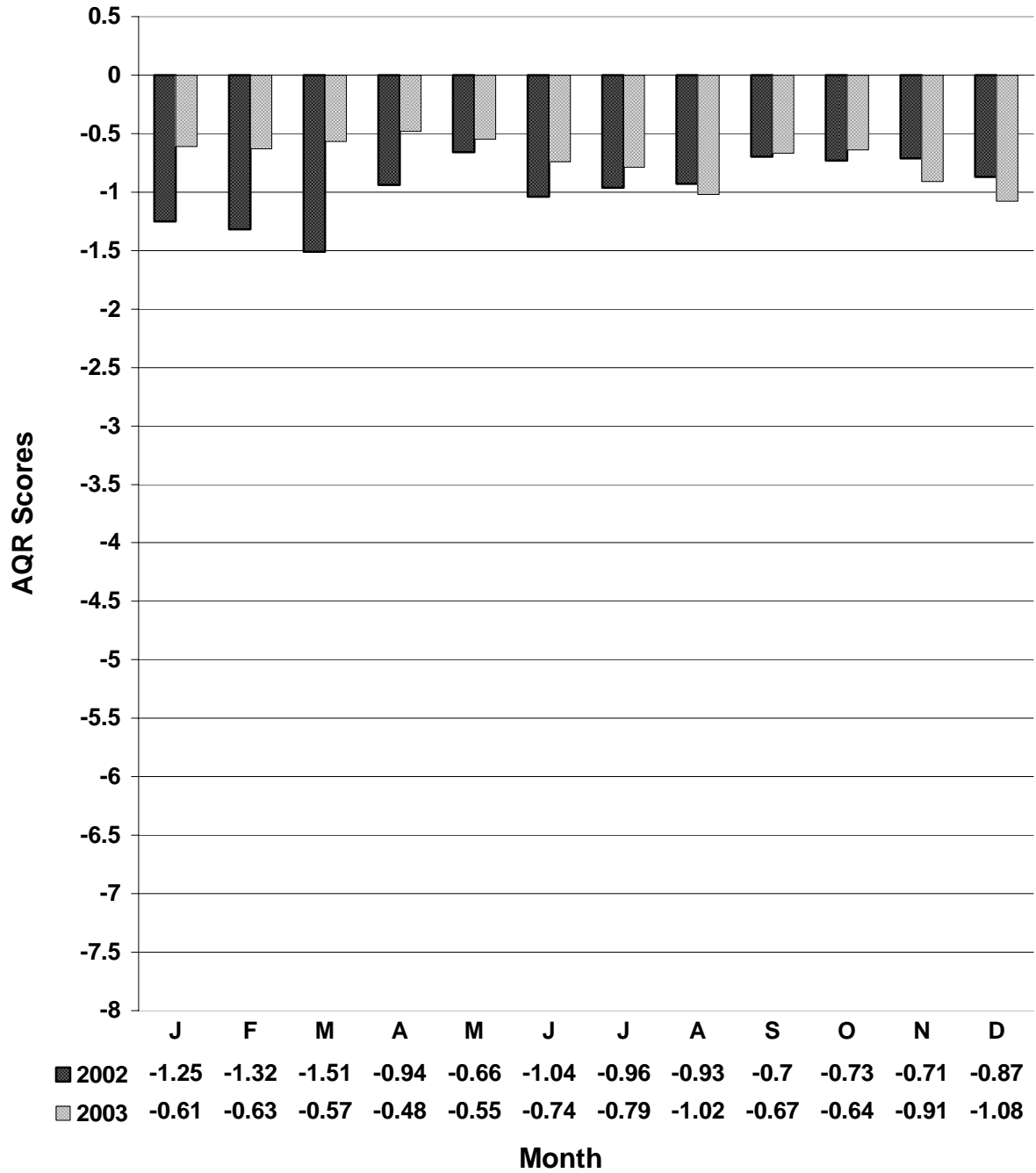
Airline Quality Rating

AirTran Airlines 2003



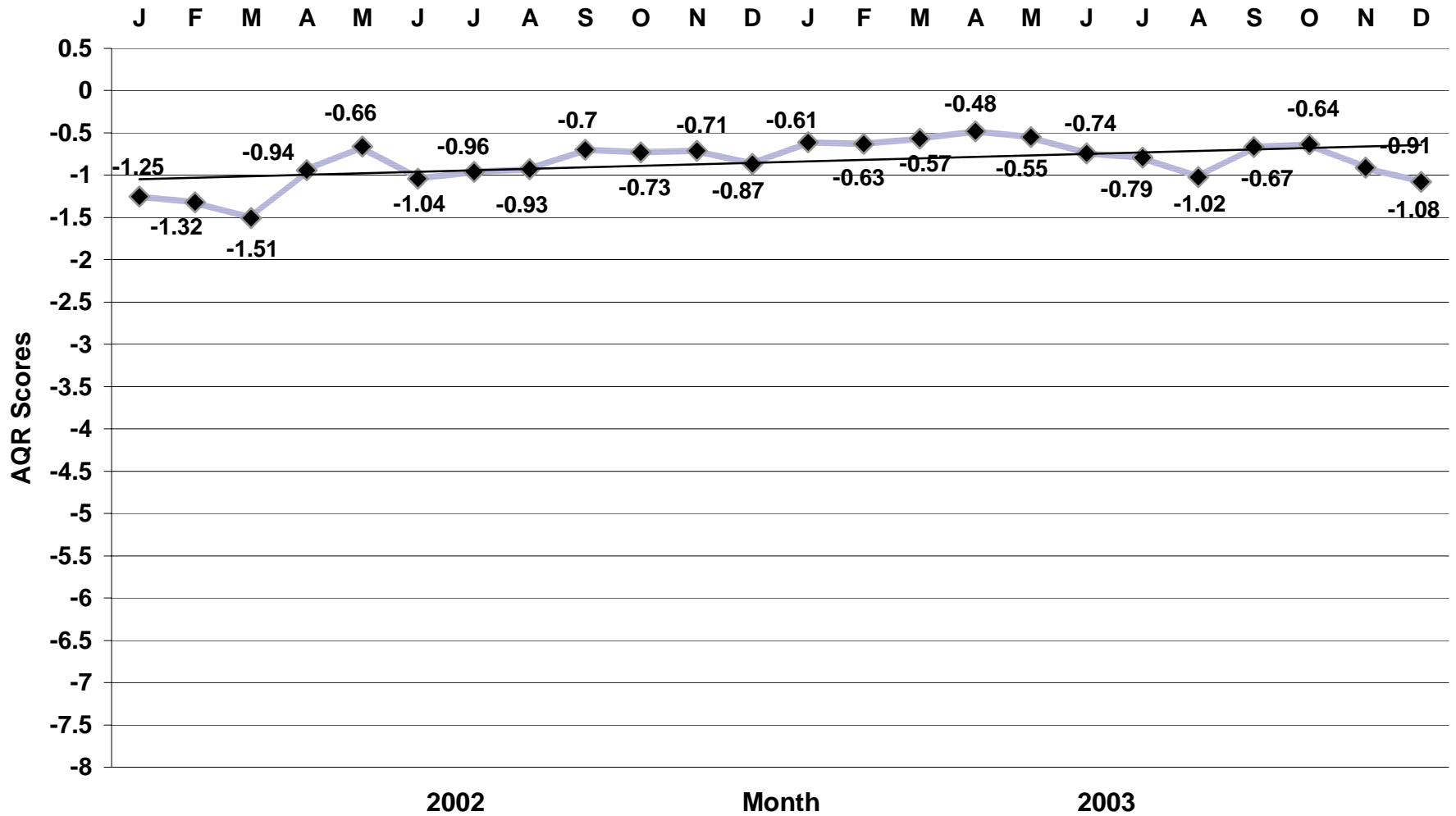
Airline Quality Rating

Alaska Airlines by Month



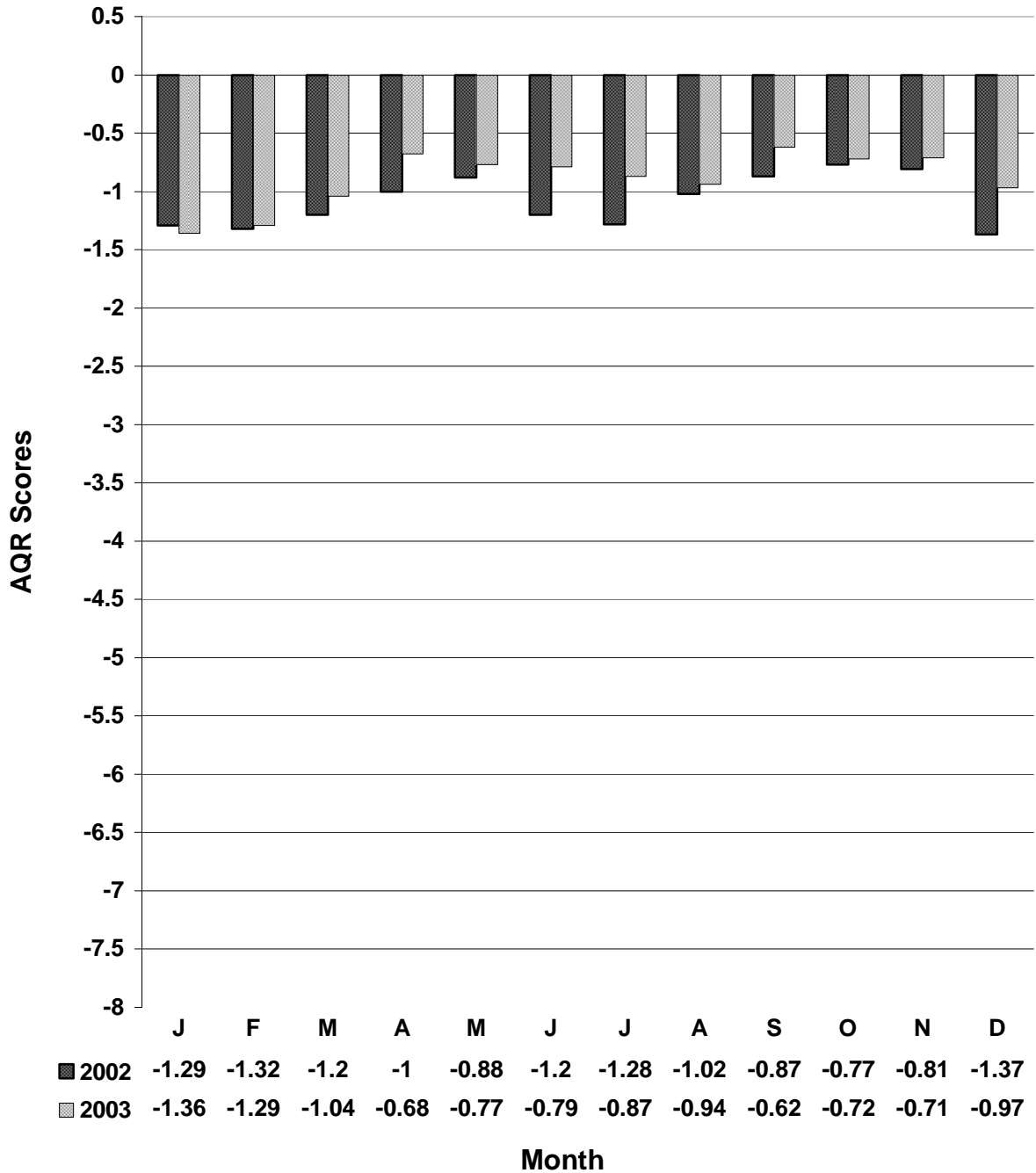
Airline Quality Rating

Alaska Airlines 2002 - 2003



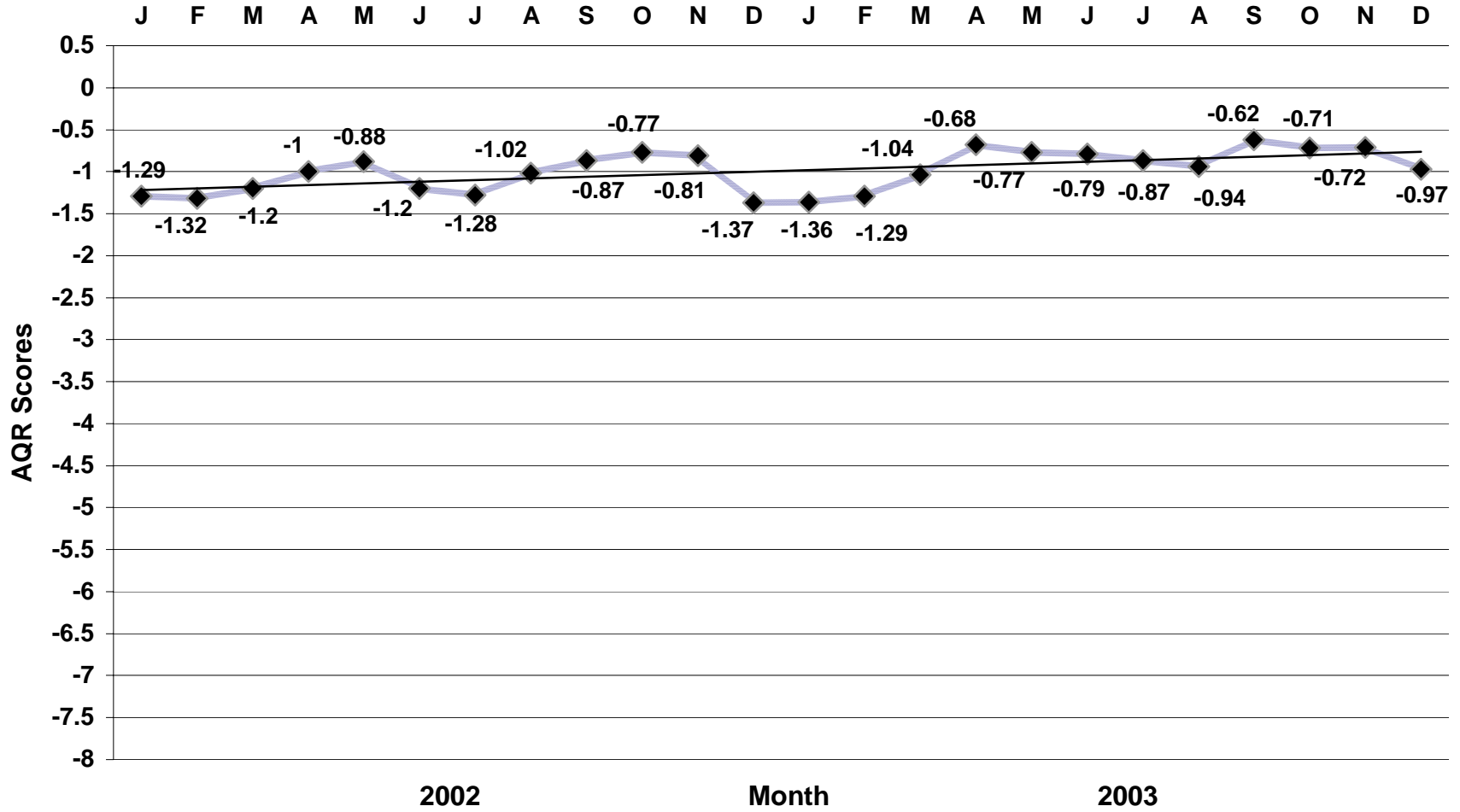
Airline Quality Rating

America West Airlines by Month



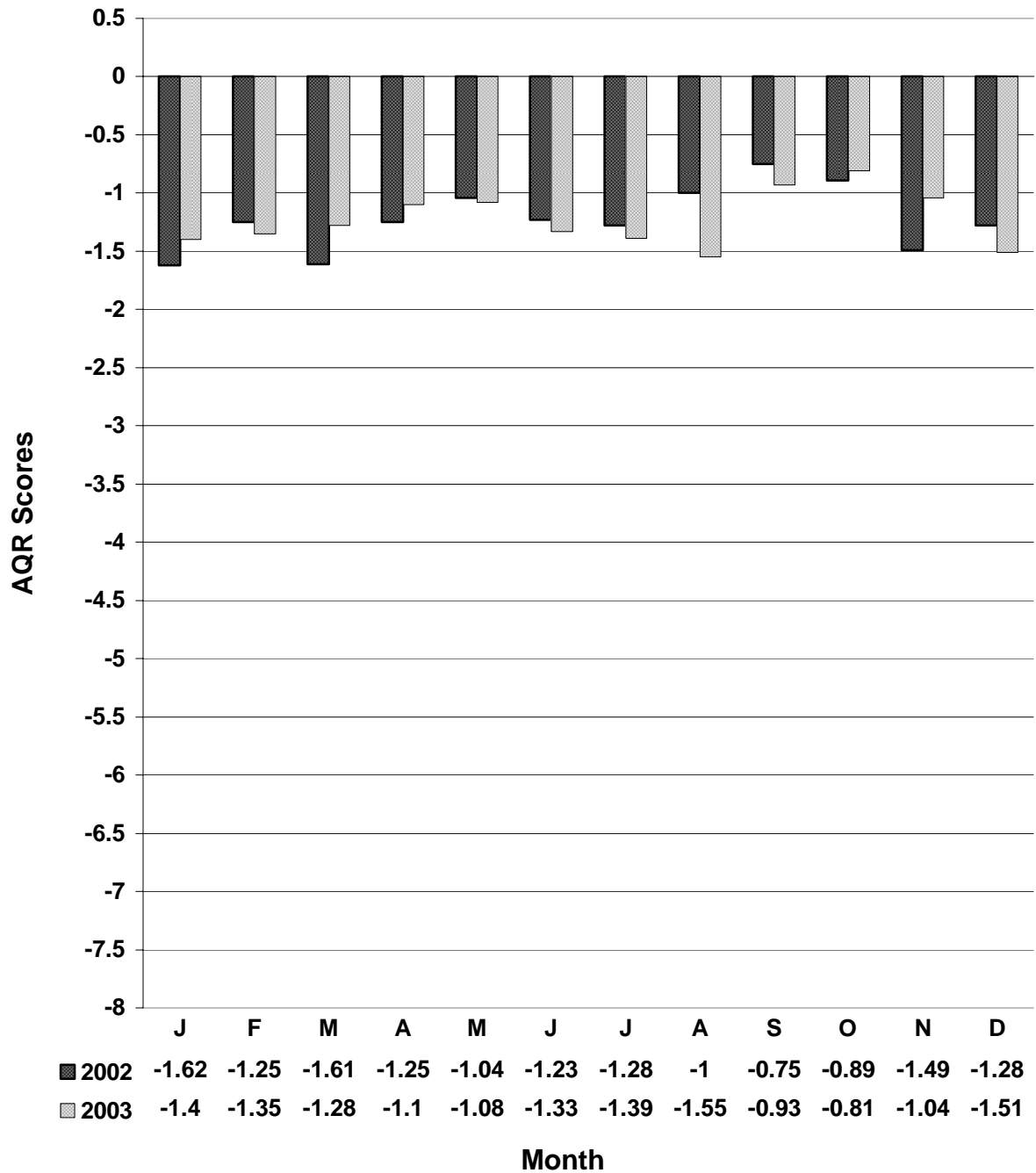
Airline Quality Rating

America West Airlines 2002 - 2003



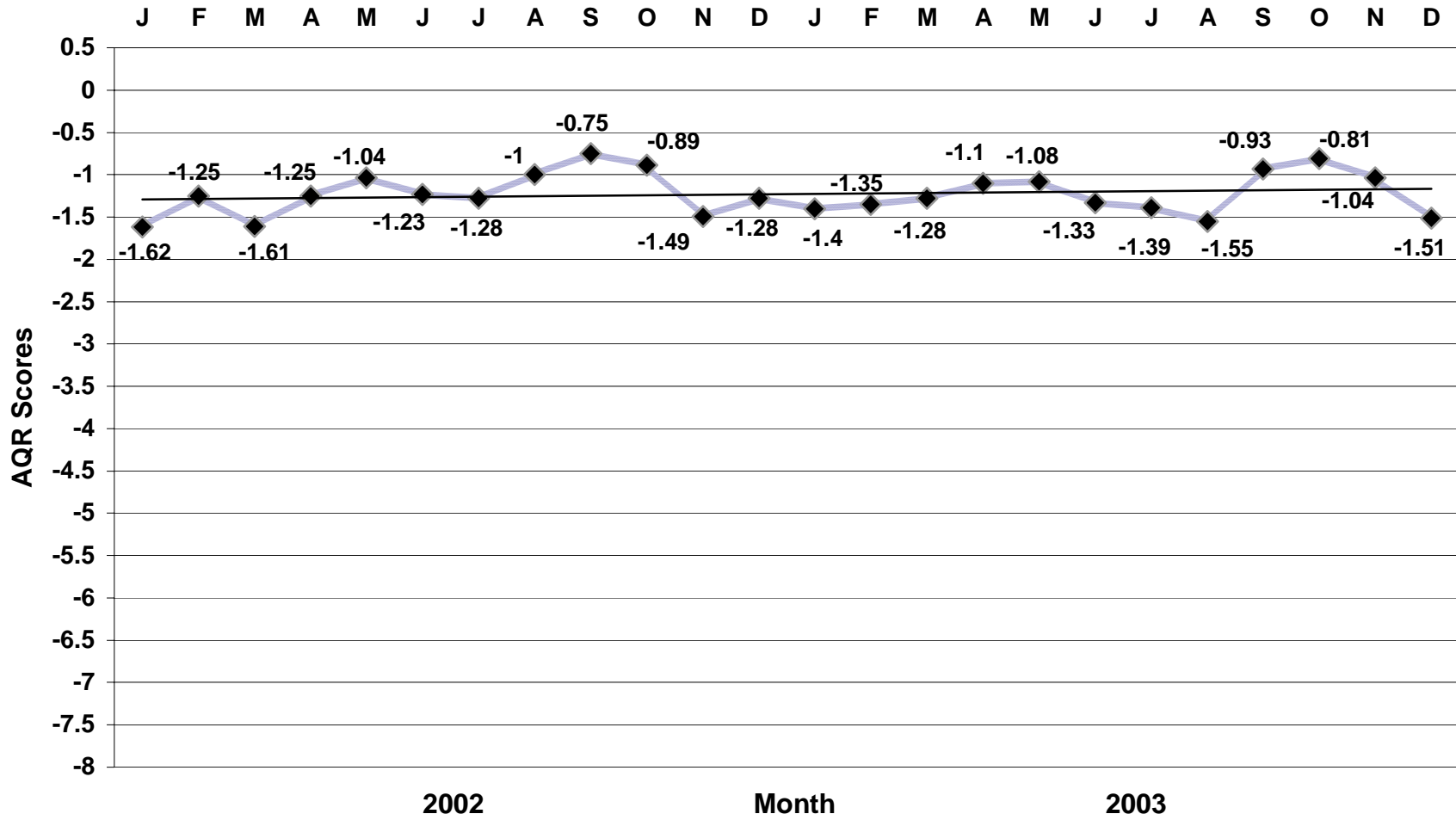
Airline Quality Rating

American Airlines by Month



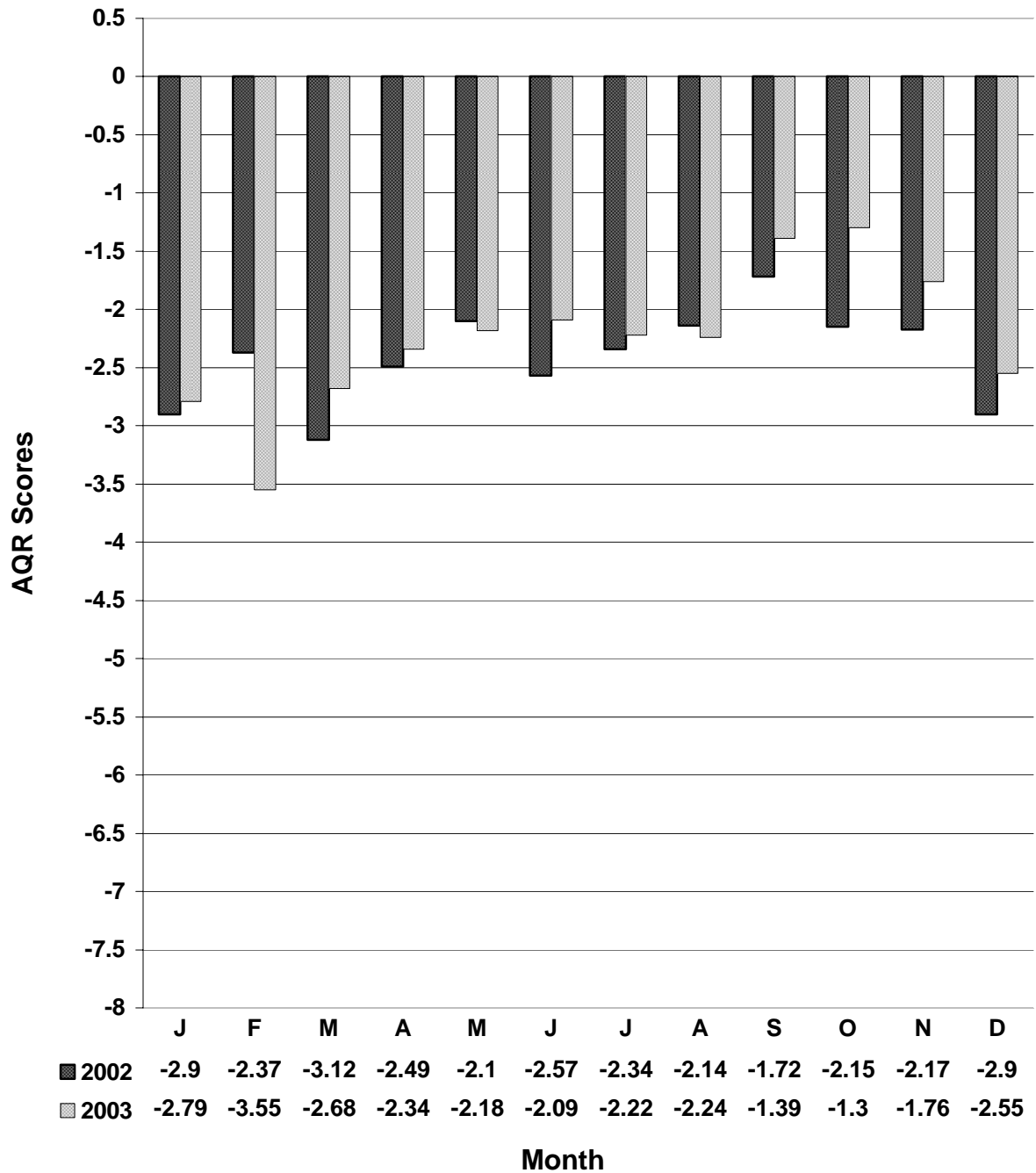
Airline Quality Rating

American Airlines 2002 - 2003



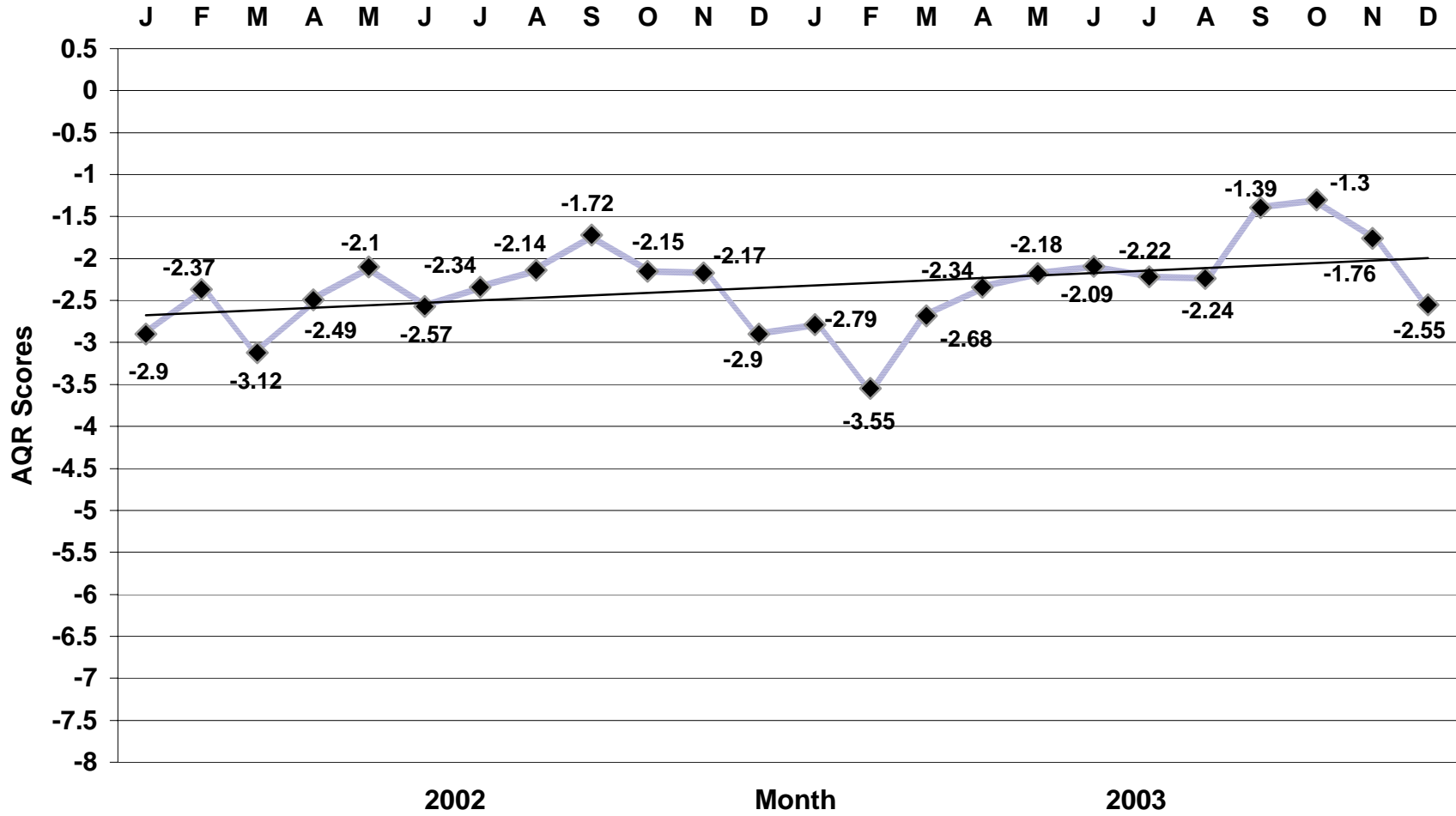
Airline Quality Rating

American Eagle Airlines by Month



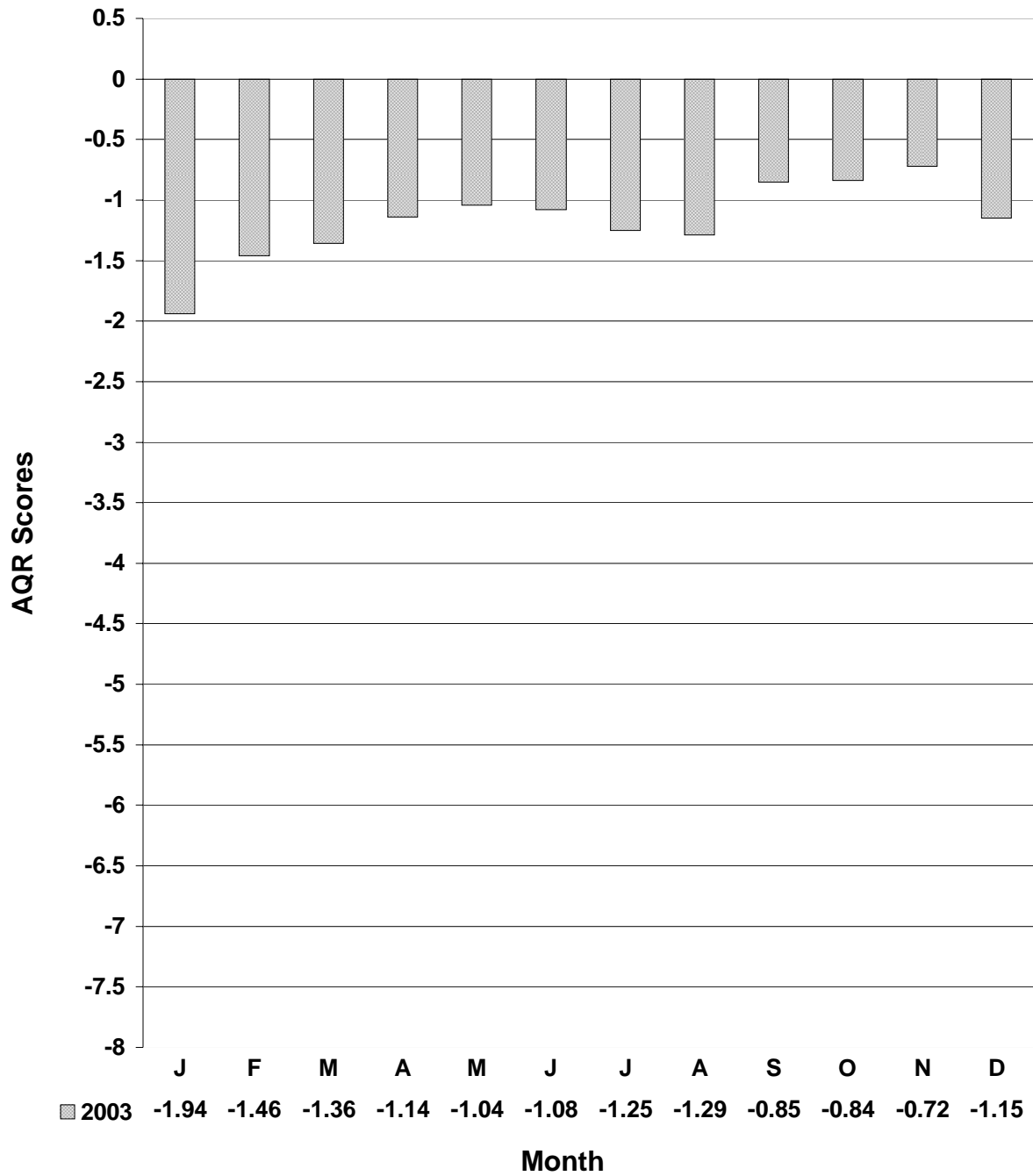
Airline Quality Rating

American Eagle Airlines 2002 - 2003



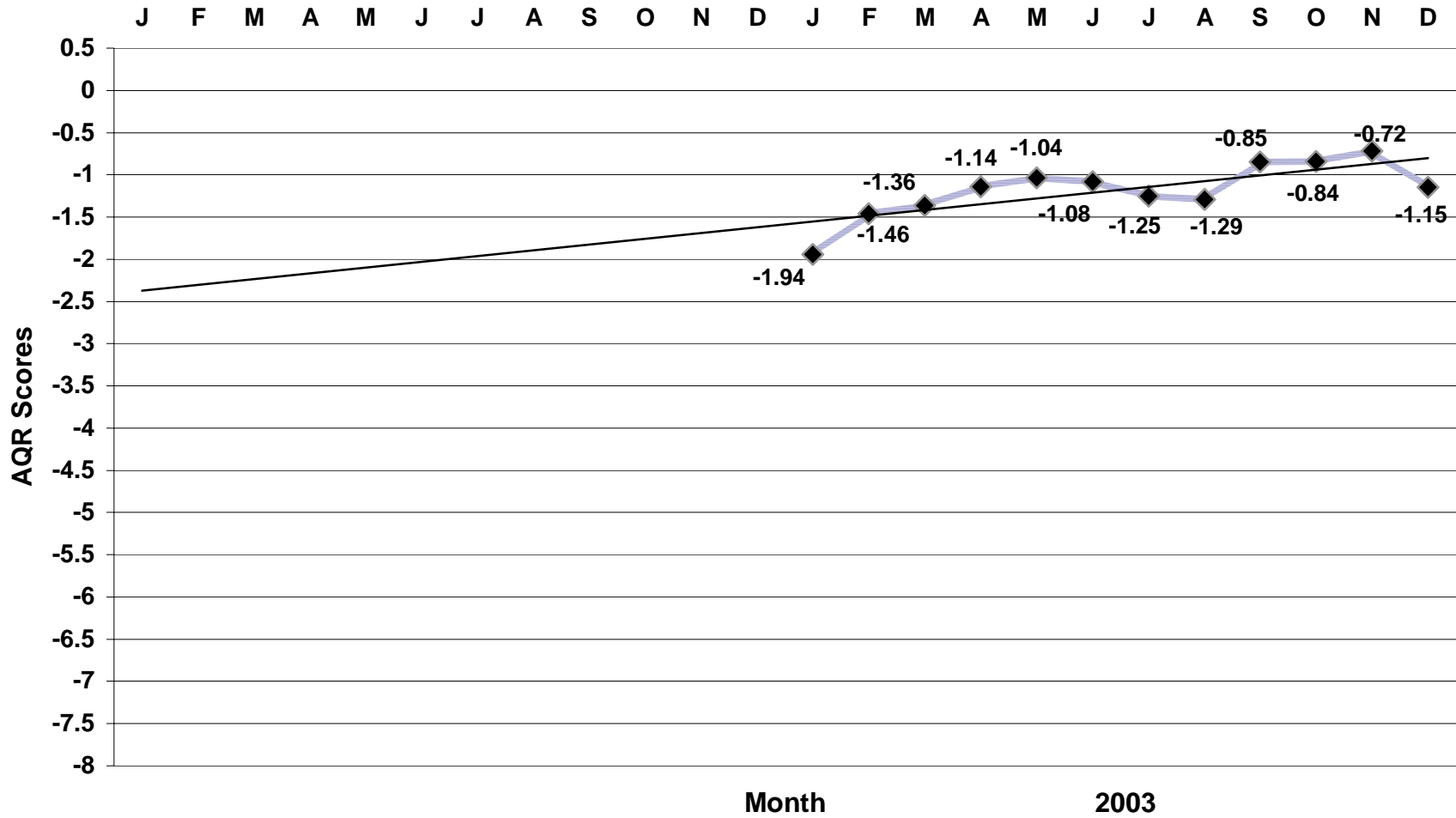
Airline Quality Rating

ATA Airlines by Month



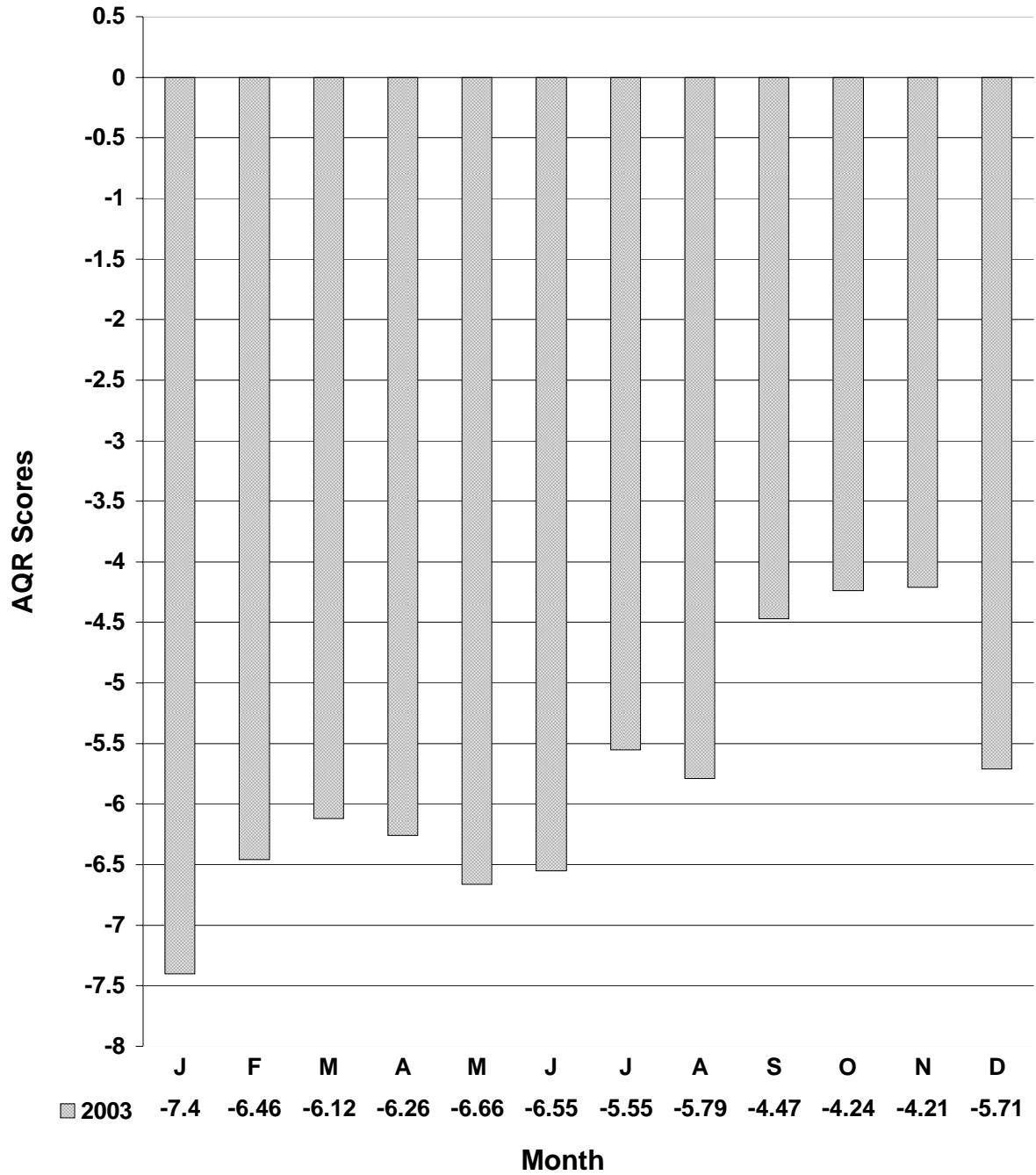
Airline Quality Rating

ATA Airlines 2003



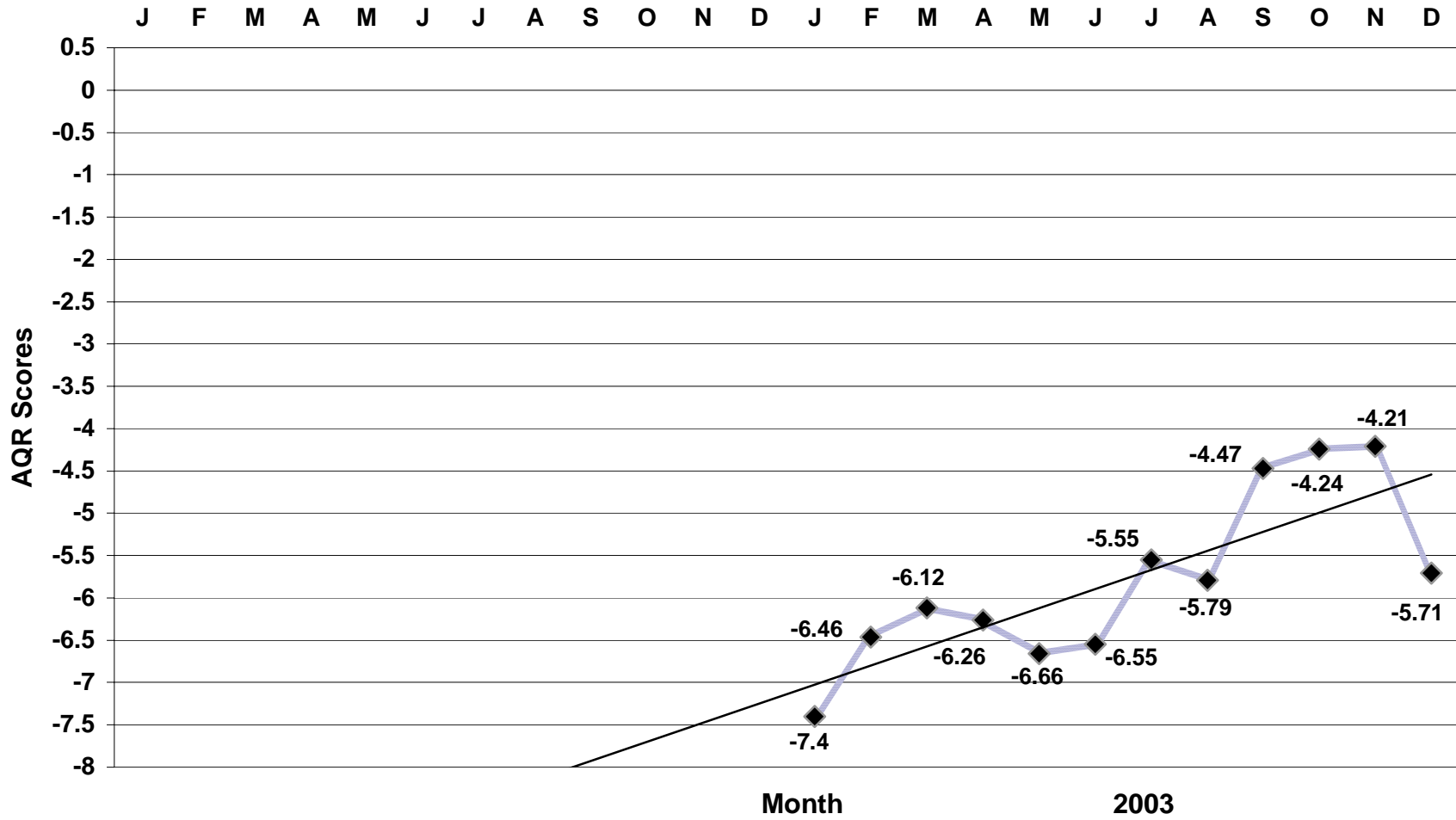
Airline Quality Rating

Atlantic Southeast Airlines by Month



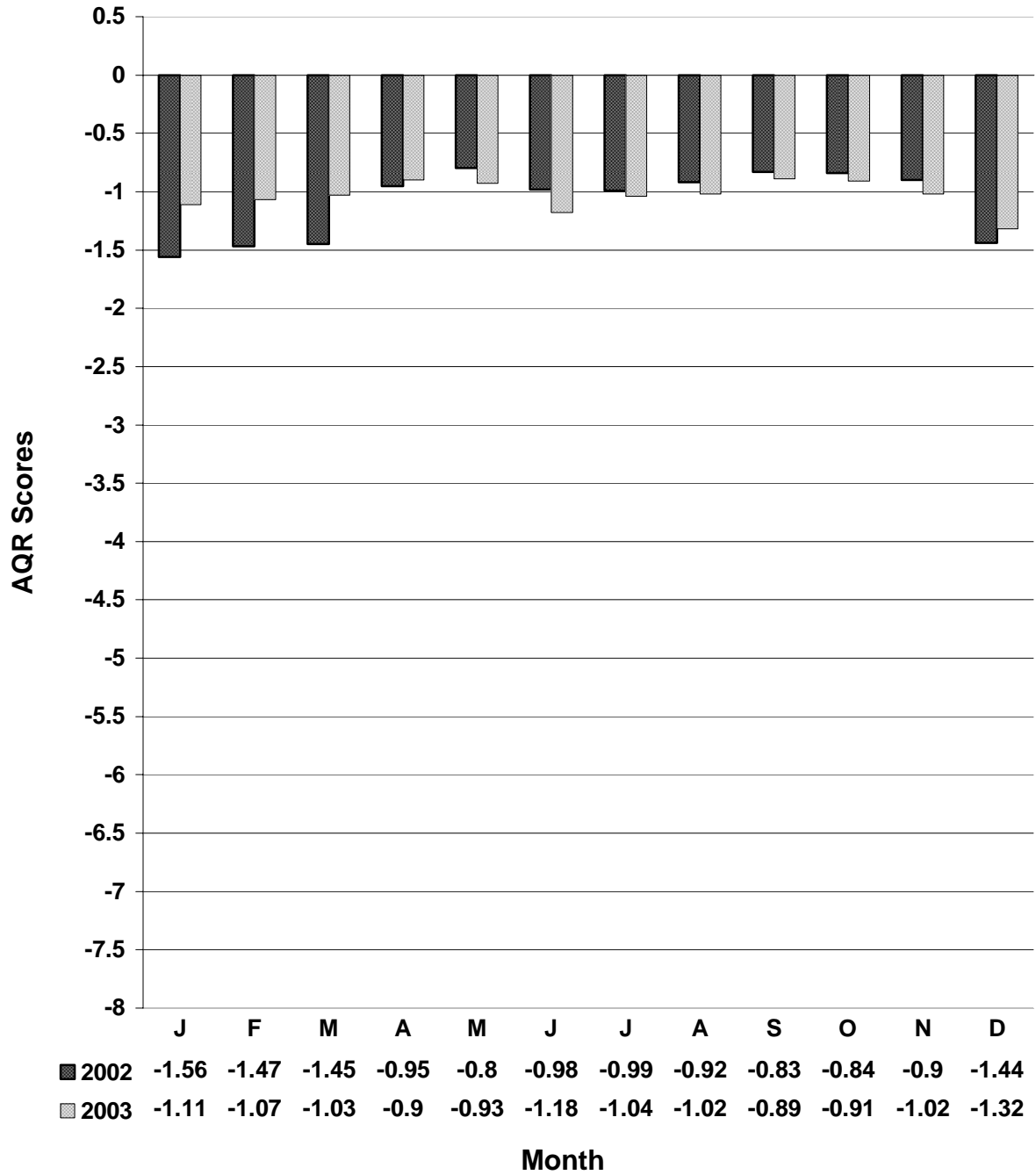
Airline Quality Rating

Atlantic Southeast Airlines 2003



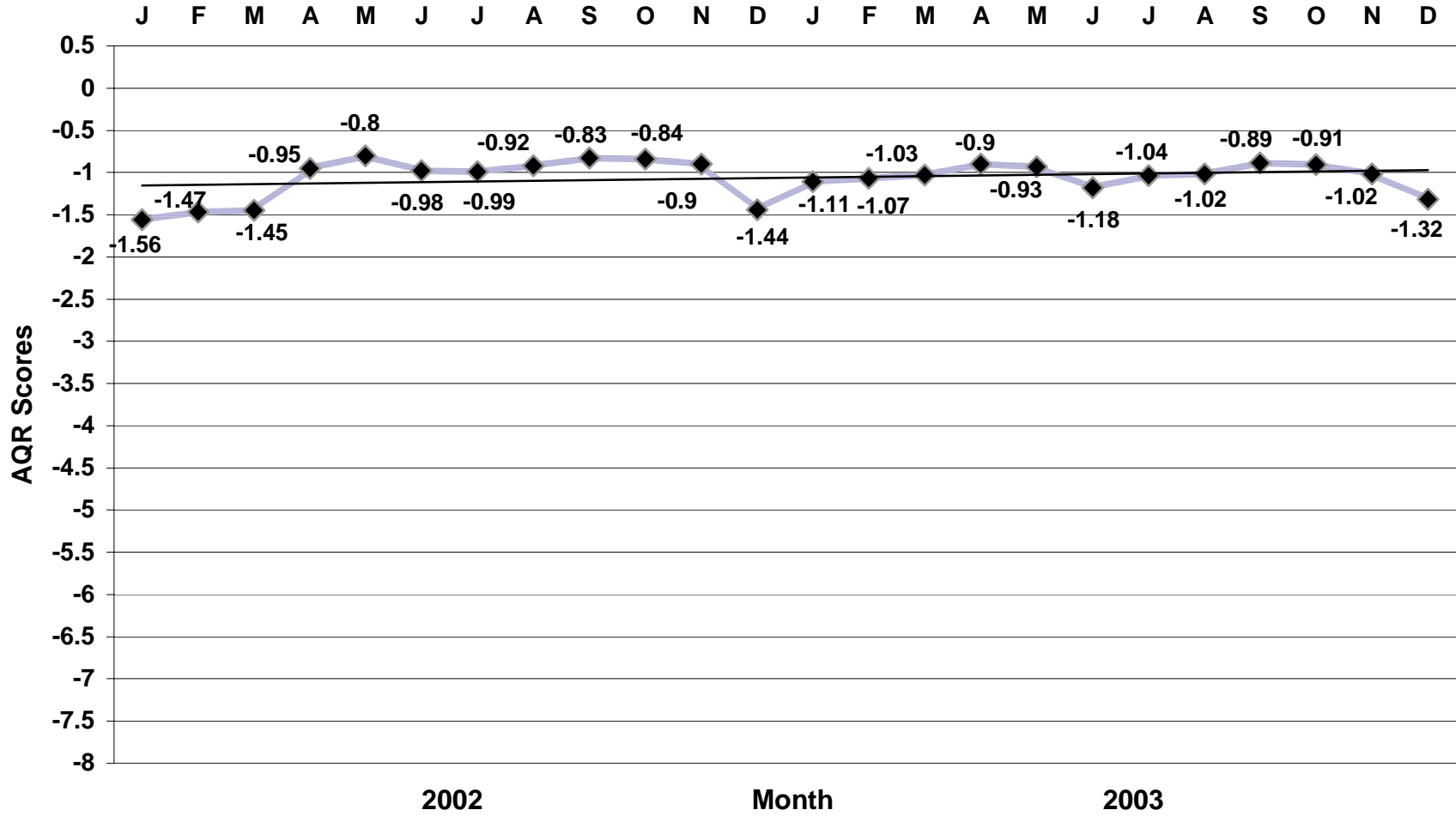
Airline Quality Rating

Continental Airlines by Month



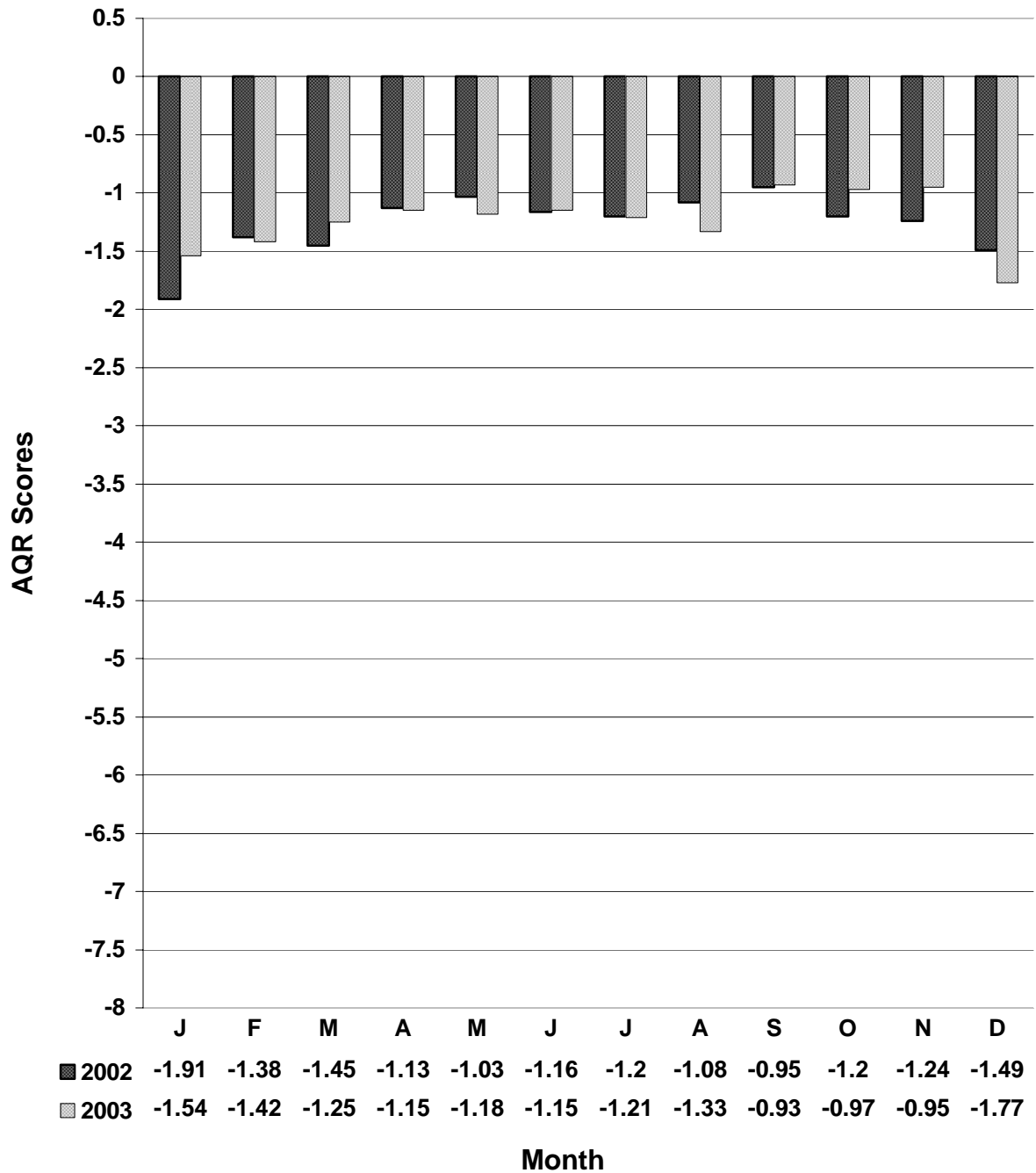
Airline Quality Rating

Continental Airlines 2002 - 2003



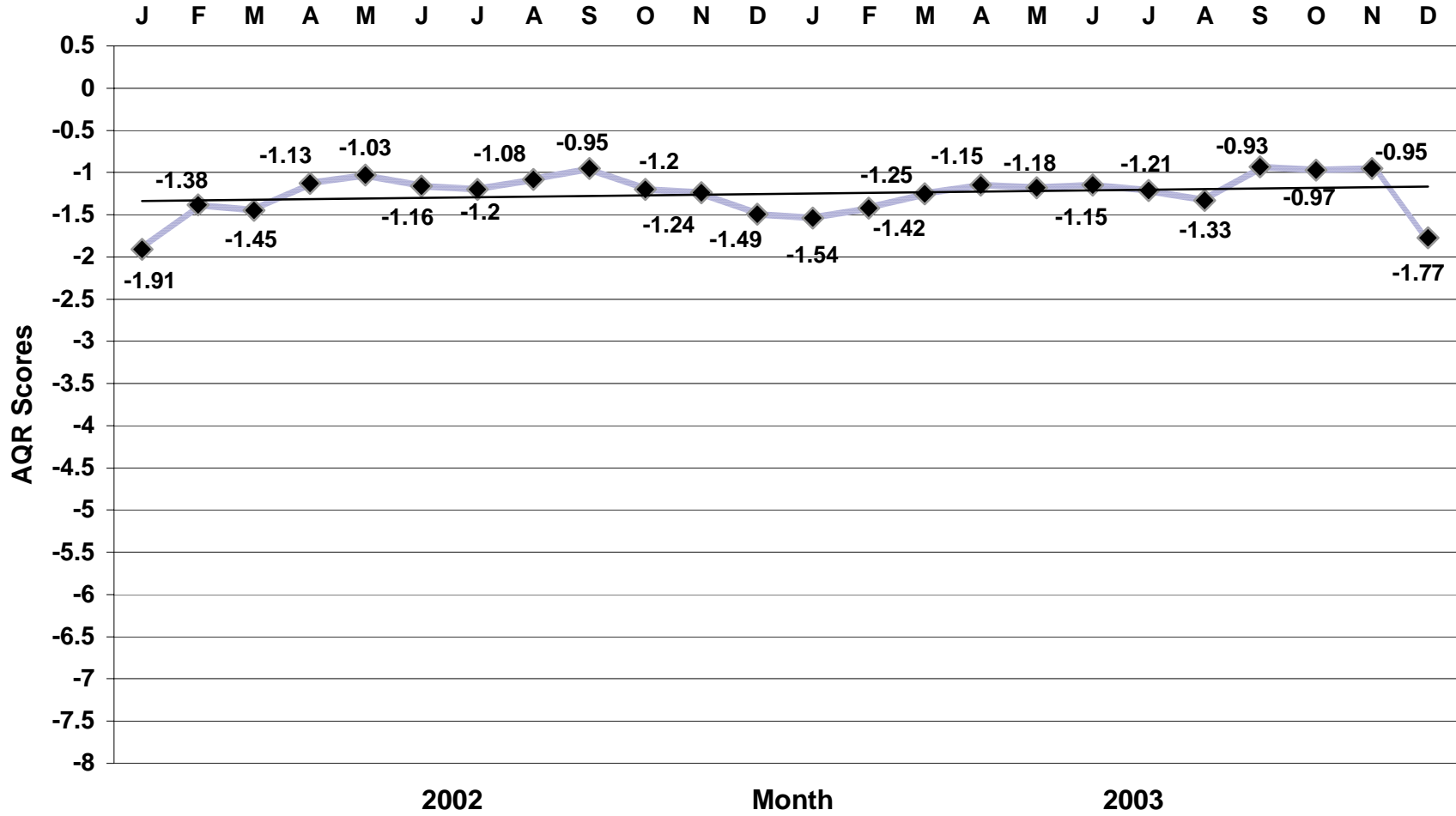
