

Airport capacity reductions

1. PURPOSE

This document is aiming to provide guidance to slot coordinators on how to manage those events that reduce capacity resulting in a significant impact on the airport's ability to accommodate demand.

2. REFERENCES

IATA Worldwide Slot Guidelines

- Section 6.6 – temporary change of level
- Section 6.8 – seasonal review of airport capacity
- Section 6.9 – reduction in airport capacity

National procedures

Local rules and agreed procedures

3. PREAMBLE

Events can be of a different nature (i.e. planned/unplanned, short-term/long-term, short notice/advanced notice, critical/non critical) and as such should be treated differently.

Ideally, any planned event having significant impact on airport capacity should be identified and communicated in a timely manner. This should occur well in advance before the start of the slot coordination processes for the airport and the season concerned (i.e. SHL submission or capacity declaration, whatever comes first).

Late notice of planned events should be strongly discouraged whenever possible. Notwithstanding, if the decision about the planned event is taken after the start of the slot coordination processes and there is no possibility of postponing it to a later season, the process described hereafter should be respected and followed as closely as possible.

Unplanned events are inevitable and by their nature cannot be anticipated. If they do occur, the process hereafter should be followed whenever possible, but adapted to the circumstances and time constraints.

Regular pro-active communications by the slot coordinators to all stakeholders is essential at every stage of the process and the slot coordinators will ensure that their website is regularly updated with the latest information.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The airport capacity provider or the designated responsible authority, where different, should provide details about the event (airport, season, dates and hours involved, type of event, type of traffic affected, etc.).

This information must include an evaluation, based on a thorough capacity analysis, of the level of reduction on the declared capacity parameters (% of reduction), as well as the careful and proper justification of the selected dates/times and the need and inevitability of the event when planned. This information should be distributed to the government authorities, the slot coordinator and other relevant stakeholders on the Coordination Committee of the airport concerned for consultation and discussion during the Coordination Committee Meeting.

Whenever the timeline does not allow a formal consultation with the Coordination Committee, a dedicated meeting with stakeholders affected by the capacity reduction (e.g. government authorities, airport managing body, air traffic control authority, most operating carriers, airline associations and slot coordinator) should be convened.

Based on the information provided, the slot coordinator will prepare an impact assessment and recommended actions for discussion and agreement within the Coordination Committee (or any other equivalent body with recognized representation, as indicated before).

This assessment and recommended actions by the slot coordinator should include, at the minimum, the following information:

- Evaluation of the impact of the capacity reduction
- Action plan to meet the reduced capacity and other mitigation measures (when necessary and according to local circumstances), for example:
 - o Evaluation of the need to restrict access to the airport for new flights.
 - o Proposal to minimize impact by applying a certain degree of flexibility in some capacity restrictions (e.g. night restrictions, terminal restrictions, noise, etc.), the way they are applied (e.g. fix/rolling hour, relevant coordination time intervals, etc.) or the different use of the resources available (including the possibility of using alternative airports).
 - o Level of flight cancellations (voluntary and/or mandatory) and proposal to share the burden amongst carriers.

- Level of re-scheduling to be requested to operators, detailing its distribution per date and hour.
- Proposal (if found necessary) of adjusting/sizing resources on slot coordination (e.g. staff, working hours, shifts, etc.) and/or established special procedures (e.g. out-of-office hours, systems, etc.).
- Criteria for the monitoring of slot compliance of daily operations during the event.
- Criteria for the determination of historic slots for the next equivalent season and conditions for granting force majeure.

When the proposed actions to meet the reduced capacity include the need to cancel and/or re-schedule flights, their distribution amongst carriers should be neutral and non-discriminatory and according to fair and transparent criteria which also should consider factors like:

- The allocation priorities recognised in the worldwide industry slot guidelines and known as 'primary criteria' (e.g. historic slots, changes to historic slots, new entrants, year round operations)
- The fair distribution by type of service, market and/or route (i.e. 'additional criteria')
- The most efficient way to minimize the impact on schedules (in terms of number of movements and/or the magnitude/scale of the reschedule)

Once the consultations about the event and the action plan proposed by the slot coordinator have taken place within the Coordination Committee or equivalent, the slot coordinator will execute the plan and update the Coordination Committee or equivalent at future ordinary meetings and whenever necessary.

In the event that the execution of the action plan means unavoidably the withdrawal and/or re-scheduling of any historic slot at the airport concerned, then the slot coordinator should be empowered to do so by the relevant regulatory authority (i.e. legal mandate).

Unplanned events leading to on the day significant capacity reductions should be managed by the airport operations centre, i.e. the airport managing body and the air traffic control authority.

The slot coordinator should be informed about the event and the impact on the capacity and will adapt the coordination parameters accordingly. This information will be also considered for slot monitoring purposes. Unless exceptional and justified circumstances occur, the slot coordinator will grant dispensation for the 80/20 rule to flights that have not operated during the event.

Having a local rule and/or agreed procedures for unplanned events can make it easier to quickly request the required actions on the schedule once the impact has been evaluated and give reassurance that the actions requested are fair and

transparent to all operators. These local rules or agreed procedures should however be present to cover unusual situations or crises involving a major loss of capacity and/or a major imbalance between capacity and demand (i.e. critical event).

Regular pro-active communications from the coordinator to all stakeholders, including other slot coordinators affected, is essential at every stage of the process and the slot coordinators will ensure that their website and WWACG's website are regularly updated with the latest information.

The exchange of information with other slot coordinators throughout the whole process is necessary in order to provide sufficient time to agree on exemptions on the 80/20 rule and/or any other dispensation for existing regulations and rules at the other end of the route.

A final report or event summary with the outcome of the process should be produced after the event, distributed to all Coordination Committee members and shared with all relevant stakeholders and the coordinator community within WWACG.