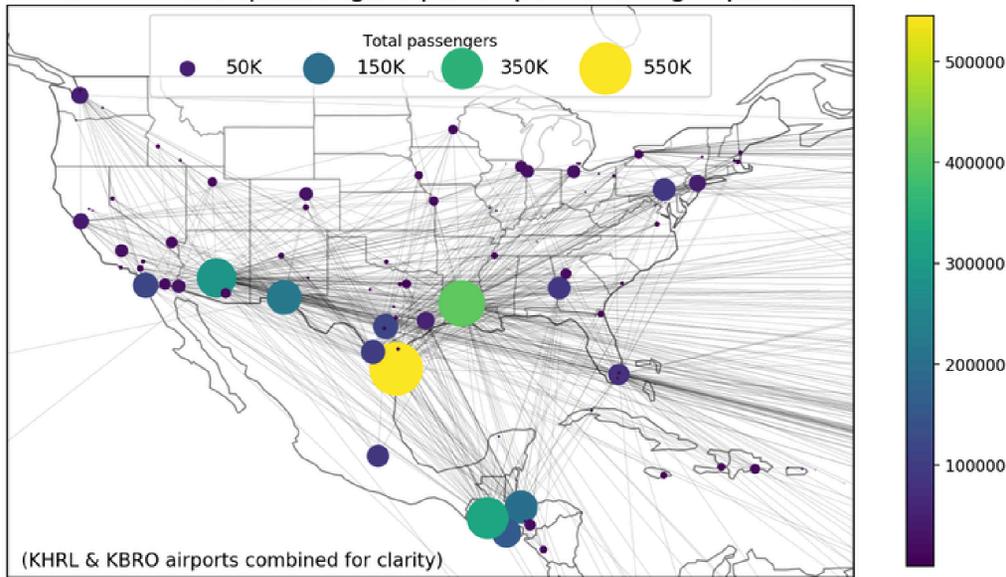


A NOTE ON THE GEOGRAPHY: THIS FIGHT IS THE SOUTH'S TO WIN.

ICE Air: Total passengers per airport and flight paths



UWCHR Report: Hidden in Plain Sight: ICE Air and the Machinery of Mass Deportation (2019)

and more at
TheOutsideAgitator.com

ICE FLIGHT TRACKING & THE LIMITATIONS OF REMOTE TRACKING

Why track flights?
How to track flights?
What to do with this information?



ACTIONS TO PURSUE IN CONCERT WITH FLIGHT TRACKING (4/4)

This zine is for people who want to learn how to track flights that may be transferring or deporting people.

Within, you will find:

- orienting background readings
- 'instructions' for how to flight track
- an outline of the limits of remote flight tracking
- a list of possible interventions for you to take where you are to challenge the machinery of racial terror which kidnaps our neighbors and tears apart communities in secret.

- Powermap the carriers. Any known associates in your area? Be sure they know you know they're there.
- Consider working with local (trusted) journalists / media outlets to publicize what is happening. Include specific asks or calls to action for other neighbors (who may be learning about this for the first time) to join your efforts.

For a brief summary of policy-related advocacy in King County, see:
<https://www.kuow.org/stories/boeing-field-makes-moves-to-ban-ice-deportation-flights>

ACTIONS TO PURSUE IN CONCERT WITH FLIGHT TRACKING (3/4)

- Petition Flight Based Operations (FBOs) to drop contracts with ICE/companies ICE charters for flights. FBOs manage flight logistics (e.g., fueling planes, loading/unloading bags). To see how you may undertake a campaign for your local FBOs to drop ICE/immigration enforcement contracts, see King County ending one contract with a company ICE chartered for deportation flights: <https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/executive/governance-leadership/king-county-executive/news/archive/2019/may/01-kcia-lease>
- Petition the County or private airport to drop FBOs with ICE contracts (arguments may be but are not limited to: human rights violations, illegality, unconstitutionality, etc.)

WHY SHOULD YOU CARE ABOUT FLIGHTS?