Airline Quality Rating

Delta Airlines by Month



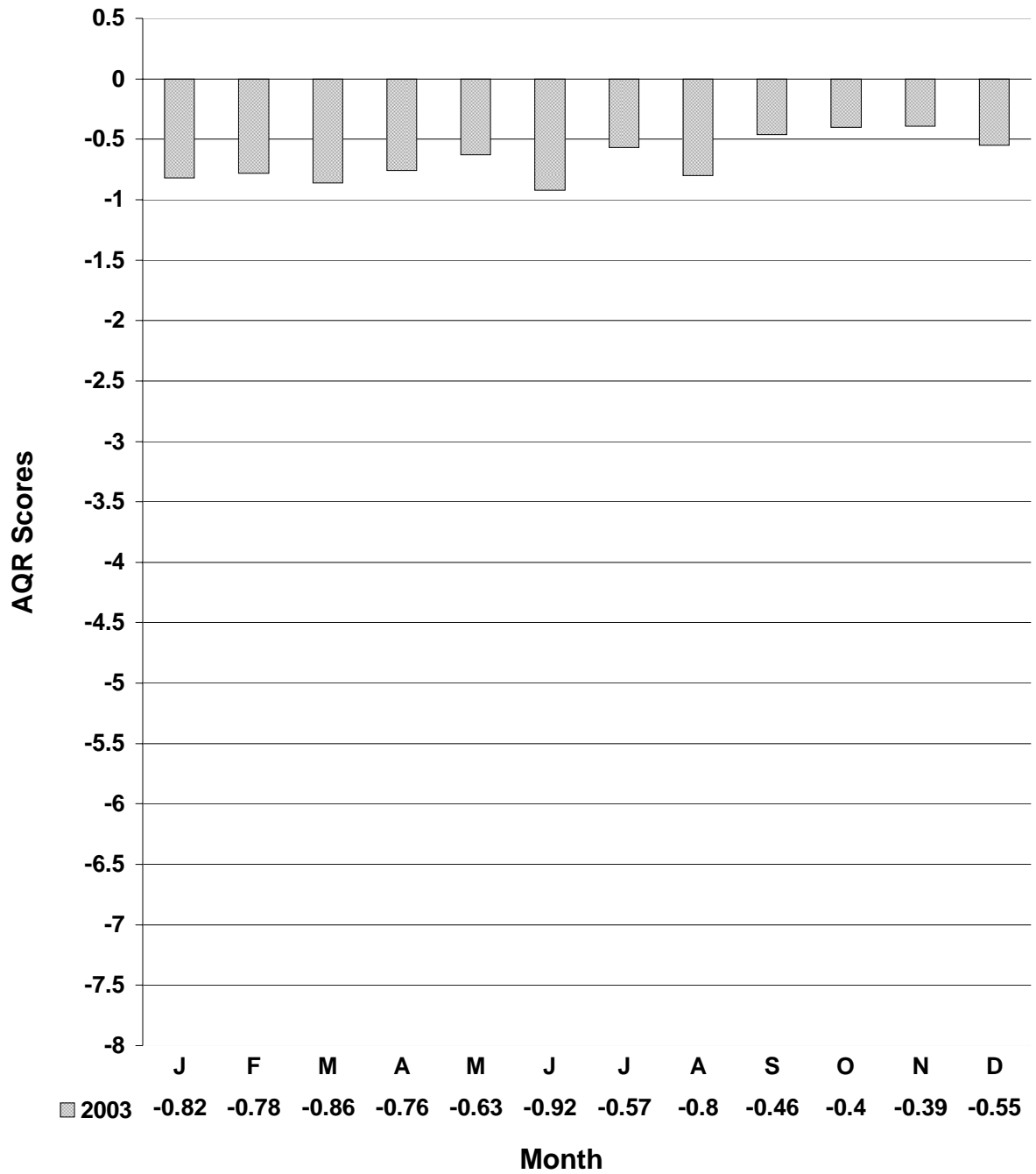
Airline Quality Rating

Delta Airlines 2002 - 2003



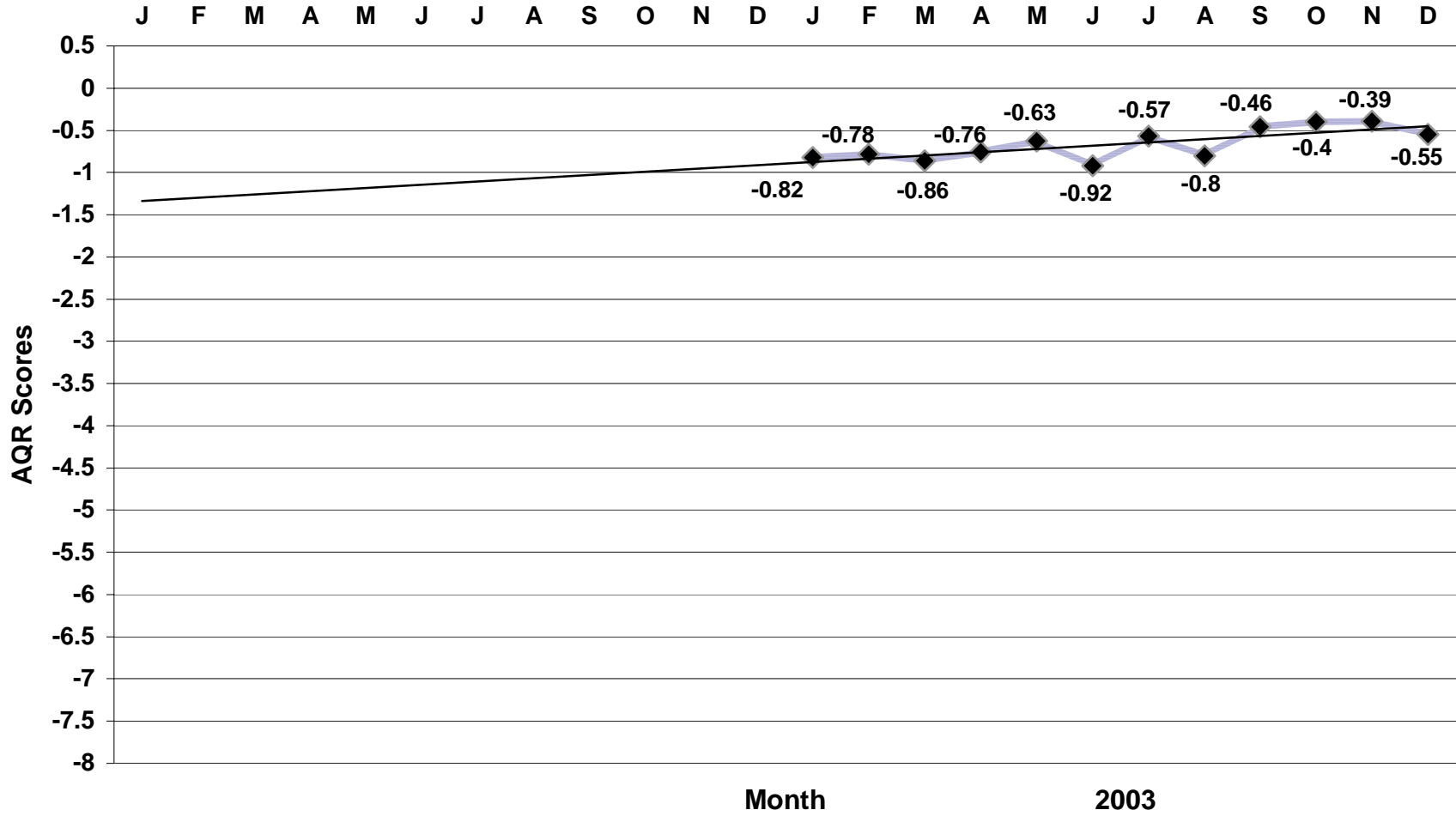
Airline Quality Rating

Jet Blue Airlines by Month



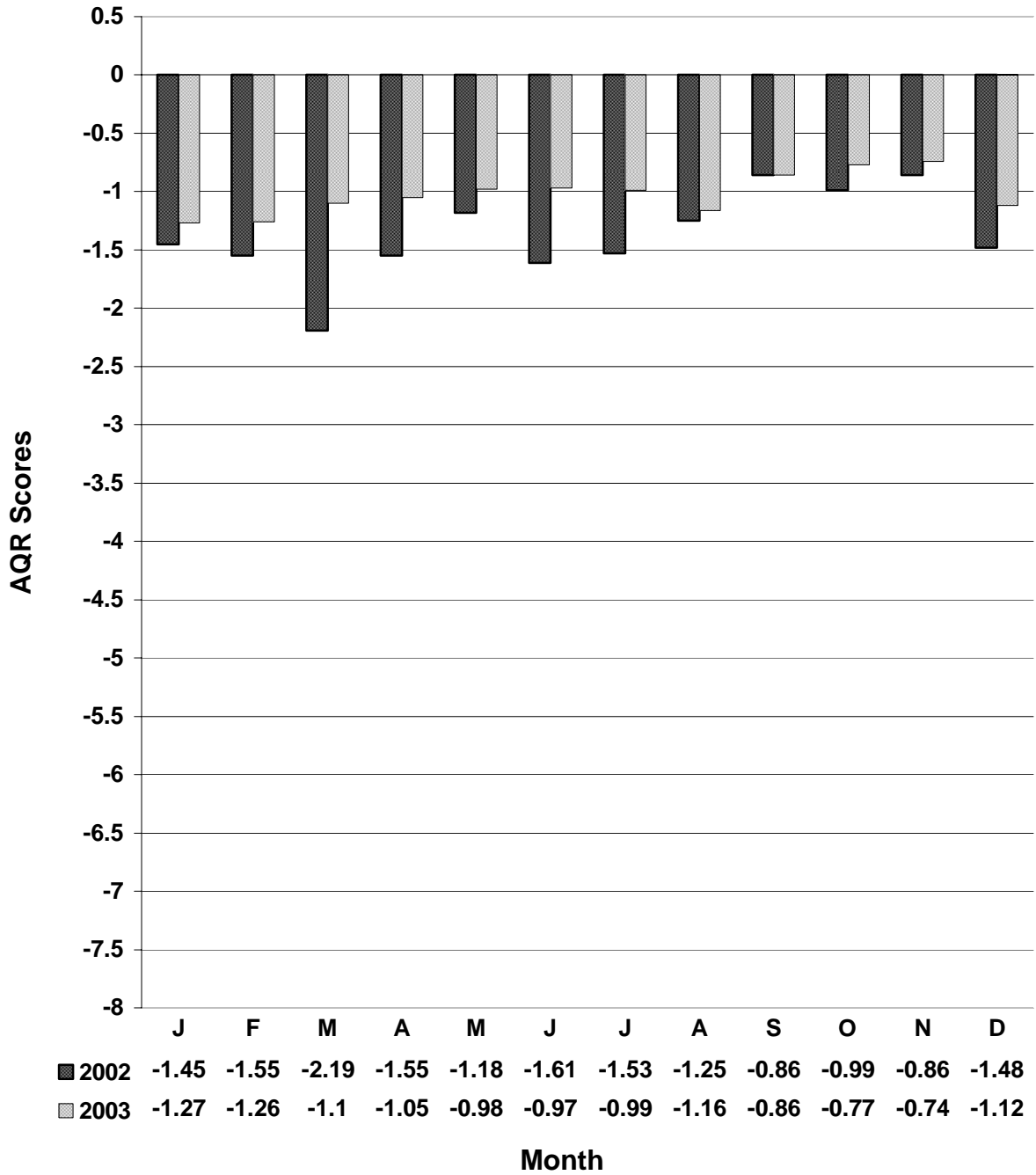
Airline Quality Rating

Jet Blue Airlines 2003



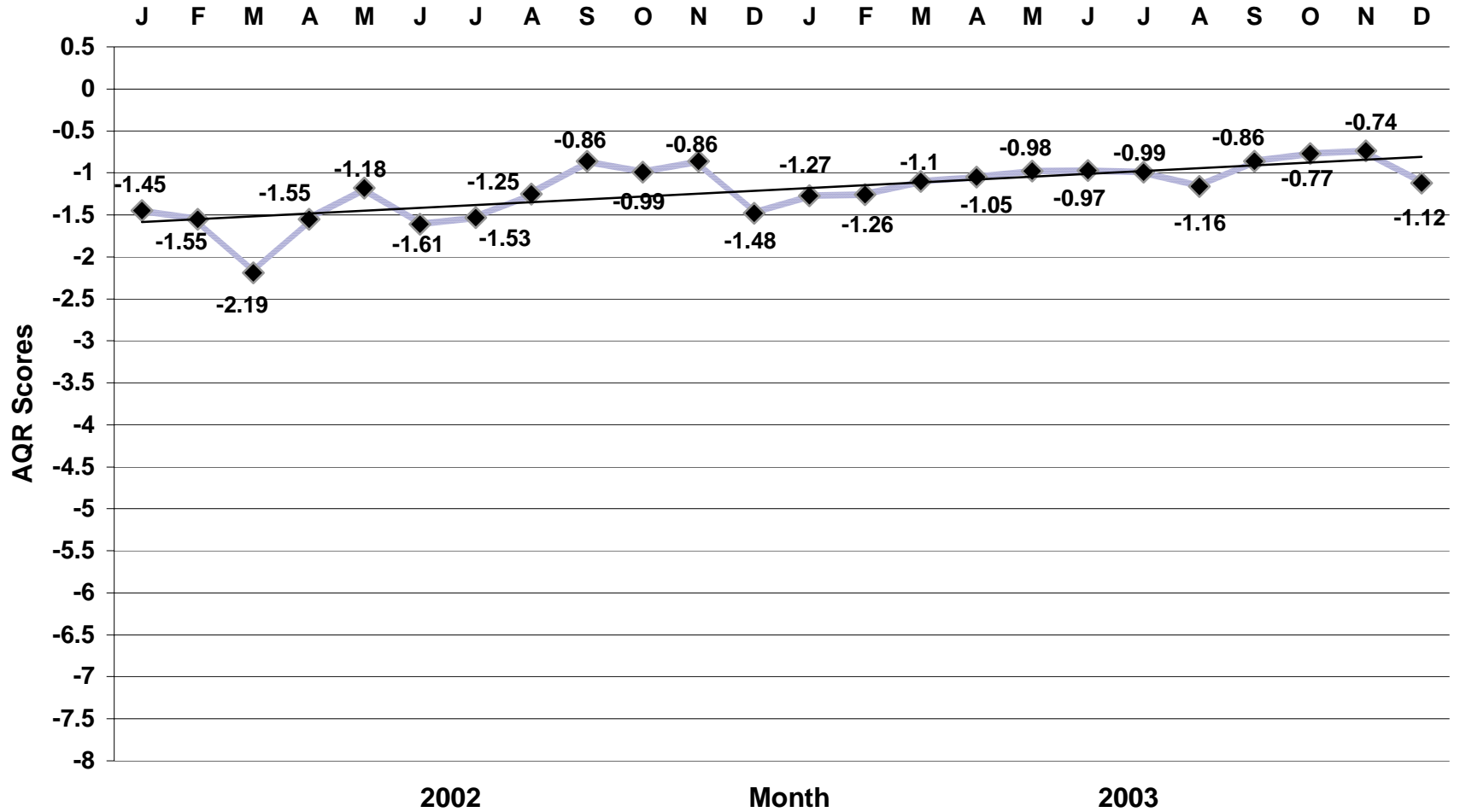
Airline Quality Rating

Northwest Airlines by Month



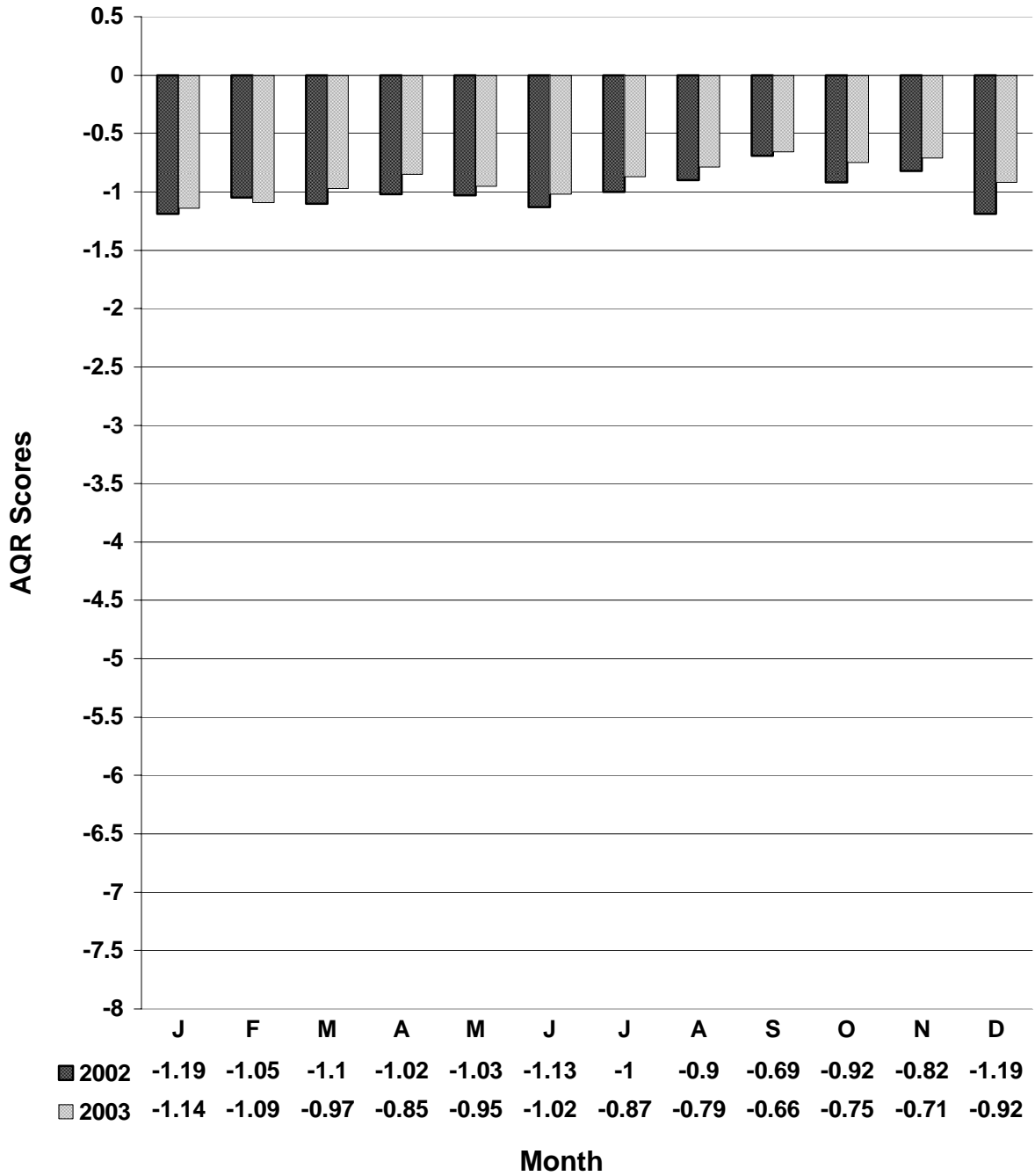
Airline Quality Rating

Northwest Airlines 2002 - 2003



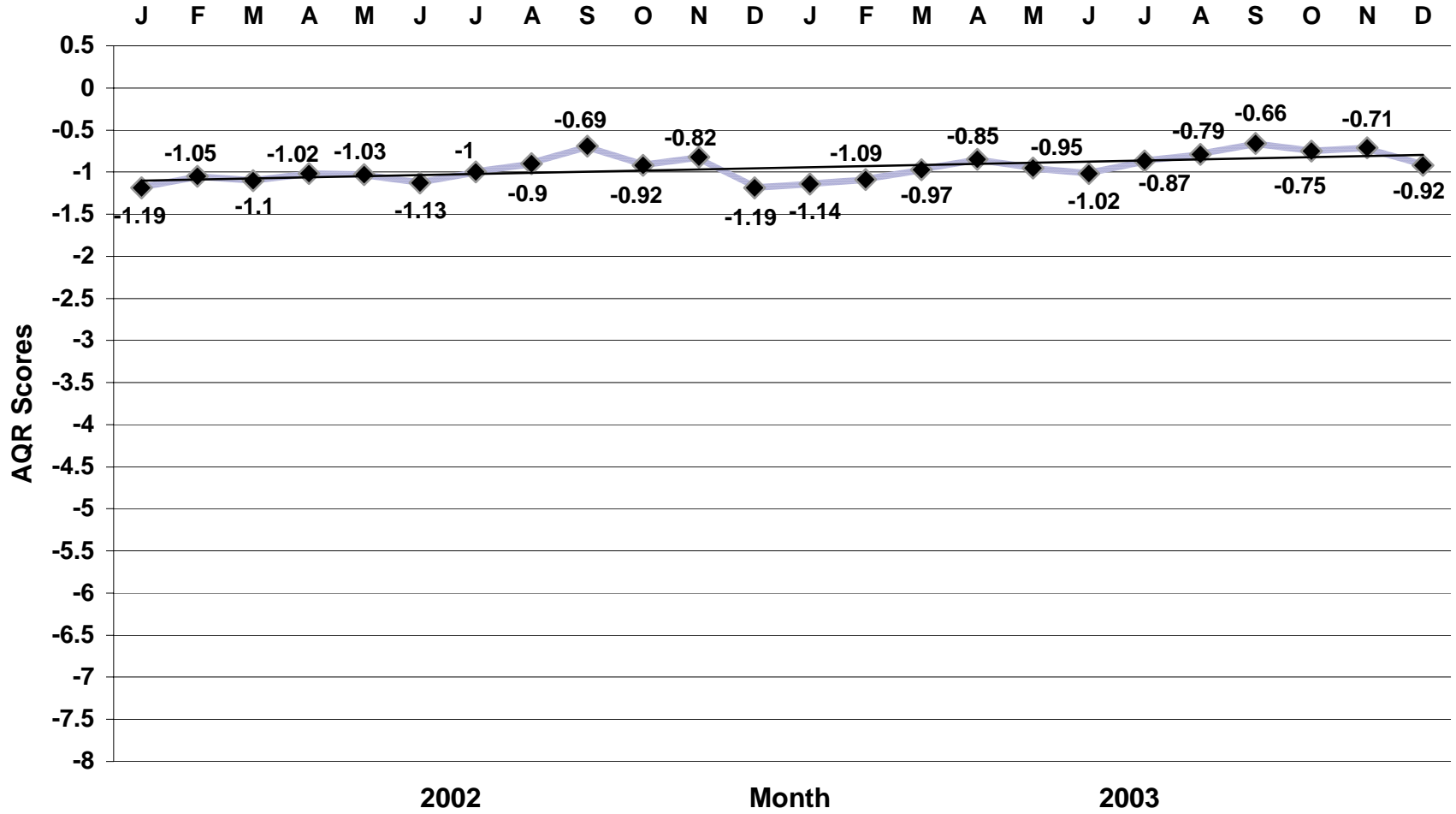
Airline Quality Rating

Southwest Airlines by Month



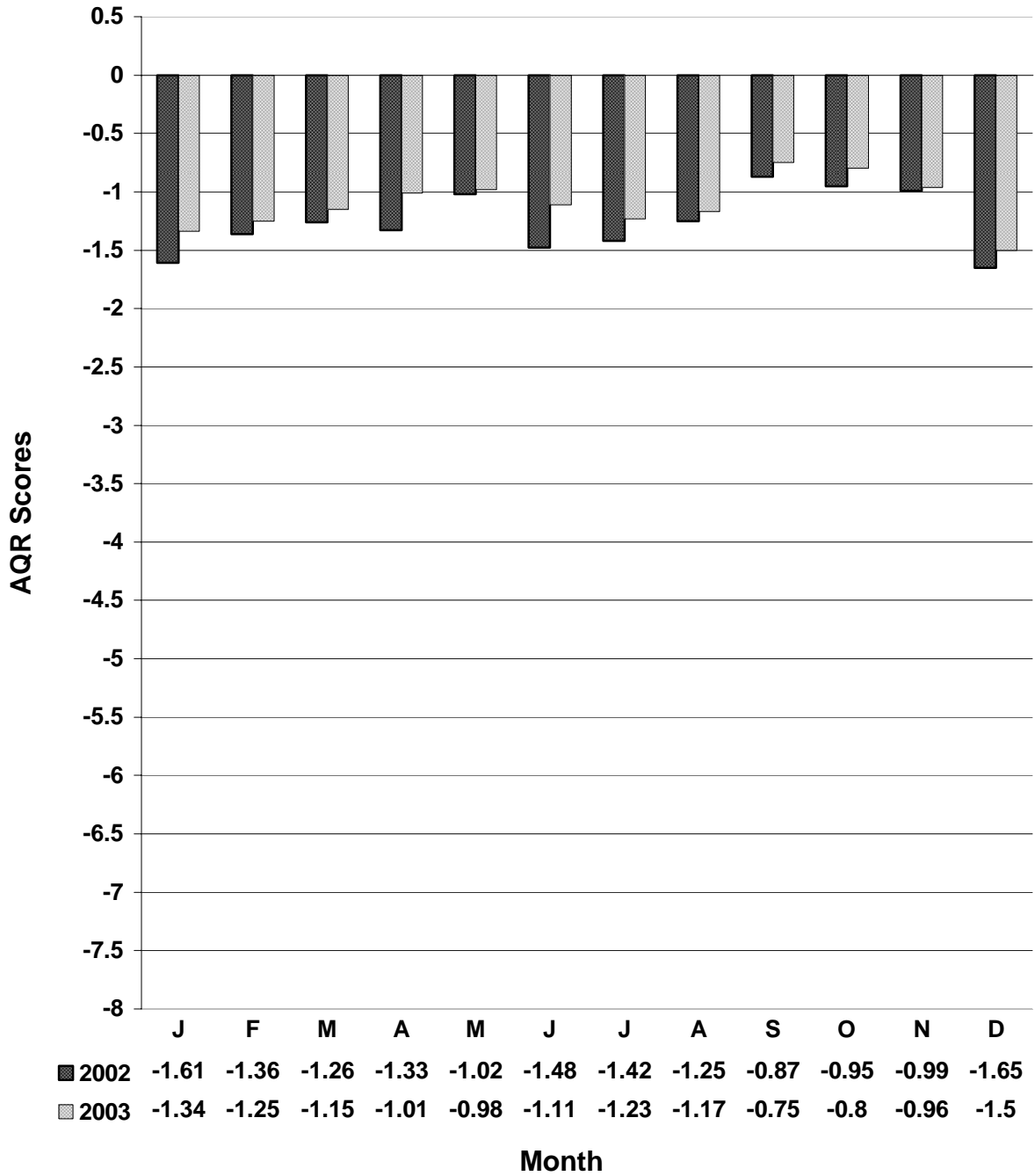
Airline Quality Rating

Southwest Airlines 2002 - 2003



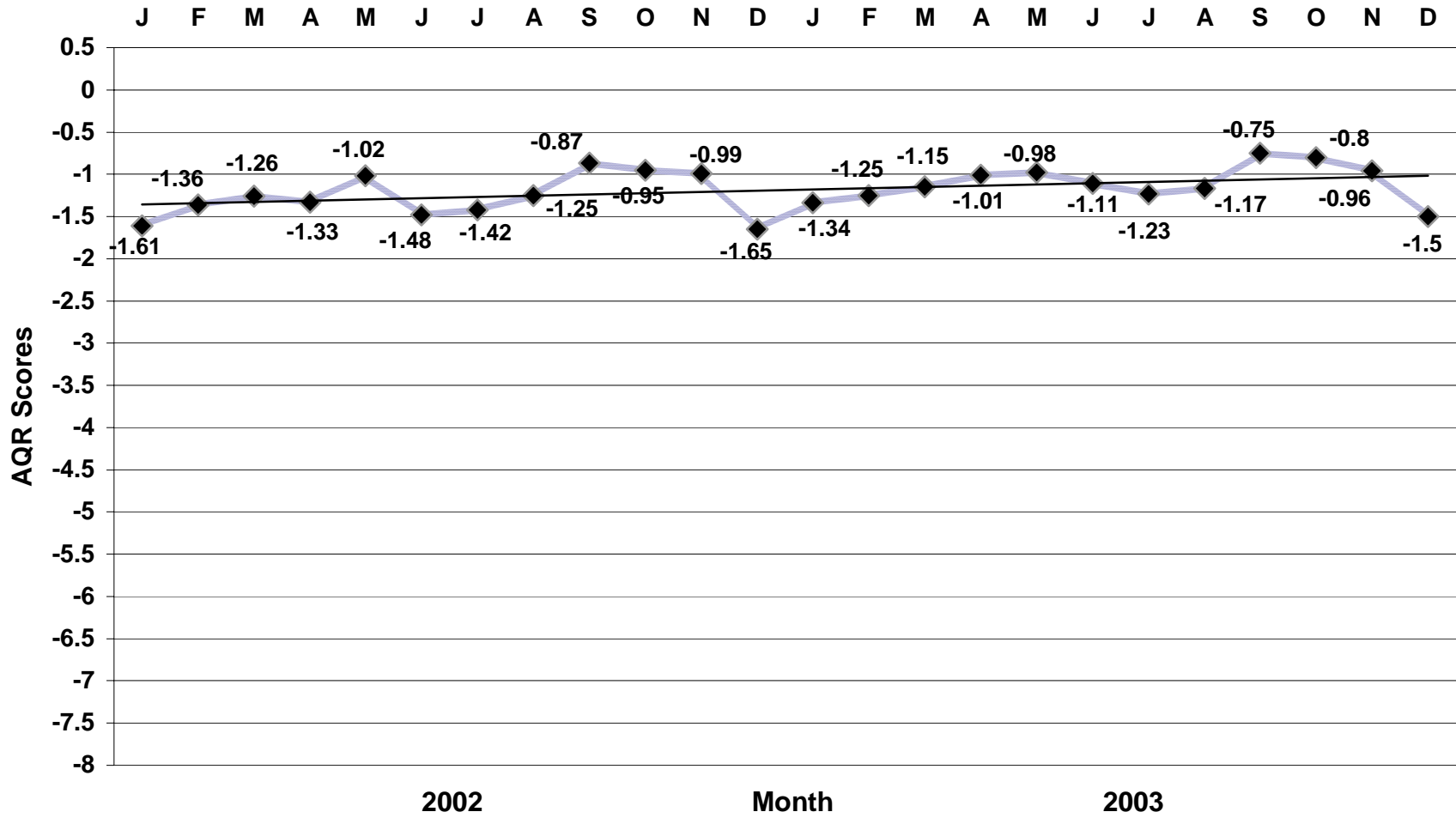
Airline Quality Rating

United Airlines by Month



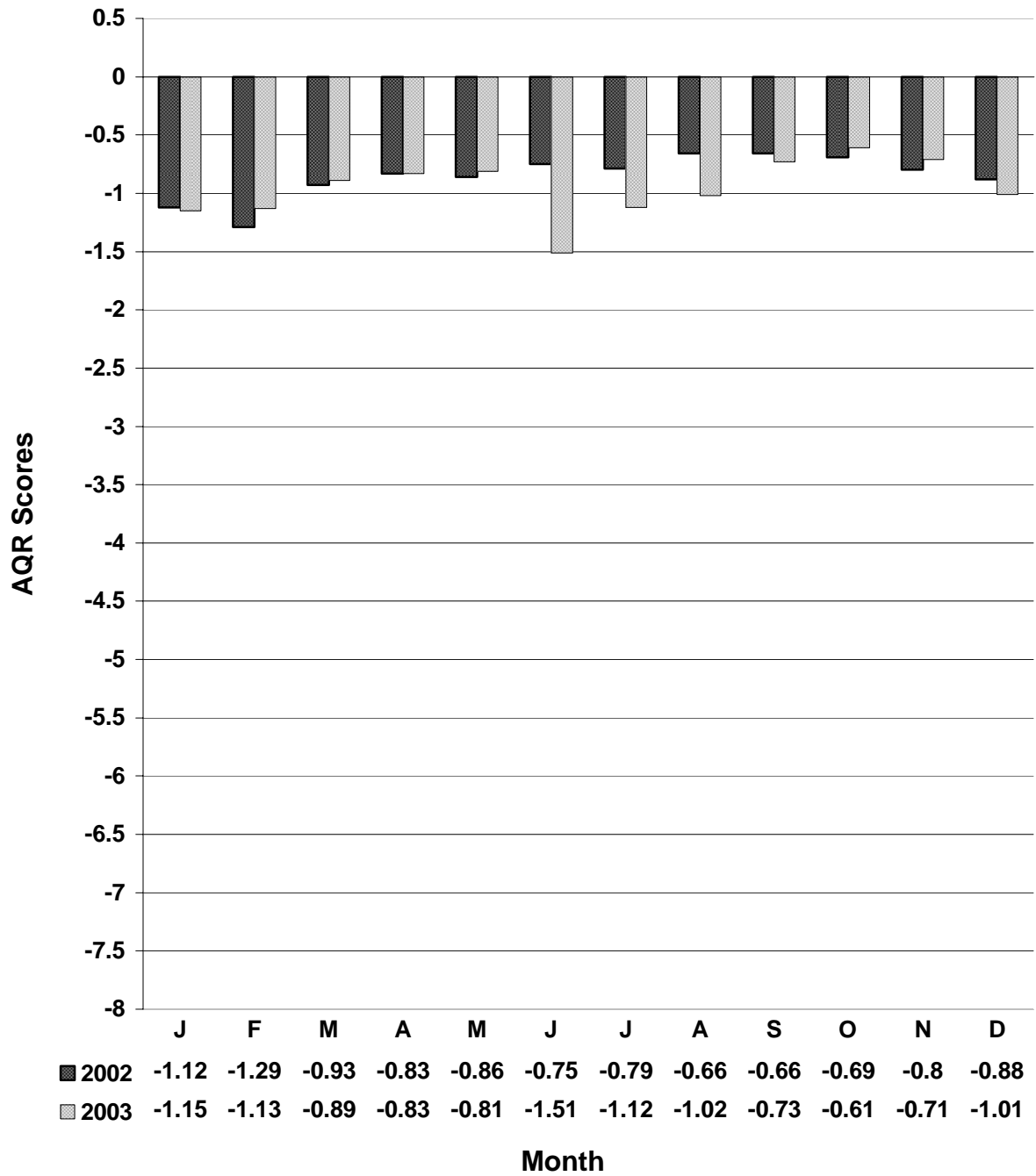
Airline Quality Rating

United Airlines 2002 - 2003



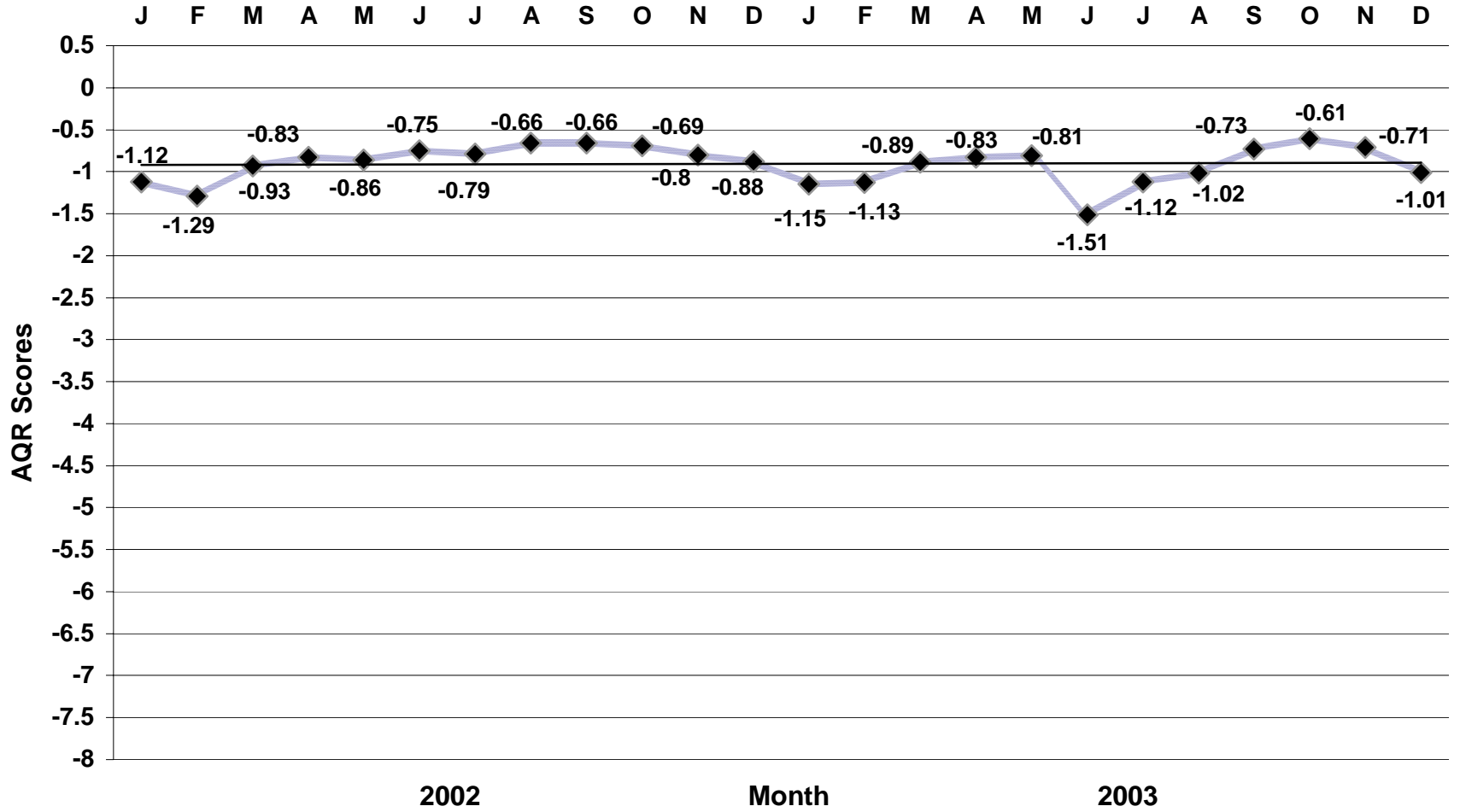
Airline Quality Rating

US Airways by Month



Airline Quality Rating

US Airways 2002 - 2003



Detail of Frequently Cited Airline Performance Criteria

Consumer interest remains high regarding such issues as on-time performance, mishandled baggage, involuntary denied boardings (bumping), and treatment of customers. Since these criteria are central to the AQR calculations, it is important to provide more complete data for individual airlines in these areas. The following data tables and charts provide a detailed look at the performance of each of the 14 