

# **ACL Guidance on the management of slots at Dubai Airports during the Northern Summer 2021 (S21) IATA Season**

## **MANAGEMENT OF A TEMPORARY REDUCTION IN AVAILABLE CAPACITY AS A RESULT OF UNCERTAIN DEMAND DUE TO THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TRAVEL**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

This guidance sets out the process for managing slots during S21. The requirement to test passengers for Covid-19 and reduced demand has presented challenges with managing slots at Dubai International Airport. The late return of slots to the pool is preventing carriers that do wish to operate from doing so and making it difficult for Dubai Airports from determining the required capacity

During Northern Summer 2020 (S20) and Northern Winter 2020 (W20) the same situation occurred and following an Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the Coordination Committee, ACL (the coordinator) introduced a process of airlines to resubmitting requests allowing a mini coordination to take place to ensure a fair and transparent distribution of slots.

Whilst adding to the complexity of the slot management process, it has offered the fairest allocation of slots, accepting that all Carriers did not necessarily receive slots at the time required.

As we approach S21, ACL has reviewed the process going forward and intends to continue with this process for the S21 season. This paper will set out the process, allocation priorities and deadlines in the spirit of transparency.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

The objective of this process is to:

- 2.1. Manage the demand for airport infrastructure against a reduced supply of capacity.
- 2.2. Provide the mechanism to support the release of capacity and ensure it is available for use as soon as it is released.
- 2.3. Give certainty that the allocated slots can be accommodated within the available capacity to avoid inconvenience and hardship to passengers.
- 2.4. Provide a process that is fair, transparent and non-discriminatory.
- 2.5. Ensure that any capacity reduction is spread across all Carriers that hold slots at the airport that use the affected infrastructure.
- 2.6. Provide reassurance to Carriers that hold historic rights that these will be protected for use in the subsequent seasons when capacity returns to the formal Declared Capacity.

## **3. PRINCIPLES OF CAPACITY REDUCTION**

- 3.1. The Coordinator will aim to satisfy as much demand as possible based on the available Temporary Capacity.
- 3.2. This process will be followed in a single phase covering the entire season.
- 3.3. Dubai Airports has advised the temporary capacity will be a continuation of W20.
- 3.4. Airlines with historic entitlement in S21 may not be able to utilise this entitlement because of reduced capacity, however where this is the case the historic entitlement will be protected for the subsequent season when capacity returns to the formal declared capacity.
- 3.5. Terminal allocations will be advised by Dubai Airports and the coordinator will base allocation decisions on the capacity available in that terminal.

## **4. PROCESS**

- 4.1. Dubai Airports have advised that the temporary capacity limits for S21 will be the same as those declared in W20.
- 4.2. ACL will take the historic baseline on or shortly after 10 January 2021. Slots held in the database at that time will form the basis for historic entitlement in Northern Summer 2022.
- 4.3. ACL will remove all slots held in the database on 12 January 2021 and will send a deletion message to the carrier.
- 4.4. Airlines submit new requests for slots by 14 January 2021.

- 4.5. Shortly after the submission deadline, ACL will perform a mini coordination and communicate the results no later than 31 January 2021 by issuing an SIR.
- 4.6. Coordination will be based on the available capacity including the requirement for PCR testing. Only those countries that require testing will be considered against the PCR constraint during coordination.
- 4.7. ACL will base its allocation on the following priorities:
  - 4.7.1. Flights allocated and operated in the W20 season would gain continuation into S21 season assuming they held the equivalent historic slots in S21 before ACL cleared the database. ACL will review operations commenced in W20 for five weeks or more and will consider these for continuation into S21
  - 4.7.2. Slots that operated in the previous season but at a different time than required will be permitted to retime into available capacity
  - 4.7.3. Reinstating slots for the first time that have not commenced operations previously
  - 4.7.4. New request for series at DXB (This may be allocated on a non-historic basis as per ACL Guidelines)
  - 4.7.5. Should DWC not be available for passenger services, DWC passenger traffic that has previously operated at DXB in S20 but not W20
  - 4.7.6. Should DWC not be available for passenger services, DWC passenger traffic that has previously operated at DXB in W20 on a non-historic basis
  - 4.7.7. New request for series of passenger flights that would normally only be permitted at DWC due to the Local Rule (non-historic only)
  - 4.7.8. Adhoc requests (series of four or less)
  - 4.7.9. Non-integrators (within restrictions identified for parking)
- 4.8. Should two or more Carriers have the same priority above, ACL will consider the additional criteria as set out in clause 8.4 of the IATA WASG ensuring that a fair distribution of flights is maintained based on slots held at the HBD.
- 4.9. All requests that cannot be satisfied within the available capacity will remain on the waitlist. The waitlist will be reviewed regularly by ACL, and improvements made based on the above priorities as airlines cancel or new capacity is made available.
- 4.10. OCS will not be available during the mini coordination exercise.
- 4.11. Carriers not planning to operate should return slots as soon as possible so they can be reallocated. Slots returned within three weeks of the operation will result in lower priority for subsequent requests.

- 4.12. After 10% of the slot allocated for S21 has not been utilised or cancelled earlier than three weeks before the planned operation without suitable justification the coordinator will remove the slot and place the series of slots in question in the pool for the remainder of the scheduling season and subsequent requests from the same carrier will be afforded lower priority.
- 4.13. Justification for cancellation within three weeks is defined as Government restriction that prevents or severely restricts a flight from operating to/from a specific destination or countries for which the slot was held, and such change or introduction of such restrictions occurred within the three weeks of the planned operation. For the avoidance of doubt, commercial considerations would not be considered as a reason for alleviation for slots cancelled within three weeks. The burden of proof rests with the operator to justify the non-utilisation of the slot.

## **5. PCR TESTING**

- 5.1. Appendix 1 identifies the current list of countries that require PCR testing at Dubai International Airport.
- 5.2. If a country is added to the list during a phase, ACL will review if capacity is available under the infrastructure applicable to the testing. If capacity is not available, the slot will be offered the nearest available time based on available capacity or no slotted where not alternative is available. The slot will remain on the waitlist should capacity become available.
- 5.3. If a country is removed from the list and slots not allocated as required will be reviewed for improvements.

## **6. TIMELINE**

Historic Baseline Created:	11 January 2021
ACL Clears Database:	12 January 2021
Operators Submission Deadline:	14 January 2021
Coordinator advises airlines of allocations:	31 January 2021

## **7. TRANSPARENCY**

All allocation will be available on OCS and by requests an all airport/carrier SIR once the coordination exercises have been completed.

## **8. ALLEVIATION**

Alleviation will be granted to slots cancelled in compliance with this process.

## **9. HISTORICS**

Historics for the subsequent season will be based on the allocation held on 11 January 2021.

Any slot that has been issued on a non-historic basis may not be granted historic eligibility in the subsequent season.

## **10. COMPLIANCE**

ACL will review any failure to operate to the times allocated and may refer poor performance to the Slot Performance Committee (SPC) that may result in sanctions or historic entitlement being removed.

## Appendix 1 – List of PCR Countries

Pakistan	Iran	Uzbekistan	Somaliland
Egypt	Brazil	Montenegro	Tajikistan
Sri Lanka	Sudan	South Africa	Armenia
India	Turkey	Lebanon	Turkmenistan
Tanzania	Philippine	Indonesia	Kyrgyzstan
Nigeria	Bangladesh	Djibouti	Eritrea
Russia	Serbia	Iraq	Kazakhstan
USA (California, Florida and Texas)		Afghanistan	