According to ICE Flight Monitor,

"Since taking office on January 20, 2025, the Trump administration has pursued an unprecedented [bigger] mass deportation agenda. U.S. officials have adopted a range of new tactics, that are legally questionable and undoubtedly cruel, to achieve this objective, **including expanding the use of expedited [very fast] removal, sending people from the United States to offshore detention facilities in the U.S. Naval Base in Guantanamo, terminating protected legal statuses, disappearing people without due process—including to a high security prison in El Salvador notorious for torture—ramped up interior enforcement, and forcibly transferring individuals to other countries of which they are not citizens.** Many of these actions have been determined to be unlawful by federal courts and carried out with little to no transparency, while thousands of peoples' lives are uprooted from communities across the country, families separated, and their rights systematically violated."

ACTIONS TO PURSUE IN CONCERT WITH FLIGHT TRACKING (2/4)

ICE Flight Monitor reports the following top findings for December 2025:



In addition to deportation ("removal") and domestic transfer ("shuffle") flights, removal-related flights are included in total enforcement figures.
Source: ICE Flight Monitor

People are being trafficked on these flights at a large scale, demonstrating that this is a much needed site for outcry, rejection, resistance, and outright confrontation.

Without air travel, the deportation machine will not be able to operate at the scale it currently does.

- Petition for a 24/7 livestream with sound at the airport (This is a demand to be made at the local level. To see what this can look like, see some of the work undertaken targeting a **public** airport in King County. Private airports are also viable campaign targets but may require different means of pressure.)

- King County's "Transparency on Use of Airport for Immigrant Deportations":
https://cdn.kingcounty.gov/-/media/king-county/depts/executive-services/policies/documents/pfc-7-1-1-eo-immigrant-deportation.pdf?rev=b8ccdb604e634a0db7a5619372687888&sc_lang=en&hash=E74587C9BC5304008E804D679D5F3FB1
- King County Livestream:
<https://kingcounty.gov/en/dept/executive-services/transit-transportation-roads/airport/about/ice-flights>

ACTIONS TO PURSUE IN CONCERT WITH FLIGHT TRACKING (1/4)

Here is a (again, an incomplete – y'all be imaginative now!) list of actions to take your flight tracking into actionable interventions into the machine.

- Meet with and organize alongside airport workers (airport food service workers, custodial staff, flight attendants, etc.) – **they are the eyes and ears of the entire operation.** Establishing these information channels and supporting these workers to share the information and build the relationships necessary to build resistance in airports against the deportation machine.
- Coordinate with Pilot and Flight Attendant Unions to have them boycott/reject working deportation flights.
- Create a flight tracking 'patrol' (begin remote with the goal of in-person)
 - Publicize what you know, skillshare out, invite ideas in

BACKGROUND

There are groups who are doing more systematized flight tracking, pulling together and publicizing data and trends to provide the public with a birds-eye view. To familiarize yourself with the deportation machine, you should poke around their websites, reports, and raw data. These are helpful in documenting trends, identifying where the machine operates closest to you, and visualizing how your community fits into a global, trans-national picture.

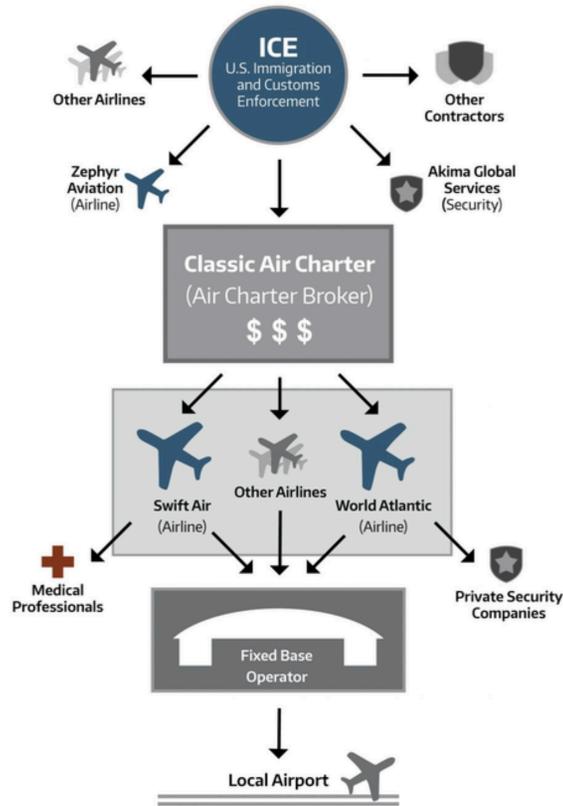
Know this:

The work of intervening in the deportation machine via air travel can only be undertaken effectively across state and national borders.