U.S. airlines that handled at least 1% or more of the total passenger volume for 2003 in the specific areas of on-time arrivals, mishandled baggage, involuntary denied boardings, and consumer complaints. Data were drawn from the U.S. Department of Transportation monthly *Air Travel Consumer Report*. The final pages of this report outline the Airline Quality Rating criteria definitions for reference and clarity in more fully understanding the nature of the data reported.

2003 On-Time Arrival Percentage by Month for U.S. Airlines

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	.820	.731	.764	.861	.800	.777	.725	.688	.852	.843	.820	.701	.781
Alaska (AS)	.816	.780	.821	.873	.874	.819	.812	.773	.862	.806	.759	.729	.810
America West (HP)	.778	.722	.795	.882	.859	.852	.820	.808	.864	.842	.820	.794	.820
American (AA)	.863	.796	.869	.860	.847	.805	.767	.745	.850	.882	.772	.741	.817
American Eagle (MQ)	.786	.716	.821	.833	.844	.812	.776	.770	.825	.850	.711	.685	.786
ATA (TZ)	.750	.702	.747	.842	.823	.851	.766	.806	.888	.888	.747	.771	.800
Atlantic Southeast (EV)	.777	.693	.715	.785	.739	.725	.651	.681	.816	.829	.836	.796	.754
Continental (CO)	.854	.778	.827	.884	.867	.814	.804	.798	.781	.882	.787	.767	.820
Delta (DL)	.849	.773	.835	.895	.838	.820	.793	.777	.861	.854	.836	.749	.823
Jet Blue (B6)	.792	.715	.769	.879	.901	.844	.885	.783	.921	.904	.888	.815	.843
Northwest (NW)	.849	.780	.817	.865	.858	.833	.827	.812	.868	.882	.798	.761	.829
Southwest (WN)	.875	.801	.860	.908	.901	.854	.840	.858	.897	.867	.855	.835	.863
