

1 Problem

AIRLINE FINED FOR TARMAC DELAY

Step 1. Outline the Problem

What	Problem(s)	Airline fined, Passengers delayed
When	Date	May 29, 2011
	Differences	Bad weather
Where	Physical Location	O'Hare International Airport in Chicago o
Impact to the Goals		
	Customer Service	Negative publicity
	Production-Schedule	Airline fined \$900,000
		This incident ??
	Frequency	15xplane delayed on May 29
		Annual Total ??

Cause Map

The DOT just issued a first of its kind fine for violating the tarmac delay rule. Airlines can be fined up to \$27,500 per passenger keep onboard a plane sitting on the runway for more than 3 hours.

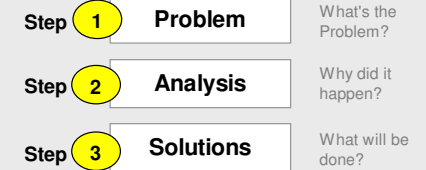
"Due to a single slow-moving weather system and the resulting congestion that developed at the airport, a total of 15 flights were delayed past the DOT's three-hour limit"

- Statement by American Eagle

Cause Mapping is a Root Cause Analysis method that captures basic cause-and-effect relationships supported with evidence.

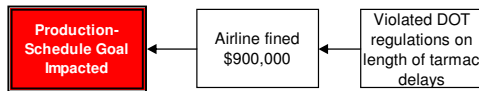
CAUSE MAPPING

Problem Solving • Incident Investigation • Root Cause Analysis



2 Analysis

Basic Level Cause Map - Start with simple Why questions.



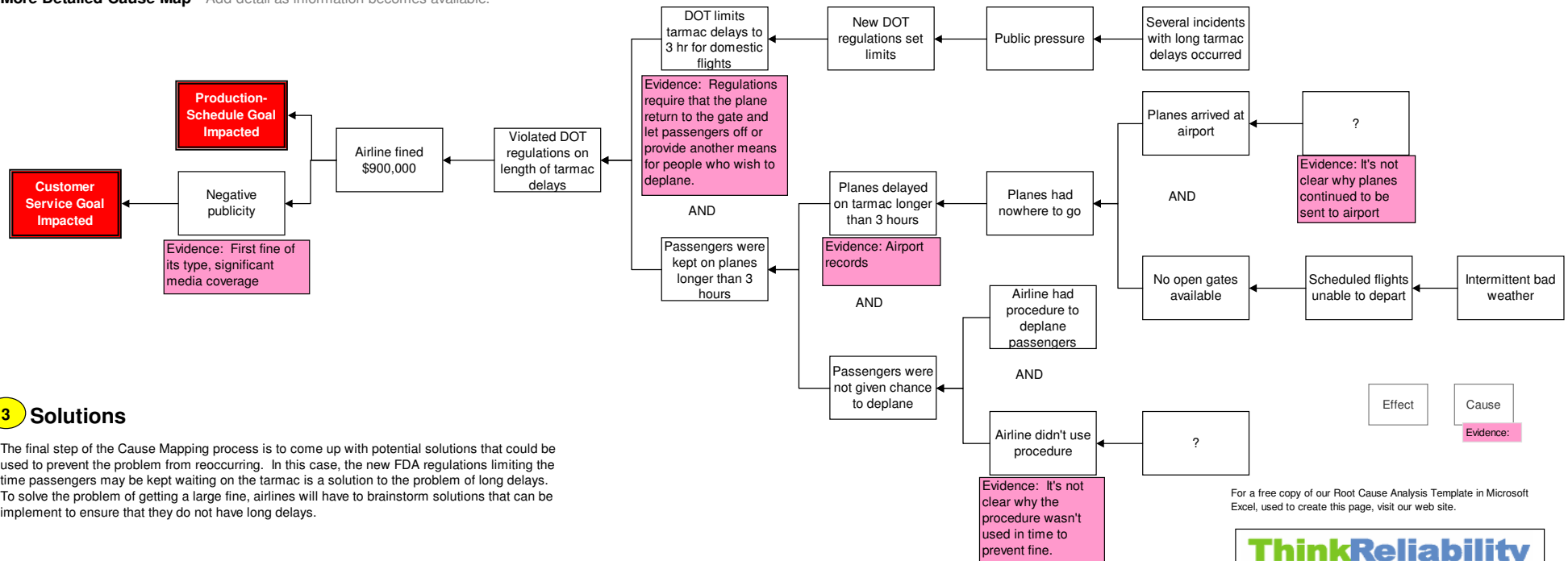
Basic Cause-and-Effect

An airline was recently fined \$900,000 for violating a DOT regulation limiting the amount of time passengers may be kept waiting in a plane on the tarmac. Passengers must be allowed to deplane if they desire if the wait is longer than 3 hours.

More Detailed Cause-and-Effect

Like many airline delays, inclement weather played a major role in this incident. Flights had been delayed taking off from O'Hare and planes that were scheduled to be gone were still sitting at the gates. Planes that landed had nowhere to go so they sat on the tarmac waiting for an open gate. Passengers were also not given an opportunity to deplane within 3 hours. The airline has procedures to get passengers off the planes even if the planes themselves were stuck waiting on the tarmac, but the procedures were not implemented within the 3 hour time limit. If there was no delay limit, an airline couldn't violate it so the new creation of the tarmac delay rule is also a cause to consider in this incident.

More Detailed Cause Map - Add detail as information becomes available.



3 Solutions

The final step of the Cause Mapping process is to come up with potential solutions that could be used to prevent the problem from reoccurring. In this case, the new FDA regulations limiting the time passengers may be kept waiting on the tarmac is a solution to the problem of long delays. To solve the problem of getting a large fine, airlines will have to brainstorm solutions that can be implement to ensure that they do not have long delays.

For a free copy of our Root Cause Analysis Template in Microsoft Excel, used to create this page, visit our web site.

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