For an overview of the machine, read the U. of Washington's Center for Human Rights (UWCHR) Report: Hidden in Plain Sight: ICE Air and the Machinery of Mass Deportation (<https://jsis.washington.edu/humanrights/2019/04/23/ice-air/>).

In short:

ICE Air Operations (IAO) carry out the majority of immigration enforcement flights via a broker, CSI Aviation (CEO: Allen Weh) who then sub-contracts out to air carriers.



Visual from UWCHR Hidden in Plain Sight report.

- To observe:
 - Who and how many are boarding? (Flight attendants, pilots, nurses, state agents, people being kidnapped, etc.)
 - What supplies or material are they traveling with? If the people cannot be counted well, the number of bags or chains may prove helpful in estimating the numbers aboard
 - Are people being trafficked on commercial flights? According to ICE Flight Monitor, ICE routinely carries out a small number of additional removals on commercial flights, which we, the public, have no visibility into.
- To have our presence be known to those participating in the trafficking of our neighbors; to have them know that we know that they are there, and that they are being watched. This is true not just of those working for ICE directly, but also those administrators at the airport who are complicit in this process, etc.

LIMITATION(S) OF REMOTE TRACKING

As you may be able to conclude from Step 5, remote flight tracking is relevant though small in impact without the information being built into existing networks or mobilized and made actionable through existing relational or organizational systems.

In-person flight tracking is the gold-standard we should aspire towards, to go with remote flight tracking. In-person flight tracking (people in-person, watching flights come and go, board and deplane) allows for the ability:

- To be seen by those being held captive by the state who therefore know that someone on the outside is watching and in this way, that they are less alone in this process. According to groups who do in-person flight tracking, **this does make a difference to those experiencing this.**

ICE Flight Monitor

(<https://humanrightsfirst.org/ice-flight-monitor/>): "Using publicly available aviation data, the project monitors and analyzes: ICE deportation flights, domestic transfers between detention centers, military flights used for immigration enforcement, flights to offshore detention in Guantanamo, Mexican and Panamanian government deportation flights. This data reveals the scale, mechanics, and international reach of the US immigration enforcement system."

The Monitor releases monthly and annual reports along with 'highlights' ("a concise overview").

UWCHR

(<https://github.com/UWCHR/ice-air>) has pulled together and publicized the Alien Repatriation Tracking System (ARTS) database their report draws from. See if any of your local or state airports have been used for deportations and transfers previously and therefore appear on existing databases. If you do find any that have been used previously, begin searching for flights from here. Original Excel files released by ICE can be found on the UWCHR drive.

NOTE:

In addition to reading these reports, I encourage readers to engage with the raw data, footnotes, and citations for further information gathering and independent analysis.

NOTE:

This data does not represent all of the reality on the ground and should not be assumed as such.

Meaning that: ICE has a proven track record of negligent and purposefully deceptive recordkeeping practices (read: they omit and lie). Further, as public scrutiny of ICE actions has grown, so have their efforts to obscure and hide their operations from the public.

They watch us watch them watch us; we all behave accordingly.

- 4. Using the above characteristics, identify and determine if a flight is part of immigration enforcement activities (transfer, deportation, agent transport). Take note of its information (departure/arrival date and times, airport pairs, Call Numbers).
- 5. Find relevant information. Share it widely. Organize around it.

.....

If you are working alone, I encourage you to plug in alongside friends, comrades, or an existing group. Otherwise, one night, you'll watch a flight take off from your local airport, fly south to Florida, and then land. You know it's a transfer flight. You know actual, kidnapped people are aboard, and you know they are alone only with their captors. And you will have this knowledge and nothing else to grasp onto. What use is your knowing and witnessing in isolation? Nothing. You are a rock with no ripple. We attempt to know the world in order to change it; you are more effective when you are not alone in your work.