United (UA)	.880	.843	.840	.879	.854	.844	.807	.817	.879	.864	.747	.750	.833
US Airways (US)	.821	.714	.825	.840	.807	.777	.737	.717	.824	.869	.846	.785	.797
All by Month		.842	.772	.829	.870	.850	.820	.792	.785	.858	.864	.804	.767
	.820												
*Atlantic Coast (DH)	.701	.570	.718	.789	.761	.815	.756	.764	.833	.844	.734	.685	.748
*Express Jet (RU)	.792	.727	.798	.865	.861	.809	.784	.771	.778	.854	.772	.726	.795
*SkyWest (OO)	.839	.854	.892	.921	.900	.903	.916	.898	.923	.888	.844	.754	.876

*These airlines are not included in the Monthly value. Only the 14 airlines that report all data elements included in the AQR are part of the Monthly value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2002 On-Time Arrival Percentage by Month for U.S. Airlines

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual	
Alaska	.750	.779	.733	.820	.809	.746	.771	.760	.851	.802	.802	.738	.780	
America West	.863	.885	.848	.849	.877	.803	.787	.827	.839	.824	.806	.757	.829	
American	.830	.865	.803	.838	.845	.794	.803	.835	.897	.875	.876	.809	.838	
American Eagle	.809	.825	.762	.794	.808	.762	.762	.797	.856	.796	.793	.731	.791	
Continental	.838	.870	.848	.879	.860	.815	.828	.833	.862	.784	.836	.764	.835	
Delta	.749	.812	.766	.791	.793	.779	.786	.846	.862	.821	.830	.776	.800	
Northwest	.793	.816	.707	.806	.811	.774	.779	.818	.870	.864	.863	.799	.808	
Southwest	.846	.873	.797	.850	.825	.787	.779	.815	.886	.826	.859	.780	.826	
United	.798	.864	.808	.834	.862	.783	.832	.823	.898	.880	.879	.822	.840	
