

9. SLOT MONITORING

9.1. WHAT IS SLOT MONITORING?

- 9.1.1. Slot monitoring is the continuous process of reconciling the operations of airlines and other aircraft operators to the slots allocated by the coordinator at a Level 3 airport. This is one of the methods available to ensure the most efficient use of airport infrastructure.
- 9.1.2. There are two phases of slot monitoring: pre-operation and post-operation analysis.
- a) Pre-operation analysis is a recommended process that will help identify and prevent potential slot misuse prior to the day of operation.
 - b) Post-operation analysis will help determine whether misuse of slots has occurred and whether airlines achieve historic precedence for the following equivalent season.
- 9.1.3. **Role of the Airline or Other Aircraft Operator:** Airlines and other aircraft operators must ensure that their operations at a Level 3 airport are in accordance with the slots allocated to them, and that the necessary slot adjustments are requested in a timely manner. They should also review their own performance and identify corrective actions where necessary, prior to intervention from coordinators. When the coordinator notifies the airline or other aircraft operator of potential misuse, the airline or other aircraft operator must respond in a timely manner and, if appropriate, take corrective action as soon as is practicable.
- 9.1.4. **Role of the Airport Managing Body:** The airport managing body shall provide, in a timely manner, all of the information and data necessary for the coordinator to perform required slot monitoring duties. It should also monitor the overall performance of the airport and should highlight any potential misuse of slots to the coordinator.
- 9.1.5. **Role of the Coordinator:** Coordinators shall perform slot monitoring, warn of discrepancies and request corrective actions, and record misuse of slots. Only coordinators shall communicate apparent misuse of slots to airlines and other aircraft operators. Coordinators shall also share relevant information with the airport managing body, as well as with all other stakeholders (ideally through the Slot Performance Committee).
- 9.1.6. **Role of the Coordination Committee:** The Coordination Committee may advise the coordinator on matters relating to the monitoring and misuse of slots. A Slot Performance Committee, a possible sub-group of the Coordination Committee, may be established to perform this role. This is discussed in more detail below.



PRINCIPLES – Principles of Slot Allocation

9.2. KEY PRINCIPLES OF SLOT MONITORING

9.2.1. The key principles of slot monitoring are as follows:

- a) Slot monitoring is intended to:
 - i. Ensure that operations at a Level 3 airport are in accordance with the slots as allocated;
 - ii. Ensure that slots are used in line with the Use It or Lose It rule;
 - iii. Help ensure scarce capacity is not wasted;
 - iv. Help ensure the smooth operation of airports for all stakeholders; and
 - v. Prevent the misuse of slots.
- b) Slot monitoring involves both pre-operation and post-operation analysis.
- c) Slot monitoring is applicable to all types of operations that require slots at a Level 3 airport.
- d) Slot monitoring is a continuous process which allows sufficient advance notice for corrective action to take place.
- e) Slot monitoring requires accurate and reliable data provided – in a timely manner and in the agreed format – ideally by the airport managing body or by other relevant stakeholders as needed.
- f) Slot times are based on the coordinated on-block (arrival) and off-block (departure) times. Actual times of arrival and departure may vary due to operational factors.
- g) The investigation of potential misuse of slots should be based on data analysis.
- h) Coordinators should enter into dialogue with airlines and other aircraft operators about correcting apparent misuse of slots at the earliest possible opportunity.
- i) Continued slot misuse after dialogue with the coordinator may result in enforcement actions as described in this section.
- j) Coordinators may consult relevant stakeholders (such as the Coordination Committee, Slot Performance Committee, the airport managing body, or air traffic control) to review the findings of slot monitoring.
- k) The Slot Performance Committee may also provide advice to the relevant stakeholder regarding actions which may be taken to improve airport performance where sanctions or other enforcement measures are not applicable.

- l) Certain types of ad hoc flights may be subject to special local slot monitoring procedures.

9.2.2. **Misuse of Slots:** The following actions are deemed a misuse of slots:

- a) Operating at a Level 3 airport without an allocated slot;
- b) Operating a flight at a significantly different time from the allocated slot.
- c) Operating a flight in a significantly different way to the allocated slot – including a different service type, aircraft subtype, aircraft capacity, or origin/destination – without the prior confirmation of the coordinator as set out in 8.10;
- d) Holding slots that the airline or other aircraft operator does not intend to operate, transfer, swap, or use in a shared operation;
- e) Holding slots for an operation other than that planned for the purpose of denying capacity to another airline or aircraft operator;
- f) Requesting new slots that the airline or other aircraft operator does not intend to operate;
- g) Requesting slots for an operation other than that indicated, with the intention of gaining improved priority; or
- h) Where applicable, operating in curfew or another restricted operations period without holding an allocated slot for that period.

9.2.3. In some instances, operational disruption or legitimate changes of plans may appear to be slot misuse. Communication between the coordinator and the airline or other aircraft operator is vital to understand the reasons for potential misuse.

9.3. PRE-OPERATION ANALYSIS

9.3.1. Coordinators may seek to prevent slot misuse by undertaking pre-operation analysis, a recommended process involving conformity checks before the day of operation.

