

Spirit Airlines, Inc.
Form 10-K
February 25, 2013

UNITED STATES
SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

FORM 10-K

(Mark One)

ANNUAL REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012

or

TRANSITION REPORT PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934

For the transition period from _____ to _____
Commission File No. 001-35186
Spirit Airlines, Inc.

(Exact name of registrant as specified in its charter)

Delaware
(State or other jurisdiction of
incorporation or organization)

38-1747023
(I.R.S. Employer
Identification No.)

2800 Executive Way Miramar, Florida
(Address of principal executive offices)

33025
(Zip Code)

(954) 447-7920
(Registrant's telephone number, including area code)

Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(b) of the Act:

Title of Each Class
Voting Common Stock, \$0.0001 par value Non-Voting
Common Stock, \$0.0001 par value
Securities registered pursuant to Section 12(g) of the Act:
None

Name of Each Exchange on Which Registered
NASDAQ Global Select Market None

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is a well-known seasoned issuer, as defined in Rule 405 of the Securities Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark if the registrant is not required to file reports pursuant to Section 13 or Section 15(d) of the Act. Yes No

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant (1) has filed all reports required to be filed by Section 13 or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934 during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to file such reports), and (2) has been subject to such filing requirements for the past 90 days. Yes No

Edgar Filing: Spirit Airlines, Inc. - Form 10-K

Indicate by checkmark whether the registrant has submitted electronically and posted on its corporate Website, if any, every Interactive Data File required to be submitted and posted pursuant to Rule 405 of Regulation S-T during the preceding 12 months (or for such shorter period that the registrant was required to submit and post such files). Yes No

Indicate by check mark if disclosure of delinquent filers pursuant to Item 405 of Regulation S-K is not contained herein, and will not be contained, to the best of registrant's knowledge, in definitive proxy or information statements incorporated by reference in Part III of this Form 10-K or any amendment to this

Edgar Filing: Spirit Airlines, Inc. - Form 10-K

Form 10-K. "

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a large accelerated filer, an accelerated filer, a non-accelerated filer, or a smaller reporting company. See the definitions of "large accelerated filer," "accelerated filer" and "smaller reporting company" in Rule 12b-2 of the Exchange Act.

Large accelerated filer Accelerated filer Non-accelerated filer Smaller reporting company

Indicate by check mark whether the registrant is a shell company (as defined in Rule 12b-2 of the Act). Yes No

The aggregate market value of the common stock held by non-affiliates of the registrant was approximately \$979.1 million computed by reference to the closing sale price of the common stock on the NASDAQ Global Select Market on June 29, 2012, the last trading day of the registrant's most recently completed second fiscal quarter. Shares held by each executive officer, director and by certain persons that own 10 percent or more of the outstanding Common Stock have been excluded in that such persons may be deemed to be affiliates. This determination of affiliate status is not necessarily a conclusive determination for other purposes.

The number of shares of each registrant's classes of common stock outstanding as of the close of business on February 11, 2013:

Class	Number of Shares
Common Stock, \$0.0001 par value per share	72,531,027

Documents Incorporated by Reference

Portions of the registrant's Proxy Statement for the registrant's 2013 Annual Meeting of Stockholders are incorporated by reference into Part III of this Form 10-K to the extent stated herein. The Proxy Statement will be filed within 120 days of the registrant's fiscal year ended December 31, 2012.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART I	Page
<u>Item 1. Business</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Item 1A. Risk Factors</u>	<u>12</u>
<u>Item 1B. Unresolved Staff Comments</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Item 2. Properties</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Item 3. Legal Proceedings</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>Item 4. Mine Safety Disclosures</u>	<u>29</u>
PART II	
<u>Item 5. Market for Registrant’s Common Equity, Related Stockholder Matters, and Issuer Purchases of Equity Securities</u>	<u>30</u>
<u>Item 6. Selected Financial Data</u>	<u>33</u>
<u>Item 7. Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations</u>	<u>36</u>
<u>Item 7A. Quantitative and Qualitative Disclosures About Market Risk</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>Item 8. Financial Statements and Supplementary Data</u>	<u>59</u>
<u>Item 9. Changes in and Disagreements with Accountants on Accounting and Financial Disclosure</u>	<u>88</u>
<u>Item 9A. Controls and Procedures</u>	<u>88</u>
<u>Item 9B. Other Information</u>	<u>88</u>
PART III	
<u>Item 10. Directors, Executive Officers and Corporate Governance</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>Item 11. Executive Compensation</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>Item 12. Security Ownership of Certain Beneficial Owners and Management and Related Stockholder Matters</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>Item 13. Certain Relationships and Related Transactions, and Director Independence</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>Item 14. Principal Accountant Fees and Services</u>	<u>89</u>
PART IV	
<u>Item 15. Exhibits and Financial Statement Schedules</u>	<u>90</u>
<u>Signatures</u>	<u>91</u>