US Airways	.811	.841	.790	.807	.813	.810	.832	.859	.909	.879	.887	.780	.834	
All by Month		.810	.847	.786	.826	.828	.786	.798	.829	.880	.842	.852	.783	.821

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2003 On-Time Arrival Ranking by Month for U.S. Airlines

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ranking
AirTran	8	8	12	9	13	12	13	13	9	11	6	13	13
Alaska	9	4	7	7	3	8	5	9	7	14	11	12	9
America West	12	9	10	4	5	2	4	4	6	12	7	4	7
American	3	3	1	10	8	11	10	11	10	4	10	11	8
American Eagle	11	10	8	13	9	10	9	10	11	10	14	14	12
ATA	14	13	13	11	11	3	11	5	3	2	13	6	10
Atlantic Southeast	13	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	13	13	5	3	14
Continental	4	6	5	3	4	9	7	6	14	5	9	7	6
Delta	6	7	4	2	10	7	8	8	8	9	4	10	5
Jet Blue	10	11	11	6	2	5	1	7	1	1	1	2	2
Northwest	5	5	9	8	6	6	3	3	5	3	8	8	4
Southwest	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	2	7	2	1	1
United	1	1	3	5	7	4	6	2	4	8	12	9	3
US Airways	7	12	6	12	12	13	12	12	12	6	3	5	11

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2003 Involuntary Denied Boardings by Quarter for U.S. Airlines
(per 10,000 passengers)

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Annual
AirTran (FL)	3.36	2.17	0.21	0.38	1.45
Alaska (AS)	0.63	0.47	0.84	1.29	0.81
America West (HP)	0.51	0.40	0.38	0.32	0.40
American (AA)	0.62	0.71	0.48	0.57	0.59
American Eagle (MQ)	0.22	0.80	0.44	0.14	0.38
ATA (TZ)	0.76	0.96	1.16	0.65	0.89
*Atlantic Coast (DH)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Atlantic Southeast (EV)	7.51	11.79	6.32	5.83	7.86
