

Airport slot alleviation measures for Northern Winter 2021

WASB Recommendation

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

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Worldwide Airport Slot Board recognizes that different countries and regions are recovering at different rates.
- 1.2. The Worldwide Airport Slot Board notes that the European Union adopted an amendment to the Slot Regulation that delegated powers to the European Commission to extend slot relief until the end of the summer 2022 season, if necessary, and to adapt the slot usage requirement within a range of 30-70% without the option for full series alleviation.
- 1.3. Other regulators adopted the Worldwide Airport Slot Board recommendation for Northern Summer 2021 in full or provided conditional slot waivers. These same regulators have not yet indicated their approach for Northern Winter 2021-22.
- 1.4. In light of the above, the Worldwide Airport Slot Board recommends to regulators who may wish to opt extending the WASB NS21 airport slot alleviation measures to do it with the principles outlined in Section 2.
- 1.5. The Worldwide Airport Slot Board recognizes that local competent authorities may decide to adapt the principles below to the circumstances and needs of their local market.

2. PRINCIPLES:

- 2.1. The following principles should be attached to the WASB recommendation:
 - 2.1.1. 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+7 days. The coordinator will alleviate the series and place them in the slot pool for reallocation and use on a non-historic basis only.
 - 2.1.2. Series of slots held at HBD that are not returned or are 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.
 - 2.1.3. The utilization rate should be set at 50:50; and WASG art. 8.7.2.2 shall be suspended.
 - 2.1.4. Slot series returned between HBD and HBD +7 should not be reallocated to the same carrier for the same use within four weeks of HBD +7, unless there is a valid reason confirmed by the slot coordinator for reallocating these slots for use.

2.1.5. Airlines must hand back slots not intended for utilization as soon as possible, but not later than four weeks prior to planned operation. Retiming and repurposing of slots within the four-week period is allowed.

2.1.6. Series operated as approved on a non-historic basis in NW21 should have priority over new demand for the same timings in the next equivalent season subject to capacity and any other legal conditions.

3. JUSTIFIED NON-UTILIZATION OF SLOTS (JNUS)

3.1. The existing justified non-use criteria in art. 8.8 of the WASG 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.

3.2. 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.

3.2.1. 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.

3.2.2. 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.

3.2.3. Government restrictions on movement or quarantine/isolation measures within the country or region where the airport or destination (including intermediate points) is.

3.2.4. Government-imposed closure of businesses essential to support aviation activities (e.g. closure of hotels).

3.2.5. Unforeseeable restrictions on airline crew, including sudden bans on entry or crew stranded in unexpected locations due to quarantine measures.

3.3. 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.

3.4. Coordinators are encouraged to grant alleviation during a recovery period of up to 6 weeks following the announcement of the ending of any relevant restrictions which lead to alleviation under 3.2.



3.5. 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 therein.

4. CONDITIONS:

- 4.1. Alleviation measures shall not apply to a series of slots of an airline that permanently ceases operations at the airport.
- 4.2. Exchanges and transfers currently allowed will continue where they are not prohibited by the laws of the relevant country WASG art. 8.11.5.
- 4.3. 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 point 2.1.3.
- 4.4. Implementation of a recommendation agreed in the WASB must be legally approved by the competent authority of the country where the coordinated/scheduled facilitated airport is located. In some jurisdictions, it requires the entering into force of a new legislation or the modification of an existing legislation.