9.3.2. Pre-operation analysis is a continuous process that:

- a) Uses objective, transparent, and non-discriminatory criteria;
- b) Should be adapted to the specific needs of the airport and types of traffic involved;
- c) Should be timely and simple to calculate and administer; and
- d) Considers advice given by the Coordination Committee or Slot Performance Committee.

9.3.3. This process requires the coordinator to have the right data in the agreed format available in a timely manner in order to complete its analysis. Airport managing



PRINCIPLES – Principles of Slot Allocation

bodies, airlines, and other aircraft operators shall provide the data requested by the coordinator, in the format agreed between the parties, for this purpose.

- 9.3.4. Coordinators shall also check published data sources such as:
- a) airline or travel agency websites, global distribution systems, or tickets;
 - b) airport or ground handling data from airports at each end of the route concerned; or
 - c) peer comparison (i.e., the performance of other operators using similar equipment and on similar routings, giving adequate consideration for the limitations of comparisons where the equipment and routings are not identical).
- 9.3.5. When the coordinator identifies a discrepancy between the published data and the allocated slot, the coordinator should communicate this to the airline or other aircraft operator to allow it to take corrective actions to avoid possible slot misuse.
- 9.3.6. Despite the pre-operation analysis process, the responsibility to avoid slot misuse remains with the airline or other aircraft operator. The pre-operation analysis process is not a prerequisite for a coordinator to take action for potential slot misuse as part of the post-operation analysis, below.

9.4. POST-OPERATION ANALYSIS

9.4.1. Data Comparison

- 9.4.1.1 The airport managing body shall provide to the coordinator a list of flown operations, in a timely manner and in the agreed format. The data supplied should include the scheduled time, the actual on/off block times, the flight number, destination, aircraft type, service type, number of seats, and any other necessary data requested by the coordinator.
- 9.4.1.2 Where actual on/off block time data is unavailable, landing and take-off times shall be provided by the airport managing body, with a recommended taxi time adjustment as an estimate for the on/off block times. Variations in taxi times may affect the accuracy of the matching process, and caution must be used when not using actual on/off block times.
- 9.4.1.3 The coordinator shall match the actual operations to the allocated slots, creating a matched data set. This process should be done on a regular basis throughout the season.
- 9.4.1.4 The coordinator may use similar additional data sources to identify potential slot misuse, such as ATC flight plans.
- 9.4.1.5 Flights operated in accordance with the allocated slots will be credited towards the granting of historic precedence.

9.4.1.6 Discrepancies detected in the matched data set will then be investigated as part of the slot performance process.

9.4.2. Slot Performance Process

9.4.2.1 The coordinator should then analyse the discrepancies in the matched data set created under the data comparison process to identify potential slot misuse.

9.4.2.2 Coordinators should rely on data analysis to demonstrate potential slot misuse with the aim of targeting only the most obvious and impactful cases of potential slot misuse for further action. Best practice guidelines on the use of data analysis in the slot performance process may be found in Annex 11.10.

9.4.2.3 Where potential slot misuse is identified, the coordinator should then enter into coordinator-airline dialogue.

9.4.2.4 The coordinator should avoid seeking unnecessary explanations regarding minor operational deviations. In analysing whether the deviation represents potential misuse, the coordinator should consider, for example:

- a) whether the deviation is a result of an obvious operational disruption (for example, known events of extreme weather, or strikes);
- b) whether the deviation is within a reasonable tolerance, indicating normal operational variability rather than potential slot misuse; and
- c) whether the deviation is part of a pattern of repeated off-slot operations, departing from normal operational variability.

9.4.3. Coordinator-Airline Dialogue

9.4.3.1 Having identified evidence of potential slot misuse, the coordinator should then contact the airline or other aircraft operator concerned, in writing. This message should request an explanation for the discrepancy and any proposed corrective action the airline or other aircraft operator plans to take. A reasonable deadline for response must be given, and all dialogue with the airline must conclude before the Agreed Historics Deadline for the subsequent equivalent season.

9.4.3.2 Coordinators should try to identify slot performance issues as soon as possible and contact the airline or other aircraft operator concerned in a timely manner, giving it the opportunity to take corrective action during the current season.

9.4.3.3 If an adequate explanation is provided or appropriate corrective action is taken by the airline or other aircraft operator, the coordinator should continue to monitor the situation. Where appropriate, the coordinator should also notify the airport managing body of the corrective action taken by the airline or other aircraft operator.



PRINCIPLES – Principles of Slot Allocation

9.4.3.4 If the airline or other aircraft operator does not respond by the deadline provided or provides inadequate explanation, or if the proposed corrective action is insufficient, the coordinator may next consider appropriate enforcement action.