Continental (CO)	0.83	1.35	0.63	1.40	1.06
Delta (DL)	1.16	1.68	1.20	1.16	1.30
*Express Jet (RU)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Jet Blue (B6)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Northwest (NW)	0.70	0.86	0.76	0.49	0.70
*SkyWest (OO)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Southwest (WN)	1.29	1.25	0.77	0.80	1.02
United (UA)	0.53	0.79	0.53	0.75	0.65
US Airways (US)	0.46	0.52	0.14	0.26	0.34
All by Quarter	0.90	1.08	0.70	0.78	0.86

*These airlines are not included in the Industry value. Only the 14 airlines that report all data elements included in the AQR are part of the Industry value. Due to size of aircraft operated, these carriers are not required to report this statistic.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2002 Involuntary Denied Boardings by Quarter for U.S. Airlines
(per 10,000 passengers)

	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Annual
Alaska	2.21	0.89	0.79	0.95	1.17
America West	0.33	0.24	0.07	0.16	0.20
American	0.28	0.19	0.21	0.56	0.31
American Eagle	0.18	0.15	0.00	0.33	0.19
Continental	1.85	0.55	0.45	0.65	0.87
Delta	0.89	0.87	0.86	1.79	1.11
Northwest	0.73	0.50	0.39	0.82	0.60
Southwest	1.14	1.24	0.81	1.19	1.09
United	0.65	0.80	0.51	0.81	0.69
US Airways	0.38	0.31	0.09	0.66	0.35
All by Quarter	0.80	0.65	0.50	0.96	0.72

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2003 Mishandled Baggage by Month for U.S. Airlines

