



Worldwide Scheduling Guidelines

18th Edition
Effective August 2009

NOTICE

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PREFACE

World economic activity increasingly demands a viable and dependable international commercial air transport system. To be operationally successful, such a system requires the close co-operation and coordination of governments, airport and air traffic control (ATC) authorities, as well as airlines.

Due to an imbalance between the demand for worldwide air transport and the availability of adequate airport facilities/infrastructure and airspace systems to meet such demand, the number of congested airports worldwide is growing. As a result, the airline industry is increasingly subjected to serious operational disruptions, with a significant number of delayed departures and arrivals, which result in significant economic penalties.

This adverse situation, which negatively impacts passengers, shippers, air traffic control agencies throughout the world as well as airports, has been the subject of intense consideration by Governments in recent years. Some have considered the introduction of various traffic distribution formulae to help relieve the congestion at busy airports. IATA is opposed in principle to the imposition of such rules because they can be impractical in the context of an international air transport system. Airline schedules, by their nature, involve more than one airport, often in different countries or continents. Any solution that is likely to ease the problem in one location must therefore be considered in an international context, with the active involvement of airlines and others directly involved in the air transport industry.

There is a process in place today, which has been singularly successful in maintaining a high degree of coherence and stability in the international air transport system. Started by IATA in 1947 as a modest attempt to maximise interlining possibilities for a small number of airlines, the IATA Schedules Conference (SC) is now *a worldwide forum for reaching consensus on schedule adjustments necessary to not only maximise interline opportunities but also a forum to discuss and resolve problems of airport congestion.* With the co-operation of airlines, airports, coordinators and industry experts, IATA has developed a comprehensive set of procedures which are intended to provide guidance on managing the allocation of scarce resources at congested airports on a fair, transparent and non-discriminatory basis.

The purpose of this document is to provide governments, airport managing bodies, coordinators, schedules facilitators and airlines with a detailed outline of these procedures. The procedures outlined in this document are intended to foster the fair and transparent allocation and efficient utilisation of scarce airport infrastructure to the acceptance of all parties concerned and to ensure that the requirements of civil aviation are met, mainly through the actions of the airlines themselves acting fairly and responsibly towards the public, airport managing bodies and one another. This document should be used in conjunction with the IATA Standard Schedules Information Manual (SSIM). The latest edition of these Guidelines is available on the IATA website at <http://www.iata.org/sked>.

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Although the policies and procedures outlined in this document are intended as best practice for worldwide application, it is possible that some States or Regions may also have legislation dealing with some of these issues, in which case that legislation will have precedence over the policies and procedures shown in this document.



ABOUT WORLDWIDE SCHEDULING GUIDELINES

For the avoidance of doubt, Annexes 1-3 do not constitute part of these Guidelines and are presented here for information purposes only.

Proposals for additions or amendments to these Guidelines must be submitted to IATA Management for review. Any amendments agreed by the Joint Scheduling Advisory Group will be distributed prior to the Schedules Conference (SC) to all Heads of Delegation. Endorsement will be sought at the Heads of Delegation Meeting held during the SC.

The following symbols will appear in the left hand margin to identify amendments:

- = addition
- ▲ = change

This edition of these Guidelines will take effect from 01 August 2009.

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CALENDAR OF SCHEDULE COORDINATION ACTIVITIES

Activity	Summer 2010 Season SC/125	Winter 2010/11 Season SC/126
Historic slots distributed by coordinators (SHLs) and IATA Management advised (6.4.2.1)	21 September 2009	19 April 2010
Agreed Historic Slot Deadline (6.4.2.3)	8 October 2009	6 May 2010
Confirmation of final coordination parameters and details of available capacity (5.5) and (6.2)	No later than 5 October 2009	No later than 3 May 2010
Deadline for Submission of Initial Slot Requests for Level 3 (6.5.1) and Schedules Information for Level 2 (4.5)	15 October 2009	13 May 2010
Appointments Calendar opened to coordinators to make appointments with airlines (Appendix 2)	3 November 2009	1 June 2010
Initial Slot Allocation and distribution of SALs by coordinators - IATA Management advised. Details of allocated slots available to all airlines (6.9.1)	No later than 5 November 2009	No later than 3 June 2010
Appointments Calendar opened to airlines to make appointments with coordinators (Appendix 2)	6 November 2009	4 June 2010
Acceptance of initial slot offers and cancellation of unwanted offers by airlines (6.9)	Prior to start of Conference	Prior to start of Conference
IATA Schedules Conference (SC) opens – See convening memo (Appendix 1, part 2.1)	19 November 2009	17 June 2010
Changes to Schedules After the Conference (6.11.3) Guidelines on Holding and Returning of Slots (6.10.3)	November to January	June to August
IATA Slot Handback Deadline (6.10.3)	15 January 2010	15 August 2010
Reallocation of Slots (6.11.2)	16-30 January 2010	16-30 August 2010
Start of Use it or Lose it Calculation (= 100%) (6.10.7)	31 January 2010	31 August 2010
Changes to Schedules After the Conference (6.11.3) Short notice cancellation of slots (6.10.3)	February to end March	September to end October
Start of Scheduling Period	28 March 2010	31 October 2010
Ad hoc or other Schedule Adjustments (6.11.4) Short notice cancellation of slots (6.10.3)	March to end October	October to end March

Note: Figures in brackets refer to section numbers in the text of this document.



