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Slot Compliance at Hong Kong International Airport

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This circular serves to remind airlines and other aircraft operators (including general aviation / business aviation (GA/BA) aircraft operators) that, to ensure the most efficient use of congested airport infrastructure and to avoid wastage of valuable airport capacity, it is of paramount importance that they conduct operations at Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) in compliance with the slot clearances granted by Hong Kong Schedule Coordination Office (HKSCO) of Civil Aviation Department (CAD).

2. Compliance with Slot Clearances

- 2.1 An airline/operator must have a slot or slots allocated by HKSCO before commencing operations to/from HKIA, except for the types of operation as listed at Annex 1 to the Schedule Coordination Guidelines for HKIA.
- 2.2 Slot times are based on the planned on-block (arrival) and off-block (departure) times, not the landing or take-off times.
- 2.3 Airlines/operators must adhere to the allocated slot times.
- 2.4 Airlines/operators must not intentionally operate or plan to operate at a time different from the allocated slot time - the time on the passenger ticket and/or the initial flight plan should match the allocated slot time.
- 2.5 Airlines/operators must not intentionally use slots in a significantly different way from that indicated at the time of allocation.

3. Intentional Misuse of Slots

- 3.1 Airlines'/operators' intentional off-slot operations may upset air traffic control's plan for managing peak-hour movements and may impose a significant cost on airlines/operators (increased holding and delay), passengers (delayed arrival and departure), airport operator (inefficient use of airport infrastructure) and the community (unnecessary increase in fuel waste and emissions).
- 3.2 The repeated and intentional misuse of slots at HKIA, if proven, will cause the airline/operator concerned to receive lower priority in its future slot requests and, where applicable, may adversely impact its eligibility for historic precedence in the following equivalent scheduling season.
- 3.3 The misuse will be treated as repeated if a similar case has occurred within the previous six months or within the same scheduling season.
- 3.4 The following is a list of common types of slot misuse:
 - a. Operation of an air service without an allocated slot.
 - b. Operation of a series of air services at times significantly different from the allocated slots.
 - c. Operation of an ad hoc air service at times significantly different from the allocated slots.
 - d. The use of a slot in a significantly different way from that indicated at the time of allocation where such use causes prejudice to airport or air traffic operations.
 - e. The failure to operate an allocated slot without cancelling it in advance, where the non-operation is not the result of factors beyond the airlines'/operators' reasonable control, and thereby causing prejudice to airport or air traffic operations.
- 3.5 The following actions also constitute slot misuse:
 - a. Holding slots that the airline/operator does not intend to operate, transfer, exchange, or use in a shared operation.
 - b. Holding slots for an operation other than that planned for the purpose of denying another airline/operator access to the otherwise available airport capacity.
 - c. Requesting new slots that the airline/operator does not intend to operate.
 - d. Requesting slots for an operation other than that indicated, with the intention of gaining improved priority.

3.6 The lists of possible slot misuse given in paragraph 3.4 and 3.5 above are not exhaustive. Other forms of slot misuse which become identified over time will also be addressed by HKSCO.

4. Slot Monitoring

4.1 To promote compliance with allocated slots and to combat intentional misuse, HKSCO conducts routine slot monitoring which processes involve discrepancy checks both in advance of the allocated slot times of operations and retrospective conformity checks of the actual times of operations against the most recent allocated slots data held by HKSCO. Through the retrospective analyses, HKSCO will also be able to identify operations without allocated slots.

4.2 HKSCO also takes into account information obtained from the following sources:

- a. Ticket information published on airlines'/operators' websites or other common forms of advertisements.
- b. Air Services and Safety Management Division of CAD regarding flight applications filed by airlines/operators for the purpose of obtaining traffic rights or charter permits.
- c. Ground handling agents.
- d. Air Traffic Management Division of CAD regarding any delay within Hong Kong airspace that may have occurred beyond the reasonable control of airlines/operators, e.g. flow control imposed by another air traffic control unit.

4.3 Any off-slot operations outside a tolerance of 20 minutes of the allocated slot times will trigger HKSCO to analyse potential slot misuse. HKSCO will contact the airline/operator concerned to seek an explanation and to establish if the discrepancies have occurred as a result of factors beyond its reasonable control. Should evidence and findings in slot monitoring confirm repeated and intentional misuse of slots, disciplinary actions against the airline/operator concerned as per paragraph 3.2 above will be taken for the purpose of securing compliance with allocated slots.

4.4 The following circumstances will not be accepted as factors beyond the reasonable control of an airline/operator:

- a. Operational issues known to the airline/operator before commencement of an operation.
- b. Incorrect block times.
- c. Late arrival of flight crew members or GA/BA passengers unless due to exceptional circumstances, e.g. an unplanned closure of the motorway or suspension of rail services.

5. Relevant Documents

5.1 This circular should be read in conjunction with the following documents available at www.cad.gov.hk and www.hkgslot.gov.hk.

- a. Schedule Coordination Guidelines for Hong Kong International Airport;
- b. Aeronautical Information Circular entitled Parking Stand Booking System for General Aviation / Business Aviation Aircraft at Hong Kong International Airport;
- c. Aeronautical Information Circular entitled Apron Parking Congestion at Hong Kong International Airport.

6. AIC 27/13 is hereby superseded.

This Circular is issued for information, guidance and necessary action
By direction of the Director-General of Civil Aviation
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