

DXB forecasts record 93m passengers in 2024

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Dubai: The number of passengers at Dubai International (DXB) airport is expected to reach a record 93 million by the end of this year, surpassing the previous estimate of 91.8 million.

The record 93 million was previously forecast for the end of 2025. Speaking to media on Monday (Sep 30) on the sidelines of the Future Hospitality Summit (FHS) World, CEO Paul Griffiths said: "We are ahead of schedule. We hope to see 93 million (by the end of this year) and 100 million maybe in a couple of years."

In August, Dubai Airports announced passenger traffic of 44.9 million in the first half of the year, up 8 percent year-on-year. Griffiths attributed the increase to a strong performance in the first half of the year and an 8 percent growth in summer traffic compared to the same period in 2023.

The revised estimate predicts a boost of passenger traffic by 6 million when compared to last year's figures when DXB achieved 87 million passengers. This will be a nearly 7 per cent increase year-on-year.

Dubai airport has been consistently growing after the pandemic as the aviation sectors bounced back strongly, driven by revenge travel (taking trips due to inability to travel during the COVID-19 pandemic). Dubai airport is also one of the world's most connected airports globally. It was connected to 262 destinations across 104 countries through 102 international carriers by the end of June 2024.

"Our forecast is nearly 93 million passengers by the end of the year. You just put speed into everything. Our clients don't want to be there any longer than possible. So it is better for us to put technology and processes in place to speed people through the airport...In order to achieve this huge throughput, we have to micromanage everything," he said, adding that artificial intelligence is playing a huge part in this.

"Now we have cameras that are recording every single aspect of an aircraft turnaround. We have to analyse those to get targets and averages."

Dubai Airports CEO noted that they have been employing and promoting Emirati talent since the launch of the graduate programme in 2007 and they now account for 78 per cent of the management team.

"A lot of them are women. They are there because they are the best; they made a huge difference. We started with 5,500 employees in 2007 with 30 million customers. Today, 93 million customers and more by the end of the year and we only have 1,800 staff. We have highly motivated people," he said.

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