(per 1,000 passengers)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	3.22	3.52	3.12	2.37	2.57	2.87	2.69	3.23	2.18	2.27	2.35	3.79	2.84
Alaska (AS)	2.34	2.01	2.15	2.18	2.18	2.71	2.97	3.22	2.32	1.97	2.56	3.41	2.56
America West (HP)	4.50	4.31	3.52	2.53	2.68	3.12	3.44	3.59	2.40	2.77	2.77	4.12	3.30
American (AA)	4.61	4.99	4.52	3.84	3.85	4.71	5.02	5.71	3.30	3.01	3.76	5.70	4.45
American Eagle (MQ)	10.31	14.21	11.21	9.10	8.22	8.09	8.47	9.28	5.73	5.73	7.35	10.49	8.42
ATA (TZ)	6.48	5.04	4.87	3.63	3.89	3.99	4.30	4.28	2.41	3.12	2.81	4.13	4.06
Atlantic Southeast (EV)	22.52	18.34	16.99	13.54	14.88	14.75	15.81	16.94	11.91	11.56	11.06	17.74	15.41
Continental (CO)	3.16	3.38	3.30	2.46	2.35	3.43	3.54	3.54	2.58	2.54	2.91	3.95	3.11
Delta (DL)	4.76	4.56	3.98	3.01	3.25	3.27	3.70	4.28	2.76	3.10	3.04	6.28	3.84
Jet Blue (B6)	3.72	3.89	3.68	3.02	3.26	3.88	3.05	3.86	2.44	2.58	2.28	2.98	3.21
Northwest (NW)	4.29	4.19	3.71	3.00	2.89	3.09	3.29	3.94	2.76	2.65	2.92	4.36	3.42
Southwest (WN)	3.95	3.73	3.45	3.03	3.40	3.66	3.45	3.21	2.77	3.05	2.83	3.70	3.35
United (UA)	5.02	4.80	4.08	3.39	3.27	3.73	4.29	4.06	2.72	2.72	3.37	5.61	3.93
US Airways (US)	3.95	4.09	3.29	3.10	3.09	5.31	4.09	3.86	2.83	2.43	2.52	3.97	3.55
All by Month		4.81	4.76	4.20	3.46	3.56	4.08	4.19	4.43	3.03	3.07	3.31	5.20
4.00													
*Atlantic Coast (DH)	10.87	11.17	9.62	7.87	7.09	7.98	9.28	10.40	6.10	6.94	8.37	15.80	9.23
*Express Jet (RU)	3.94	4.82	5.11	3.76	3.23	4.73	5.18	5.07	3.92	3.60	4.54	5.96	4.51
*SkyWest (OO)	9.14	9.43	7.75	5.87	6.52	7.10	8.88	7.71	5.60	6.75	8.57	19.06	8.62