PART I

Cautionary Statement Regarding Forward-Looking Statements

This Annual Report on Form 10-K includes forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended, or the Exchange Act. Forward-looking statements may include words such as “believe,” “may,” “estimate,” “continue,” “anticipate,” “intend,” “expect,” “predict,” “potential” and similar expressions indicating future results or expectations, as they relate to our company, our business and our management, are intended to identify forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements should not be read as a guarantee of future performance or results, and will not necessarily be accurate indications of the times at, or by, which such performance or results will be achieved. Forward-looking statements are based on information available at the time those statements are made and/or management's good faith belief as of that time with respect to future events, and are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual performance or results to differ materially from those expressed in or suggested by the forward-looking statements. Important factors that could cause such differences include, but are not limited to: the competitive environment in our industry; our ability to keep costs low; changes in our fuel cost; ability to hedge fuel requirements; restrictions on or increased taxes applicable to non-ticket revenues; the impact of worldwide economic conditions, including the impact of the economic recession on customer travel behavior; actual or threatened terrorist attacks, global instability and potential U.S. military actions or activities; external conditions, including air traffic congestion, weather and outbreak of disease; restriction on third-party membership programs; air travel substitutes; labor disputes, employee strikes and other labor-related disruptions, including in connection with our current negotiations with the union representing our flight attendants; aircraft-related fixed obligations; dependence on cash balances and operating cash flows; our aircraft utilization rate; maintenance costs; lack of marketing alliances; government regulation; our ability to fulfill growth strategy; our reliance on automated systems and the risks associated with changes made to those systems; use of personal data; ability to generate non-ticket revenues; operational disruptions; our reliance on third-party vendors and partners; our reliance on a single fuel provider; an aircraft accident or incident; negative publicity regarding our customer service; our aircraft and engine suppliers; changes in the U.S., Caribbean, and Latin America markets; insurance costs; environmental regulations; ability to attract and retain qualified personnel; loss of key personnel; and other risk factors included under “Risk Factors” in this annual report. We undertake no obligation to revise or update any forward-looking statements to reflect any event or circumstance that arises after the date of this report, or to confirm such statements to actual results or changes in our expectations. References in this report to “Spirit,” “we,” “us,” “our,” or the “Company” shall mean Spirit Airlines, Inc., unless the context indicates otherwise.

ITEM 1. BUSINESS

Overview

Spirit Airlines is an ultra low-cost, low-fare airline based in Miramar, Florida that offers affordable travel to price-conscious customers. Our all-Airbus fleet currently operates more than 200 daily flights to over 50 destinations in the United States, Caribbean and Latin America. We completed an initial public offering during the second quarter of 2011, and our stock trades on the NASDAQ Global Select Stock Market under the symbol "SAVE".

Our ultra low-cost carrier, or ULCC, business model allows us to compete principally through offering low base fares and charging separately for select optional services, thereby allowing customers the freedom to save by choosing only the extras they value. We have unbundled components of our air travel service that have traditionally been included in base fares, such as baggage and advance seat selection, and offer them as optional, ancillary services (which we record in our financial statements as non-ticket revenue) as part of a strategy to enable our passengers to identify, select and pay only for the services they want to use.

Our History and Corporate Information

We were founded in 1964 as Clippert Trucking Company, a Michigan corporation. We began air charter operations in 1990 and renamed ourselves Spirit Airlines, Inc. in 1992. In 1994, we reincorporated in Delaware, and in 1999 we relocated our headquarters to Miramar, Florida. On June 1, 2011, we completed our initial public offering of common stock. For more information, see "Notes to Financial Statements- 18. Initial Public Offering and Tax Receivable

Agreement".

Our mailing address and executive offices are located at 2800 Executive Way, Miramar, Florida 33025, and our telephone number at that address is (954) 447-7920. We are subject to the information and periodic reporting requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, or Exchange Act, and, in accordance therewith, file periodic reports, proxy statements and other information with the Securities and Exchange Commission, or SEC. Such periodic reports, proxy statements and other information are available for inspection and copying at the SEC's Public Reference Room at 100 F Street, NE., Washington,

4

DC 20549 or may be obtained by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. In addition, the SEC maintains a Web site at <http://www.sec.gov> that contains reports, proxy statements and other information regarding issuers that file electronically with the SEC. We also post on the Investor Relations page of our Web site, www.spirit.com, a link to our filings with the SEC, our Corporate Governance Guidelines and Code of Business Conduct and Ethics, which applies to all directors and all our employees, and the charters of our Audit, Compensation, Finance and Nominating and Corporate Governance committees. Our filings with the SEC are posted as soon as reasonably practical after they are filed electronically with the SEC. Please note that information contained on our Web site is not incorporated by reference in, or considered to be a part of, this report. You can also obtain copies of these documents free of charge by writing to us at: Corporate Secretary, Spirit Airlines, Inc., 2800 Executive Way, Miramar, Florida 33025, or emailing us at: Corporate.Secretary@spirit.com.