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This section describes the impact on airport infrastructure of growing air traffic levels and highlights the need to constantly review airport capacity.

SECTION 1 – AIRPORT CAPACITY AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION

- 1.1 The capacity of an airport is dependent on the demand for one or more of its limiting components, such as the runway(s), taxiways, aircraft parking stands, gates, terminal capacity (e.g. check-in and baggage delivery), and environmental constraints (e.g. night restrictions). Good management of these areas will determine the extent to which the airport can reach its full potential.
- 1.2 Increasing demand for air transport services implies that all facilities at an airport will remain under constant pressure to expand. The problems associated with expansion are complicated by the fact that services must be provided to the maximum possible extent at times when the public requires them. This causes demand peaks in certain seasons of the year, on certain days of the week and at certain hours of the day.
- 1.3 Without an expansion in capacity or resolution of the problem by other means, an airport becomes congested at certain times. This occurs when the demand for one or more of its limiting components exceeds capacity in a certain time period.
- 1.4 To resolve the situation, governments, airport and ATC authorities and the airlines must continually find the means to develop the capacity of each of their own systems in order to satisfy public demand. Increases in capacity should be undertaken to the point where the cost of doing so becomes unreasonable, or where political, sociological or environmental factors form insurmountable barriers. Additionally, all appropriate measures to mitigate congestion by making more efficient use of facilities should be taken.
- 1.5 Overall, there are relatively few airports where all the components of its infrastructure are fully utilised over extended periods of the day. While these airports can generally meet the needs of their customers, there are others that do not have the facilities or infrastructure to meet demand. Before embarking on costly ventures to expand capacity, airports need to regularly assess the capacity of the airport taking into consideration internationally and generally accepted methods. Assessment of airport capacity can often result in a more effective use of available facilities and resources, which can be achieved quickly and with minimum cost.

The important principle to note here is that the primary solution to the problem of airport congestion is to increase capacity. It is essential that airport management's, together with ATC, airlines and other parties involved, should endeavour to remove or change restrictive features so that the airport can reach and sustain its full potential. Schedule adjustments or coordination should only be necessary when all possibilities of developing the limiting components of airports have been exhausted.



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This section outlines the IATA scheme of airport categorisation for scheduling and coordination purposes.

SECTION 2 –AIRPORT LEVELS

2.1 While airports will continue to come under pressure to maximise their full potential, the aviation industry must deal with the realities of airport congestion and find ways to minimise its impact. Depending on the level of activity at airports, certain procedures to ensure acceptance of airline schedules have been developed to cover various situations.

2.2 For the purposes of schedule clearance, there are three broad categories of airports:

- **Level 1** describes those airports whose capacities are adequate to meet the demands of users. Such airports are recognised from a schedule clearance viewpoint as **non-coordinated**;
- **Level 2** describes airports where, due to demand, a more formal level of co-operation and facilitation is required to avoid exceeding scheduling parameters. These airports are referred to as **schedules facilitated**;
- **Level 3** describes those airports where demand exceeds capacity during the relevant period and it is impossible to resolve the serious problems in the short term. In this scenario, formal procedures have been implemented at the airport to allocate capacity and coordinate schedules. Airports with such high **levels of congestion are referred to as coordinated**.

2.3 The designated level of an airport will be reviewed by IATA Management and JSAG after receipt of the Notification of Airport Level Change Form (Annex 5) by the appropriate airport managing body. IATA Management will then distribute to the airlines affected notification of the level change.

▲ **2.4** See below for a graphical outline of the three categories of airport, and associated activities.



Levels of Airport Activity

Level 1: Non Coordinated Airport



Simple discussions between airline, handling and data collection agents and airport

Level 2: Schedules Facilitated Airport



Schedules submitted to schedules facilitator who seeks cooperation and voluntary schedule changes to avoid congestion.

No slots are actually allocated and no historical precedence applies.

Message Type: SMA

Level 3: Coordinated Airport



*Airlines must have been allocated a slot before operating
Allocation of slots by coordinator*

Historic precedence exists and slot exchange occurs

Message Type: SCR

