

Airport slot alleviation measures for Northern Summer 2021

WASB Recommendation

The following details the recommendation of the Worldwide Airport Slot Board (WASB) concerning the Northern Summer 2021 season and slot use alleviation.

1. PRINCIPLES

- 1.1. Series of slots that an airline does not intend to operate should be returned on or before the Series Return Deadline (SRD).
- 1.2. Full series of slots (other than newly allocated series) for which a carrier wishes to claim full season alleviation should be returned between the Historic Baseline Date (HBD) and HBD+7days - meaning 8 February 2021 16h00 UTC. The coordinator will alleviate the series and place them in the slot pool for reallocation and use on a non-historic basis only.
- 1.3. Series of slots held at HBD that are not returned or only partially returned at the deadline of HBD+7 days will be subject to the utilization requirement set for that season to secure the historic entitlement in the subsequent equivalent season. The utilization rate should be declared prior to HBD.
- 1.4. Series operated as approved on a non-historic basis in S21 should have priority over new demands for the same timings in the next equivalent season, subject to capacity availability and any other legal conditions.
- 1.5. **Threshold:**

All parties agree that the normal threshold (80:20) should be replaced by a lower threshold.

1.5.1. Slot usage requirement threshold shall be set at 50:50

1.5.2. WASG art. 8.7.2.2 shall be suspended

The Worldwide Airport Slot Board (WASB) recommends the worldwide use of the threshold agreed under point 1.5.1. However, it is recognized that local competent authorities may decide to adapt the threshold to the circumstances and needs of their local market.

1.6. **Justified non-utilization of slots (JNUS)**

The existing justified non-utilization criteria in the WASG art. 8.8 does not capture specific restrictions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, that may prevent airlines from operating scheduled flights for reasons other than commercial cancellations.

Coordinators should accept as valid justification for the non-utilization of series of slots, any government restrictions that prevent or severely restrict travel to specific airports, destinations (including intermediate points) or countries for which the slot was held, such as examples listed hereafter.

- 1.6.1. Government travel restrictions based on nationality, closed borders, government advisories related to COVID-19 that warn against all but essential travel, or complete bans on flights from/to certain countries or geographic areas.
- 1.6.2. Severe government restrictions related to COVID-19 on the maximum number of arriving or departing passengers on a specific flight or through a specific airport.
- 1.6.3. Government restrictions on movement or quarantine/isolation measures within the country or region where the airport or destination (including intermediate points) is.
- 1.6.4. Government-imposed closure of businesses essential to support aviation activities (e.g. closure of hotels).
- 1.6.5. Unforeseeable restrictions on airline crew, including sudden bans on entry or crew stranded in unexpected locations due to quarantine measures.

Furthermore, enhanced transparency regarding the application of JNUS criteria is necessary to ensure that the proposed examples above are responsive to aviation stakeholders' needs. Coordinators should report, where requested by local Coordination Committees and agreed with the coordinator, on the implementation of the proposed list.

In the event of airport capacity reduction as a result of health measures being imposed, regards should be given to the WASB Best Practice Paper on Capacity Reductions and the JNUS provisions contained therein¹.

¹ <https://blog.aci.aero/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/WASB-Airport-capacity-declaration-and-temporary-changes-in-capacity-during-COVID-19.pdf>

1.7. Recovery time after the period of alleviation:

Coordinators are encouraged to grant alleviation during a recovery period of up to 6 weeks following the ending of any relevant restrictions which led to alleviation under point 1.6.

2. CONDITIONS

2.1. The following conditions should be attached to the WASB recommendation:

- 2.1.1. Alleviation measures shall not apply to series of slots of an airline that permanently ceases operations at the airport.
- 2.1.2. Exchanges and transfers currently allowed will continue where they are not prohibited by the laws of the relevant country WASG 8.11.5.
- 2.1.3. New slot trade arrangements are not eligible for full season alleviation (this does not include continuation or unwinding of existing slot trade arrangements), but are eligible for other slot relief measures mentioned in points 1.5 & 1.6.

3. REMARK:

Implementation of a recommendation agreed by the WASB must be legally approved by the competent authority of the country where the coordinated/schedules facilitated airport is located. In some jurisdictions, it requires the entering into force of new legislation or the modification of existing legislation.