Our Business Model

Our ULCC business model provides customers very low base fares with a range of optional services, allowing customers the freedom to choose only the extras they value. The success of our model is driven by our low cost structure, which permits us to offer very low base fares while maintaining one of the highest profit margins in the industry.

We are focused on price-sensitive travelers who pay for their own travel, and our business model is designed to deliver what we believe our customers want: low fares. We aggressively use low fares to stimulate air travel demand in order to increase passenger volume, load factors and non-ticket revenue on the flights we operate. Higher passenger volumes and load factors help us sell more ancillary products and services, which in turn allows us to reduce the base fare we offer even further, stimulating additional demand. We strive to be recognized by our customers and potential customers as the low-fare leader in the markets we serve.

We compete based on total price. We believe other airlines have used an all-inclusive price concept to effectively raise total prices to consumers, rather than lowering fares by unbundling each product or service. For example, carriers that tout “free bags” have included the cost of checking bags in the total ticket price, not allowing passengers to see how much they would save if they did not check luggage. We believe that we and our customers benefit when we allow our customers to know the total price of their travel by breaking out the cost of additional, optional products or services. Before they pay, our customers are easily able to compare the total cost of flying with us versus flying with another airline.

We allow our customers to see all available options and their prices prior to purchasing a ticket, and this full transparency illustrates that our total prices are lower, on average, than our competitors, even when options are included.

Our Strengths

We believe we compete successfully in the airline industry by leveraging the following demonstrated business strengths:

Ultra-Low Cost Structure. Our unit operating costs are among the lowest of all airlines operating in the Americas. We believe this cost advantage helps protect our market position and enables us to offer some of the lowest base fares in our markets, sustain among the highest operating margins in our industry, and support continued growth. Our operating costs per available seat mile (CASM) of 10.09 cents in 2012, are significantly lower than those of the major domestic network carriers, American Airlines, Delta Air Lines, United Air Lines and US Airways, and among the lowest of the domestic low-cost carriers, including JetBlue Airways and Southwest Airlines. We achieve these low unit operating costs in large part due to:

- high aircraft utilization;
- high-density seating configurations on our aircraft;
- our simple operations;
- no hub-and-spoke inefficiencies ;
- highly productive workforce;
- opportunistic outsourcing of operating functions;
-

operating a modern single fleet type of Airbus A320-family aircraft, with associated lower maintenance costs and common flight crews across the fleet;

• reduced sales, marketing and distribution costs through direct-to-consumer marketing;

• efficient flight scheduling, including minimal ground times between flights; and

• a company-wide business culture that is keenly focused on driving costs lower.

Innovative Revenue Generation. We execute our innovative, unbundled pricing strategy to produce significant non-ticket revenue generation, which allows us to stimulate passenger demand for our product by lowering base fares and enabling passengers to identify, select, and pay for the products and services they want to use. Our unbundled strategy has enabled us to grow average non-ticket revenue per passenger flight segment from approximately \$5 in 2006 to \$51 in 2012 by:

- charging for checked and carry-on baggage;
- passing through all distribution-related expenses;
- charging for premium seats and advance seat selection;
- enforcing ticketing policies, including service charges for changes and cancellations;
- generating subscription revenue from our \$9 Fare Club ultra low-fare subscription service;
- deriving brand-based revenues from proprietary services, such as our FREE SPIRIT affinity credit card program;
- selling itinerary attachments, such as hotel and car rental reservations and travel insurance, through our website; and
- selling in-flight products and onboard advertising.

Resilient Business Model and Customer Base. By focusing on price-sensitive travelers, we have maintained relatively stable unit revenue and profitability during volatile economic periods because we are not highly dependent on premium-fare business traffic. We believe our growing customer base is more resilient than the customer bases of most other airlines because our low fares and unbundled service offering appeal to price-sensitive passengers. For example, in 2009, when premium-fare business traffic dried up due to the economic recession, our operating revenue per available seat mile (RASM) declined 1.9%, compared to an average U.S. airline industry decline of over 9%.

Well Positioned for Growth. We have developed a substantial network of destinations in profitable U.S. domestic niche markets, targeted growth markets in the Caribbean and Latin America, and high-volume routes flown by price-sensitive travelers. In the United States, we also have grown into large markets that, due to higher fares, have priced out those more price-sensitive travelers. Our strategy to balance growth in large domestic markets, niche markets and opportunities in the Caribbean and Latin America gives us a significant number of growth opportunities.