* These airlines are not included in the Monthly value. Only the 14 airlines that report all data elements included in the AQR are part of the Monthly value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2002 Mishandled Baggage by Month for U.S. Airlines

(per 1,000 passengers)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual	
Alaska	2.48	1.97	3.59	2.52	2.46	2.95	3.03	3.04	2.51	2.51	2.25	2.66	2.63	
America West	3.68	3.21	3.55	3.05	2.95	3.70	4.04	3.74	3.14	3.13	3.15	5.15	3.55	
American	5.77	4.25	5.35	4.18	3.76	4.40	4.48	3.79	2.86	3.13	3.60	5.57	4.27	
American Eagle	11.79	9.70	12.38	9.97	8.54	10.33	9.66	9.13	7.81	8.42	8.42	11.89	9.81	
Continental	3.34	3.23	3.32	2.82	2.62	3.25	3.38	3.06	2.39	2.69	2.47	4.91	3.14	
Delta	5.65	3.65	4.20	3.17	2.77	3.40	3.53	3.22	3.14	3.09	3.02	4.17	3.57	
Northwest	4.13	4.60	7.35	4.71	3.74	5.37	5.10	4.36	3.15	3.08	2.76	5.14	4.52	
Southwest	4.08	3.52	3.74	3.42	3.50	3.69	3.74	3.40	2.81	3.10	2.88	4.33	3.52	
United	4.19	3.28	3.40	3.66	3.02	4.37	3.80	4.32	2.94	2.74	3.11	5.92	3.76	
US Airways	3.28	3.78	3.37	2.94	2.86	2.64	2.71	2.81	2.74	2.47	2.89	2.91	2.95	
All by Month		4.69	3.85	4.52	3.69	3.32	4.03	3.99	3.72	3.04	4.11	3.16	4.91	3.84

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2003 Mishandled Baggage Rankings by Month for U.S. Airlines

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ranking
AirTran	3	3	2	2	3	2	1	3	1	2	2	4	2
Alaska	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	4	2	1
America West	8	8	6	4	4	4	5	5	3	8	5	7	5
American	9	11	11	12	11	11	12	12	12	9	12	11	12
American Eagle	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13	13
ATA	12	12	12	11	12	10	11	11	4	12	6	8	11
Atlantic Southeast	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14	14
Continental	2	2	4	3	2	6	7	4	6	4	8	5	3
Delta	10	9	9	6	7	5	8	10	9	11	10	12	9
Jet Blue	4	5	7	7	8	9	3	6	5	5	1	1	4
Northwest	7	7	8	5	5	3	4	8	8	6	9	9	7
Southwest	5	4	5	8	10	7	6	1	10	10	7	3	6
United	11	10	10	10	9	8	10	9	7	7	11	10	10
US Airways	6	6	3	9	6	12	9	7	11	3	3	6	8

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2003 Total Complaints to Department of Transportation by Month for U.S. Airlines

(per 100,000 passengers)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual
AirTran (FL)	0.86	0.79	1.01	1.04	0.41	0.19	0.61	0.81	1.04	0.30	1.03	1.84	0.83
Alaska (AS)	0.38	0.78	0.42	0.26	0.56	0.72	0.26	0.95	0.52	0.17	0.66	0.46	0.52
America West (HP)	1.42	1.25	1.09	0.84	1.04	0.61	0.63	0.75	0.71	0.78	0.70	0.36	0.84
American (AA)	1.44	0.72	1.01	0.86	0.76	0.88	1.01	0.91	0.94	0.67	0.72	0.62	0.88
American Eagle (MQ)	1.67	0.62	0.21	0.42	0.69	0.38	0.91	0.09	0.31	0.28	0.39	0.37	0.51
ATA (TZ)	1.49	0.88	0.68	0.96	0.24	0.33	0.42	0.66	0.87	0.60	0.27	0.73	0.66
Atlantic Southeast (EV)	0.43	0.76	0.76	0.52	0.72	0.36	0.83	0.66	0.56	0.49	0.91	0.13	0.59
Continental (CO)	1.50	0.99	0.98	0.83	1.04	0.91	0.96	0.85	1.31	0.73	0.67	0.83	0.95
Delta (DL)	1.30	0.86	0.86	0.95	0.78	0.58	0.87	0.76	0.75	0.61	0.56	0.50	0.78
Jet Blue (B6)	0.47	0.00	0.67	0.27	0.27	0.82	0.23	0.23	0.44	0.00	0.26	0.12	0.31
Northwest (NW)	1.12	1.10	0.97	1.40	1.20	0.92	0.91	0.92	0.94	1.00	0.44	0.52	0.95
Southwest (WN)	0.29	0.21	0.08	0.10	0.14	0.12	0.21	0.13	0.10	0.08	0.15	0.11	0.14
United (UA)	0.86	0.64	1.01	0.88	0.87	0.92	1.08	1.07	0.76	0.74	0.59	0.50	0.83
US Airways (US)	1.20	0.84	0.77	0.68	0.55	1.16	1.15	0.95	0.94	0.79	1.09	0.72	0.90
All by Month		1.08	0.74	1.14	0.76	0.71	0.69	0.81	0.75	0.74	0.58	0.58	0.51
0.67													
*Atlantic Coast (DH)	1.55	0.17	0.83	0.29	1.20	0.51	1.52	0.90	0.14	0.39	0.59	0.88	0.76
*Express Jet (RU)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.31	0.09	0.26	0.48	0.11	0.28	0.31	0.29	0.21
*SkyWest (OO)	0.86	0.24	0.21	0.11	0.31	0.28	0.30	0.00	0.22	0.20	0.52	0.39	0.30

*These airlines are not included in the Monthly value. Only the 14 airlines that report all data elements included in the AQR are part of the Monthly value. Performance statistics are presented here for reference and comparison.

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2002 Total Complaints to Department of Transportation by Month for U.S. Airlines
(per 100,000 passengers)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Annual	
Alaska	1.24	2.11	1.14	1.39	0.17	1.23	0.93	0.81	0.46	0.38	0.57	0.72	0.91	
America West	2.30	2.99	2.06	1.80	1.42	1.91	2.09	1.31	1.32	0.77	0.89	1.09	1.63	
American	1.49	1.59	1.88	1.72	1.25	1.33	1.43	1.03	1.00	0.90	0.97	0.87	1.29	
American Eagle	0.59	0.58	0.87	0.80	0.67	0.74	0.63	0.37	0.00	0.81	0.90	0.21	0.60	
Continental	2.15	1.91	1.70	1.52	1.06	1.12	1.15	1.18	1.55	0.95	1.54	1.14	1.41	
Delta	2.13	2.04	1.69	1.47	1.48	1.34	1.39	1.28	0.82	0.89	1.13	0.87	1.37	
Northwest	2.01	1.94	1.62	2.06	1.52	1.57	1.63	1.26	0.94	1.09	0.90	0.94	1.45	
Southwest	0.50	0.53	0.42	0.36	0.32	0.47	0.32	0.29	0.13	0.30	0.16	0.11	0.33	
United	2.72	2.71	2.09	1.95	1.34	1.79	2.50	1.19	1.11	1.32	1.12	0.86	1.71	
US Airways	1.90	2.14	0.92	1.04	1.26	1.03	1.41	0.73	0.90	0.66	0.69	0.88	1.13	
All by Month		1.77	1.82	1.49	1.43	1.14	1.26	1.41	0.99	0.86	0.85	0.90	0.78	1.22

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

2003 Total Complaints to Department of Transportation Rankings by Month for U.S. Airlines

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Ranking
AirTran	5	8	13	13	4	2	5	8	13	5	13	14	9
Alaska	2	7	3	2	6	8	3	12	4	3	8	6	4
America West	10	14	14	8	13	7	6	6	6	12	10	4	10
American	11	5	12	9	9	10	12	10	10	9	11	10	11
American Eagle	14	3	2	4	7	5	9	1	2	4	4	5	3
ATA	12	11	5	12	2	3	4	5	9	7	3	12	6
Atlantic Southeast	3	6	6	5	8	4	7	4	5	6	12	3	5
Continental	13	12	10	7	12	11	11	9	14	10	9	13	14
Delta	9	10	8	11	10	6	8	7	7	8	6	7	7
Jet Blue	4	1	4	3	3	9	2	3	3	1	2	2	2
Northwest	7	13	9	14	14	12	10	11	11	14	5	9	13
Southwest	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1
United	6	4	11	10	11	13	13	14	8	11	7	8	8
US Airways	8	9	7	6	5	14	14	12	12	13	14	11	12

Source: *Air Travel Consumer Report*, U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Aviation Enforcement and Proceedings.

**Overview of Complaints Received by Department of Transportation
2003 and 2002**

	Complaints For All Airlines¹		Complaints for U.S. Airlines		Complaints for Largest Airlines		Top Four Categories⁴ of Complaints to All U.S. Airlines, 2003			
	2003	2002	2003	2002	2003²	2002³	1	2	3	4
Jan	692	1065	532	844	438	652	FP	BG	CS	TB
Feb	440	964	315	782	287	663	FP	TB	BG	RF
Mar	539	1019	414	830	364	682	FP	BG	CS	RF
Apr	479	929	370	776	330	611	BG	FP	RF	TB
May	489	757	383	640	320	504	FP	BG	TB	RF
Jun	504	893	378	716	335	582	BG	TB	FP	RF
Jul	616	1031	491	839	415	678	FP	BG	RF	TB
Aug	517	737	424	616	379	481	FP	BG	TB	RF
Sep	460	515	366	404	299	327	FP	BG	TB	RF
Oct	398	522	315	415	272	357	FP	TB	BG	CS
Nov	382	519	300	431	251	350	FP	TB	BG	DA
Dec	467	522	304	409	300	335	FP	BG	CS	TB
	5,980	9,466	4,600	7,697	3,879	6,229	FP	BG	TB	CS
Percent (%) of All Complaints for U.S. Airlines in these Categories for 2003							22.8	17.4	14.0	12.7

¹Total number includes complaints for all U.S. airlines + foreign airlines + travel agents + tour operators + miscellaneous sources.

²2003 numbers are for 14 airlines reporting.

³2002 numbers are for 10 airlines reporting.

⁴FP = Flight Problems; CS = Customer Service; BG = Baggage; TB = Reservations, Ticketing, and Boarding; RF = Refunds; DA = Disability. Details of categories are at the back of the report.

Airline Quality Rating Criteria Overview

The individual criteria used to calculate the AQR scores are summed up in four basic areas that reflect customer-oriented areas of airline performance. Definitions of the four areas used in this AQR 2004 (2003 data) are outlined below.

OT ON-TIME PERFORMANCE (+8.63)

Regularly published data regarding on-time arrival performance is obtained from the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Air Travel Consumer Report*. According to the DOT, a flight is counted "on time" if it is operated within 15 minutes of the scheduled time shown in the carriers' Computerized Reservations Systems. Delays caused by mechanical problems are counted as of January 1, 1995. Canceled and diverted operations are counted as late. The AQR calculations use the percentage of flights arriving on time for each airline for each month.

DB INVOLUNTARY DENIED BOARDINGS (-8.03)

This criterion includes involuntary denied boardings. Data regarding denied boardings can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Air Travel Consumer Report*. Data includes the number of passengers who hold confirmed reservations and are involuntarily denied boarding on a flight that is oversold. These figures include only passengers whose oversold flight departs without them onboard. The AQR uses the ratio of involuntary denied boardings per 10,000 passengers boarded by month.

MB MISHANDLED BAGGAGE REPORTS (-7.92)

Regularly published data regarding consumer reports to the carriers of mishandled baggage can be obtained from the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Air Travel Consumer Report*. According to the DOT, a mishandled bag includes claims for lost, damaged, delayed, or pilfered baggage. Data is reported by carriers as to the rate of mishandled baggage reports per 1,000 passengers and for the industry. The AQR ratio is based on the total number of reports each carrier received from passengers concerning lost, damaged, delayed, or pilfered baggage per 1,000 passengers served.

CC CONSUMER COMPLAINTS (-7.17)

The criteria of consumer complaints is made up of 12 specific complaint categories (outlined below) monitored by the U. S. Department of Transportation and reported monthly in the *Air Travel Consumer Report*. Consumers can file complaints with the DOT in writing, by telephone, via e-mail, or in person. The AQR uses complaints about the various categories as part of the larger customer complaint criteria and calculates the consumer complaint ratio on the number of complaints received per 100,000 passengers flown for each airline.

CONSUMER COMPLAINT CATEGORIES

Flight Problems

Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to cancellations, delays, or any other deviations from schedule, whether planned or unplanned for each airline each month.

Oversales

This complaint category includes all bumping problems, whether or not the airline complied with DOT oversale regulations. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to oversales for each airline each month.

Reservations, Ticketing, and Boarding

This category includes airline or travel agent mistakes in reservations and ticketing, problems in making reservations and obtaining tickets due to busy telephone lines, or waiting in line or delays in mailing tickets, and problems boarding the aircraft (except oversales). Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to ticketing and boarding for each airline each month.

Fares

As defined by the DOT, consumer complaints regarding fares include incorrect or incomplete information about fares, discount fare conditions and availability, overcharges, fare increases, and level of fares in general. Data is available for the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to fares for each airline each month.

Refunds

This category includes customer complaints about problems in obtaining refunds for unused or lost tickets, fare adjustments, or bankruptcies. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to refunds for each airline each month.

Baggage

Claims for lost, damaged, or delayed baggage, charges for excess baggage, carry-on problems, and difficulties with airline claim procedure are included in this category. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to baggage for each airline each month.

Customer Service

This category includes complaints about rude or unhelpful employees, inadequate meals or cabin service, and treatment of delayed passengers. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to customer service for each airline each month.

Disability

Previously included as part of the Reservations, Ticketing and Boarding Category (through 6/99), this category includes complaints about civil rights complaints by air travelers with disabilities. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints pertaining to disabilities for each airline each month.

Advertising

These are complaints concerning advertising that is deemed unfair, misleading or offensive to consumers. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints regarding advertising for each airline each month.

Discrimination

Civil rights complaints by air travelers (other than disabilities); for example: complaints based on race, national origin, religion, etc. (this category was first reported in May, 2002).

Animals

This category, added in October 2000, tracks customer complaints about loss, injury, or death of an animal during air transport by an air carrier. Data is available by the total number of customer complaints regarding animals for each airline each month.

Other

Data regarding consumer complaints about frequent flyer programs, smoking, tours credit, cargo problems, security, airport facilities, claims for bodily injury, and other problems not classified above are included in this category. Data is available by the total number of consumer complaints regarding other problems for each airline each month.