3. Using free flight tracker websites, such as flightaware.com, radarbox24.com, or ADS-B Exchange, begin to look for and identify flights with the below characteristics based on a combination of flight codes and models.

a. Flight codes with the prefix **RPN** (this stands for repatriation). A few deportations include this prefix while most do not.

b. Prefixes of specific private companies who are known to charter with ICE transfer and deportation flights. These include (but not exhaustive so monitor reports, note trends, and use your intuition): Swift Air (**SWT**), World Atlantic Airlines (**WAL**), Zephyr Aviation (**RZR**, flights to Cuba), Omni Air International (**OAE**), Classic Air Charter (**CAC**), GlobalX/Global Crossing (**GXA**), Eastern Air Express (**EAZ**), Avelo Airlines (**VXP**), World Atlantic (Caribbean Sun) (**WAL**), Kaiser (**KAI**), and Key Lime Air (**LYM**). ICE also utilizes small charter planes operated by Gryphon Air (**ATS**) and Journey Aviation. The Mexican government carries out removal flights (both voluntary and forced returns) by the airline VivaAerobus (**VIV**)

i. Note: as of January 2026, Avelo announced the company will cease carrying out ICE flights.

c. Tyson (**TYS**): This carrier does not exist; it is a 'dummy' call sign used to obscure transfer/deportation flights. Keep an eye out for similarly new call signs that may crop up.

d. Branches of the US military have also participated in trafficking people, as of February 2026, this includes: the US Air Force and US Coast Guard. These are usually military aircraft cargo planes: C-17, C-130.

i. Coast Guard note: it appears the Coast Guard may have paused flights in late December (ICE Monitor, Dec. 2025 report)

e. Using these flight tracker websites, you can also look for aircraft types to cross-reference if you are unsure Swift Air primarily has a fleet of Boeing 737s (abbreviation: 737). World Atlantic Airlines primarily uses McDonnell Douglas MD-80 (abbreviation: MD).

Data table from ICE Watch 2025 Report:

Data Tables

U.S. Immigration Enforcement Flights by ICE Carrier (January - October 31, 2025)

In addition to regular enforcement flight categories, this data includes "relocation" flights, wherein carriers relocate from a hub to facilitate a transfer or removal.

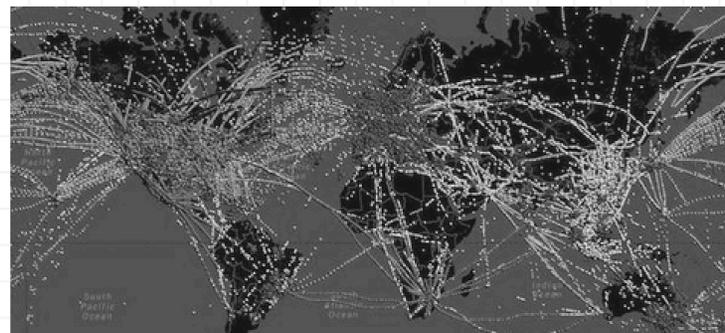
Carrier	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct
Air Charter Express						5				
Avelo					116	214	238	291	318	314
Eastern Airlines			3	5		7	8	34	41	40
Eastern Air Express	70	80	199	225	264	192	293	277	256	309
GlobalX	421	418	542	549	644	703	610	621	610	503
Gryphon		24	4	15	21	6	3			
Journey						3	2	21	27	11
Key Lime									83	192
OMNI	2	2	3	7	17	38	21	25	56	51
World Atlantic	16		4			1				

The information is already out of date.

'HOW TO' (TO A DIMINISHING EFFECT)

Instructions such as the one below quickly become out of date. The state knows we are watching and do what they can to avoid public eyes on them. ICE especially is known for its lack of transparency, poor recordkeeping, and straight up lying. This lack of a papertrail combined with the collapse of local journalism has meant tracking, recording, publicizing and raging at state abuse is even more difficult. This does not mean the instructions below are entirely useless: this is a place to start and familiarize yourself with databases and existing groups tracking and analyzing this data. This is a place to plug in alongside other folks who are looking and contributing to the collective effort of destroying the deportation machine and the cages which make it possible—be it land, sea, or air.

1. Review the UWHCR Hidden in Plain Sight and ICE Watch reports.
2. Notate local airports flagged as sites for transfer and deportation flights along with immigration enforcement agent transfers. Initially narrowing your watching to these airports will make things doable. (You can later expand to: regional airports and other airports that you observe regularly receive your departures.)



If you are based out of the Triangle, local participating airports (as of Dec. 2025) include:

- ★ Charlotte, NC
- ★ Greensboro/High Point, NC
- ★ Raleigh, NC

If you are based out of the Triangle, regional participating airports (as of Dec. 2025) include:

- ★ Richmond, VA