Experienced International Operator. We believe we have substantial experience in foreign local aviation, security and customs regulations, local ground operations and flight crew training required for successful international and overwater flight operations. All of our aircraft are certified for overwater operations. We believe we compete favorably against other low-cost carriers because we have been conducting international flight operations since 2003 and have developed substantial experience in complying with the various regulations and business practices in the international markets we serve.

Financial Strength Achieved by Cost Discipline Focus. We believe our ULCC business model has delivered strong financial results in difficult economic times. We have generated these results by:

- keeping a consistent focus on maintaining low unit operating costs;
- maintaining disciplined capacity control and fleet size;
- ensuring our sourcing arrangements with key third parties are continually benchmarked against the best industry standards;
- maintaining a simple operation that focuses on delivering transportation; and
- generating and maintaining an adequate level of liquidity to insulate against volatility in key cost inputs, such as fuel, and in passenger demand that may occur as a result of changing general economic conditions.

Route Network

As of December 31, 2012, our route network included 110 markets served by 52 airports throughout North America, Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

Below is a route map of our current network, which includes seasonal routes and routes announced as of January 31, 2013 for which service has not yet started:

Our network expansion targets underserved and/or overpriced markets. We utilize a rigorous process to identify growth opportunities to deploy new aircraft where we believe they will be profitable. To monitor the profitability of each route, we analyze weekly and monthly profitability reports as well as near term forecasting.

Competition

The airline industry is highly competitive. The principal competitive factors in the airline industry are fare pricing, total price, flight schedules, aircraft type, passenger amenities, number of routes served from a city, customer service, safety record and reputation, code-sharing relationships, and frequent flier programs and redemption opportunities. Our competitors and potential competitors include traditional network airlines, low-cost carriers, and regional airlines. We typically compete in markets served by traditional network airlines and other low-cost carriers, and, to a lesser extent, regional airlines.

Our single largest overlap, at approximately 60% of our markets as of January 8, 2013, is with American Airlines. Our principal competitors on domestic routes are American Airlines, Southwest Airlines, United Airlines, and Delta Airlines. Our principal competitors for service from South Florida to our markets in the Caribbean and Latin America are American Airlines through its hub in Miami and JetBlue Airways through its operations in Fort Lauderdale. Our principal competitive advantages are our low base fares and our focus on the price-sensitive traveler who pays his or her own travel costs. These low base fares are facilitated by our low unit operating costs, which in 2012 were among the lowest in the industry. We believe our low costs coupled with our non-ticket revenues allow us to price our fares at levels where we can be profitable while our primary competitors cannot.

The airline industry is particularly susceptible to price discounting because, once a flight is scheduled, airlines incur only nominal incremental costs to provide service to passengers occupying otherwise unsold seats. The expenses of a scheduled aircraft flight do not vary significantly with the number of passengers carried and, as a result, a relatively small change in the number of passengers or in pricing could have a disproportionate effect on an airline's operating and financial results. Price competition occurs on a market-by-market basis through price discounts, changes in pricing structures, fare matching, target promotions and frequent flier initiatives. Airlines typically use discount fares and other promotions to stimulate traffic during normally slower travel periods to generate cash flow and to maximize RASM. The prevalence of discount fares can be particularly acute when a competitor has excess capacity that it is under financial pressure to sell. A key element to our competitive strategy is to maintain very low unit costs in order to permit us to compete successfully in price-sensitive markets.

Seasonality

Our business is subject to significant seasonal fluctuations. We generally expect demand to be greater in the second and third quarters compared to the rest of the year. The air transportation business is also volatile and highly affected by economic cycles and trends.

Distribution

The majority of our tickets are sold through direct channels including online via www.spirit.com, our call center and the ticket counter with spirit.com being the primary channel. We also partner with a number of third parties to distribute our tickets, including online and traditional travel agents and electronic global distribution systems.

Customers

The majority of our customers travel for leisure (non-business) purposes, and leisure travel is discretionary and tends to be more price sensitive. By focusing on lowering our cost structure, we can successfully sell tickets at low fares while maintaining a strong profit margin.

Customer Service

We are committed to taking care of our customers. We believe focus on customer service in every aspect of our operations including personnel, flight equipment, in-flight and ancillary amenities, on-time performance, flight completion ratios, and baggage handling will strengthen customer loyalty and attract new customers. We proactively aim to improve our operations to ensure further improvement in customer service.

In response to customer and other demands, we recently modified our online booking process to allow our customers to see all available options and their prices prior to purchasing a ticket, and have initiated a campaign that illustrates our total prices are lower, on average, than our competitors, even when options are included.

Fleet

We fly only Airbus A320 family aircraft, which provides us significant operational and cost advantages compared to airlines that operate multiple aircraft types. By operating a single aircraft type, we avoid the incremental costs of training crews across multiple types. Flight crews are entirely interchangeable across all of our aircraft, and maintenance, spare parts inventories and other operational support remains highly simplified compared to those of more complex fleets. Due to this commonality among Airbus single-aisle aircraft, we can retain the benefits of a fleet comprised of a single type of aircraft while still having the flexibility to match the capacity and range of the aircraft to the demands of each route.

As of December 31, 2012, we had a fleet of 45 Airbus single-aisle aircraft, consisting of 27 A319s, 16 A320s and two A321s, and the average age of the fleet was 4.6 years. All of our existing aircraft were financed under operating leases.

As of December 31, 2012, firm aircraft orders with Airbus and a third party consisted of 106 A320 family aircraft (two used A319 aircraft, 54 of the existing A320 aircraft model, and 50 A320 NEOs). Aircraft are scheduled for delivery from 2013 through 2021. We also have a contractual purchase commitment for three spare V2500 IAE International Aero Engines AG engines scheduled for delivery from 2013 through 2015. The aircraft provide for growth capacity as well as give us flexibility in our fleet plan to replace all or some of the 31 aircraft in our present fleet with lease expirations between 2016 and 2020. We may elect to supplement these deliveries by additional acquisitions from the manufacturer or in the open market if demand conditions merit.

Consistent with our ULCC business model, each of our aircraft is configured with a high density seating configuration. Our A319s accommodate 145 passengers (compared to 120 on United and 124 on US Airways), our A320s accommodate 178 passengers (compared to 138 or 144 on United and 150 on JetBlue and US Airways) and our A321s accommodate 218 passengers (compared to 183 on US Airways).

Maintenance and Repairs

We have an FAA mandated and approved maintenance program, which is administered by our technical services department. Our maintenance technicians undergo extensive initial and ongoing training to ensure the safety of our aircraft.

Aircraft maintenance and repair consists of routine and non-routine maintenance and work performed is divided into three general categories: line maintenance, heavy maintenance and component service. Line maintenance consists of routine daily and weekly scheduled maintenance checks on our aircraft, including pre-flight, daily, weekly and overnight checks and

8

any diagnostics and routine repairs and any unscheduled items on an as needed basis. Line maintenance events are currently serviced by in-house mechanics supplemented by contract labor and are primarily completed at airports we currently serve. Heavy airframe maintenance checks consist of a series of more complex tasks that can take from one to four weeks to accomplish and typically are required approximately every 20 months. Heavy engine maintenance is performed approximately every four to six years and includes a more complex scope of work. Due to our relatively small fleet size and projected fleet growth, we believe outsourcing all of our heavy maintenance activity, such as engine servicing, major part repair and component service repairs is more economical. Outsourcing eliminates the substantial initial capital requirements inherent in heavy aircraft maintenance. We have entered into a long-term flight hour agreement with IAE for our engine overhaul services and Lufthansa Technik on an hour-by-hour basis for component services. We outsource our heavy airframe maintenance to FAA-qualified maintenance providers. Our recent maintenance expenses have been lower than what we expect to incur in the future because of the relatively young age of our aircraft fleet. Our maintenance costs are expected to increase as the scope of repairs increases with the increasing age of our fleet. As our aircraft age, scheduled scope of work and frequency of unscheduled maintenance events is likely to increase like any mature fleet. Our aircraft utilization rate could decrease with the increase in aircraft maintenance.

Employees

Our business is labor intensive, with labor costs representing approximately 19.1%, 19.6% and 22.0% of our total operating costs for 2012, 2011 and 2010, respectively. As of December 31, 2012, we had 680 pilots, 933 flight attendants, 24 flight dispatchers, 269 mechanics, 795 airport agents/other, and 332 employees in administrative roles for a total of 3,033 employees. Approximately 54% of our employees were represented by labor unions under three different collective-bargaining agreements. On an average full-time equivalent basis, for the full year 2012, we had 2,767 employees, compared to 2,456 in 2011.

FAA regulations require pilots to have commercial licenses with specific ratings for the aircraft to be flown, and to be medically certified as physically fit to fly. FAA and medical certifications are subject to periodic renewal requirements including recurrent training and recent flying experience. In December 2007, federal legislation was enacted increasing the mandatory retirement age for U.S. commercial airline pilots from age 60 to age 65. Mechanics, quality-control inspectors, and flight dispatchers must be certificated and qualified for specific aircraft. Flight attendants must have initial and periodic competency training and qualification. Training programs are subject to approval and monitoring by the FAA. Management personnel directly involved in the supervision of flight operations, training, maintenance, and aircraft inspection must also meet experience standards prescribed by FAA regulations. All safety-sensitive employees are subject to pre-employment, random, and post-accident drug testing.

The Railway Labor Act, or RLA, governs our relations with labor organizations. Under the RLA, the collective bargaining agreements generally do not expire, but instead become amendable as of a stated date. If either party wishes to modify the terms of any such agreement, they must notify the other party in the manner agreed to by the parties. Under the RLA, after receipt of such notice, the parties must meet for direct negotiations, and if no agreement is reached, either party may request the National Mediation Board, or NMB, to appoint a federal mediator. The RLA prescribes no set timetable for the direct negotiation and mediation process. It is not unusual for those processes to last for many months, and even for a few years. If no agreement is reached in mediation, the NMB in its discretion may declare at some time that an impasse exists, and if an impasse is declared, the NMB proffers binding arbitration to the parties. Either party may decline to submit to arbitration. If arbitration is rejected by either party, a 30-day “cooling off” period commences. During that period (or after), a Presidential Emergency Board, or PEB, may be established, which examines the parties’ positions and recommends a solution. The PEB process lasts for 30 days and is followed by another “cooling off” period of 30 days. At the end of a “cooling off” period, unless an agreement is reached or action is taken by Congress, the labor organization and the airline each may resort to “self-help,” including, for the labor organization, a strike or other labor action, and for the airline, the imposition of any or all of its proposed amendments and the hiring of new employees to replace any striking workers. Congress and the President have the authority to prevent “self-help” by enacting legislation that, among other things, imposes a settlement on the parties. The table below sets forth our employee groups and status of the collective bargaining agreements.

Employee Groups	Representative	Amendable Date
-----------------	----------------	----------------

Edgar Filing: Spirit Airlines, Inc. - Form 10-K

Pilots	Air Line Pilots Association, International (ALPA)	August 2015
Flight Attendants	Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA)	August 2007
Dispatchers	Transport Workers Union (TWU)	July 2012

We focus on hiring highly productive employees and, where feasible, designing systems and processes around automation and outsourcing in order to maintain our low cost base.

9

Safety and Security

We are committed to the safety and security of our passengers and employees. We strive to comply with or exceed health and safety regulation standards. In pursuing these goals, we maintain an active aviation safety program and all of our personnel are expected to participate in the program and take an active role in the identification, reduction, and elimination of hazards.

Our ongoing focus on safety relies on training our employees to proper standards and providing them with the tools and equipment they require so they can perform their job functions in a safe and efficient manner. Safety in the workplace targets several areas of our operation including: flight operations, maintenance, in-flight, dispatch, and station operations. The Transportation Security Administration, or TSA, is charged with aviation security for both airlines and airports. We maintain active, open lines of communication with the TSA at all of our locations to ensure proper standards for security of our personnel, customers, equipment and facilities are exercised throughout the operation.

Insurance

We maintain insurance policies we believe are customary in the airline industry and as required by the DOT. The policies principally provide liability coverage for public and passenger injury; damage to property; loss of or damage to flight equipment; fire and extended coverage; directors' and officers' liability; advertiser and media liability; cyber risk liability; fiduciary; and workers' compensation and employer's liability. We have obtained third-party war risk (terrorism) insurance through a special program administered by the FAA, resulting in lower premiums than if we had obtained this insurance in the commercial insurance market. Should the government discontinue this coverage, obtaining comparable coverage from commercial underwriters could result in substantially higher premiums and more restrictive terms, if it is available at all. Although we currently believe our insurance coverage is adequate, there can be no assurance that the amount of such coverage will not be changed or that we will not be forced to bear substantial losses from accidents.

Foreign Ownership

Under DOT regulations and federal law, we must be controlled by U.S. citizens. In order to qualify, at least 75% of our stock must be voted by U.S. citizens, and our president and at least two-thirds of our board of directors and senior management must be U.S. citizens.

On December 7, 2011, we entered into a Stock Distribution Agreement with Indigo Miramar LLC and its members. Pursuant to the Stock Distribution Agreement 10,576,180 shares of outstanding common stock were exchanged on a share-for-share basis for shares of non-voting common stock. As of February 11, 2013, we had no non-voting shares outstanding due to the conversion of all non-voting shares to voting shares in compliance with the Stock Distribution Agreement.

Government Regulation

Operational Regulation

The airline industry is heavily regulated, especially by the federal government. Two of the primary regulatory authorities overseeing air transportation in the United States are the DOT and the FAA. The DOT has jurisdiction over economic issues affecting air transportation, such as competition, route authorizations, advertising and sales practices, baggage liability and disabled passenger transportation, among other areas, several of which were included in new rules that became effective in 2011 and 2012 relating to, among other things, how airlines handle interactions with passengers through advertising, the reservation process, at the airport and on board the aircraft. The DOT has extended the effective date for certain of these rules. See "Risk Factors—Restrictions on or increased taxes applicable to charges for ancillary products and services paid by airline passengers and burdensome consumer protection regulations or laws could harm our business, results of operations and financial condition." The DOT has a pending notice of proposed rulemaking addressing additional accommodations required for passengers with certain disabilities among other matters.

The DOT has authority to issue certificates of public convenience and necessity required for airlines to provide air transportation. We hold a DOT certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing us to engage in scheduled air transportation of passengers, property, and mail within the United States, its territories and possessions and between the United States and all countries that maintain a liberal aviation trade relationship with the United States

(known as “open skies” countries). We also hold DOT certificates to engage in air transportation to certain other countries with more restrictive aviation policies.

The FAA is responsible for regulating and overseeing matters relating to air carrier flight operations, including airline operating certificates, aircraft certification and maintenance and other matters affecting air safety. The FAA requires each commercial airline to obtain and hold an FAA air carrier certificate. This certificate, in combination with operations specifications issued to the airline by the FAA, authorizes the airline to operate at specific airports using aircraft approved by

the FAA. As of December 31, 2012, we had FAA airworthiness certificates for all of our aircraft, we had obtained the necessary FAA authority to fly to all of the cities we currently serve and all of our aircraft had been certified for overwater operations. We believe we hold all necessary operating and airworthiness authorizations, certificates and licenses and are operating in compliance with applicable DOT and FAA regulations, interpretations and policies.

International Regulation

All international service is subject to the regulatory requirements of the foreign government involved. We currently operate international service to Aruba, the Bahamas, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru and St. Maarten, as well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. If we decide to increase our routes to additional international destinations, we will be required to obtain necessary authority from the DOT and the applicable foreign government. We are also required to comply with overfly regulations in countries that lay along our routes but which we do not serve.

International service is also subject to Customs and Border Protection, or CBP, immigration and agriculture requirements, and the requirements of equivalent foreign governmental agencies. Like other airlines flying international routes, from time to time we may be subject to civil fines and penalties imposed by CBP if unmanifested or illegal cargo, such as illegal narcotics, is found on our aircraft. These fines and penalties, which in the case of narcotics are based upon the retail value of the seizure, may be substantial. We have implemented a comprehensive security program at our airports to reduce the risk of illegal cargo being placed on our aircraft, and we seek to cooperate actively with CBP and other U.S. and foreign law enforcement agencies in investigating incidents or attempts to introduce illegal cargo.

Security Regulation

The TSA was created in 2001 with the responsibility and authority to oversee the implementation, and ensure the adequacy, of security measures at airports and other transportation facilities. Funding for passenger security is provided in part by a per enplanement ticket tax (passenger security fee) of \$2.50 per passenger flight segment, subject to a \$5 per one-way trip cap. The TSA was granted authority to impose additional fees on air carriers if necessary to cover additional federal aviation security costs. Pursuant to its authority, the TSA may revise the way it assesses this fee, which could result in increased costs for passengers and us. We cannot forecast what additional security and safety requirements may be imposed in the future or the costs or revenue impact that would be associated with complying with such requirements. The TSA also assesses an Aviation Security Infrastructure Fee, or ASIF, on each airline. Our ASIF fee is approximately \$1.6 million per year.

Environmental Regulation

We are subject to various federal, state and local laws and regulations relating to the protection of the environment and affecting matters such as aircraft engine emissions, aircraft noise emissions, and the discharge or disposal of materials and chemicals, which laws and regulations are administered by numerous state and federal agencies. The Environmental Protection Agency, or EPA, regulates operations, including air carrier operations, which affect the quality of air in the United States. We believe the aircraft in our fleet meet all emission standards issued by the EPA. Concern about climate change and greenhouse gases may result in additional regulation or taxation of aircraft emissions in the United States and abroad.

Federal law recognizes the right of airport operators with special noise problems to implement local noise abatement procedures so long as those procedures do not interfere unreasonably with interstate and foreign commerce and the national air transportation system. These restrictions can include limiting nighttime operations, directing specific aircraft operational procedures during takeoff and initial climb, and limiting the overall number of flights at an airport. None of the airports we serve currently restricts the number of flights or hours of operation, although it is possible one or more of such airports may do so in the future with or without advance notice.

Other Regulations

We are subject to certain provisions of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended, and are required to obtain an aeronautical radio license from the Federal Communications Commission, or FCC. To the extent we are subject to FCC requirements, we will take all necessary steps to comply with those requirements. We are also subject to state and local laws and regulations at locations where we operate and the regulations of various local authorities that operate the airports we serve.

Future Regulations

The U.S. and foreign governments may consider and adopt new laws, regulations, interpretations and policies regarding a wide variety of matters that could directly or indirectly affect our results of operations. We cannot predict what laws, regulations, interpretations and policies might be considered in the future, nor can we judge what impact, if any, the implementation of any of these proposals or changes might have on our business.

ITEM 1A. RISK FACTORS

You should carefully consider the risks described below and the other information in this report. If any of the following risks materialize, our business could be materially harmed, and our financial condition and results of operations could be materially and adversely affected. The risks described below are not the only ones facing us. Additional risks not currently known to us or that we currently believe are immaterial may also impair our business, results of operations, financial condition and liquidity.

Risks Related to Our Industry

We operate in an extremely competitive industry.

We face significant competition with respect to routes, fares and services. Within the airline industry, we compete with traditional network airlines, other low-cost airlines and regional airlines on many of our routes. Competition in most of the destinations we presently serve is intense, due to the large number of carriers in those markets.

Furthermore, other airlines may begin service or increase existing service on routes where we currently face no or little competition. Substantially all of our competitors are larger and have significantly greater financial and other resources than we do.

The airline industry is particularly susceptible to price discounting because once a flight is scheduled, airlines incur only nominal additional costs to provide service to passengers occupying otherwise unsold seats. Increased fare or other price competition could adversely affect our operations. Moreover, many other airlines have begun to unbundle services by charging separately for services such as baggage and advance seat selection. This unbundling and other cost reducing measures could enable competitor airlines to reduce fares on routes that we serve.

In addition, airlines increase or decrease capacity in markets based on perceived profitability. Decisions by our competitors that increase overall industry capacity, or capacity dedicated to a particular domestic or foreign region, market or route, could have a material adverse impact on our business. If a traditional network airline were to successfully develop a low-cost structure or if we were to experience increased competition from other low-cost carriers, our business could be materially adversely affected.

All of the domestic traditional network airlines have on one or more occasions initiated bankruptcy proceedings in attempts to restructure their debt and other obligations and reduce their operating costs. On November 29, 2011, AMR Corporation and substantially all of its subsidiaries, including American Airlines, Inc., filed a petition for relief under Chapter 11 of the U.S. Bankruptcy Code. We presently compete with American Airlines in a majority of our markets. We cannot predict the extent to which the pendency of this bankruptcy proceeding will change our competitive dynamic with American Airlines or the extent to which a successfully reorganized American Airlines, or the acquisition of American Airlines by another carrier, will result in a more effective competitor to us.

Our growth and the success of our ULCC business model could stimulate competition in our markets through our competitors' development of their own ULCC strategies or new market entrants. Any such competitor may have greater financial resources and access to cheaper sources of capital than we do, which could enable them to operate their business with a lower cost structure than we can. If these competitors adopt and successfully execute a ULCC business model, we could be materially adversely affected.

There have been numerous mergers and acquisitions within the airline industry including, for example, the recent combinations of Delta Air Lines and Northwest Airlines, United Airlines and Continental Airlines, and Southwest Airlines and AirTran Airways. In the future, there may be additional mergers and acquisitions in our industry. Any business combination could significantly alter industry conditions and competition within the airline industry and could cause fares of our competitors to be reduced.

The extremely competitive nature of the airline industry could prevent us from attaining the level of passenger traffic or maintaining the level of fares or revenues related to ancillary services required to sustain profitable operations in new and existing markets and could impede our growth strategy, which could harm our operating results. Due to our relatively small size, we are susceptible to a fare war or other competitive activities in one or more of the markets we serve, which could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations, and financial condition.

Our low cost structure is one of our primary competitive advantages, and many factors could affect our ability to control our costs.

Our low cost structure is one of our primary competitive advantages. However, we have limited control over many of our costs. For example, we have limited control over the price and availability of aircraft fuel, aviation insurance, airport and

12

related infrastructure taxes, the cost of meeting changing regulatory requirements, and our cost to access capital or financing. In addition, the compensation and benefit costs applicable to a significant portion of our employees are established by the terms of our collective bargaining agreements. We cannot guarantee we will be able to maintain a cost advantage over our competitors. If our cost structure increases and we are no longer able to maintain a cost advantage over our competitors, it could have a material adverse effect on our business, results of operations and financial condition.

The airline industry is heavily impacted by the price and availability of aircraft fuel. Continued volatility in fuel costs or significant disruptions in the supply of fuel, including hurricanes and other events affecting the Gulf Coast in particular, could materially adversely affect our business, results of operations, and financial condition.

Aircraft fuel costs represent our single largest operating cost, accounting for 41.2%, 41.9%, and 34.8% of our total operating expenses for 2012, 2011 and 2010, respectively. As such, our operating results are significantly affected by changes in the availability and the cost of aircraft fuel, especially aircraft fuel refined in the U.S. Gulf Coast region, on which we are highly dependent. Both the cost and the availability of aircraft fuel are subject to many meteorological, economic, and political factors and events occurring throughout the world, which we can neither control nor accurately predict. For example, a major hurricane making landfall along the Gulf Coast could cause disruption to oil production, refinery operations, and pipeline capacity in that region, possibly resulting in significant increases in the price of aircraft fuel and diminished availability of aircraft fuel supplies. Any disruption to oil production, refinery operations, or pipeline capacity in the Gulf Coast region could have a disproportionate impact on our operating results compared to other airlines that have more diversified fuel sources.