9.4.4. Enforcement Action

9.4.4.1 If the airline-coordinator dialogue process is unsuccessful, enforcement action shall be considered for intentional or repeated slot misuse. When deciding whether to pursue any enforcement action, in accordance with these guidelines and applicable law, the coordinator should consider whether the slot misuse was:

- a) following a warning issued as part of the pre-operation analysis process;
- b) a first occurrence or part of a pattern of misuse;
- c) part of a series of slots or an ad hoc operation; or
- d) likely to impact the airport, ATC operations, or other airlines

9.4.4.2 Enforcement actions for intentional or repeated slot misuse may include:

- a) Referral of the matter to the airport's Coordination Committee or other competent body;
- b) Loss of historic precedence for the series of slots involved in the next equivalent season;
- c) A lower priority for that airline for new future slot requests in the next equivalent season;
- d) Withdrawal of the series of slots involved for the remaining portion of the current season; or
- e) Sanctions (including financial sanctions) under applicable law.

9.4.4.3 There are circumstances where slot misuse is initially not deemed intentional but may become intentional during the season if the airline or other aircraft operator concerned does not take effective corrective actions following correspondence with the coordinator.

9.4.4.4 Coordinators should communicate any actions taken by them against airlines or other aircraft operators to the airport managing body and other stakeholders (ideally through the Slot Performance Committee).

9.5. THE COORDINATION COMMITTEE AND SLOT MONITORING

9.5.1. The Coordination Committee

9.5.1.1 The Coordination Committee is established at a Level 3 airport to advise the coordinator on matters relating to capacity, slot allocation, and monitoring the use of slots at the airport. Sub-groups of the Coordination Committee, such as a Slot

Performance Committee, can be used to focus on specific functions of the Coordination Committee, or specific relevant topics.

9.5.1.2 Certain tasks of the Coordination Committee relate to slot monitoring. These are to:

- a) Mediate in case of complaints from airlines or other aircraft operators related to slot allocation or slot monitoring which cannot be resolved between the airline or other aircraft operator and the coordinator in a mutually agreeable way;
- b) Oversee the activities of the sub-groups of the Coordination Committee, such as a Slot Performance Committee, where these exist; and
- c) Advise the coordinator on methods of slot monitoring, where a Slot Performance Committee does not exist.

9.5.2. The Slot Performance Committee

9.5.2.1 A Slot Performance Committee should be established as a possible sub-group of the Coordination Committee at Level 3 airports. The role of the Slot Performance Committee shall be performed by the Coordination Committee if a Slot Performance Committee is not established.

9.5.2.2 The Slot Performance Committee's objective is to advise the coordinator on any slot monitoring issues, with the objective of improving punctuality and reducing slot misuse. The Slot Performance Committee shall also guarantee a fair judgment of potential slot misuse.

9.5.2.3 The principal tasks of the Slot Performance Committee are to:

- a) Determine trends that could lead to potential slot misuse at the airport, and where appropriate recommend corrective actions;
- b) Identify and set goals within the Slot Performance Committee to address these trends, in order to enhance the performance and effective utilization of available airport capacity;
- c) Provide guidance and advice to the coordinator on any matters related to slot misuse;
- d) Establish, if required, a working group or other dispute resolution mechanism to mediate between the coordinator and an airline or aircraft operator where differences of interpretation on slot misuse exist; and
- e) Subject to applicable law, to make available upon request any information disclosed within the Slot Performance Committee to all airlines and other aircraft operators using the airport, and to permit their representatives as observers to Slot Performance Committee meetings.

The Slot Performance Committee does not replace the function of slot monitoring activities performed by the coordinator.



PRINCIPLES – Principles of Slot Allocation

- 9.5.2.4 Only matters related to slot performance may be discussed during Slot Performance Committee meetings, and due consideration should be given to applicable competition laws (following consultation with legal counsel, if necessary). Attendees should not divulge any competitively sensitive information at such meetings. By way of non-exhaustive example, attendees should not share information regarding pricing, costs, route schedules, route changes, aircraft capacity, use of a particular aircraft type or a particular aircraft on a route, or any information regarding an airline's commercial strategy. To the extent that an airline or other aircraft operator facing a hearing needs to convey such information to the coordinator, the other attendees should be warned at the beginning of the hearing so that arrangements can be made for any other attendees present to leave the meeting while such matters are discussed.
- 9.5.2.5 Membership of the Slot Performance Committee should include (but not necessarily be limited to):
- a) The airport managing body;
 - b) Representatives with scheduling expertise from two or three airlines or other aircraft operators that best represent the traffic mix at the airport, to be selected by the airlines or other aircraft operators serving the airport;
 - c) The coordinator, as an advisor; and
 - d) An ATC representative.
- 9.5.2.6 The members of the Slot Performance Committee need not be members of the Coordination Committee. Members of the Slot Performance Committee shall have the necessary knowledge, expertise, and mandates to serve on the Slot Performance Committee and to actively contribute to its discussions.
- 9.5.2.7 The chairperson (and vice-chairperson, if any) and secretary of the Slot Performance Committee should be appointed by the airport managing body.
- 9.5.2.8 Meetings of the Slot Performance Committee shall be held as required, typically on a quarterly basis.
- 9.5.2.9 Descriptions of the problems discussed by the Slot Performance Committee should be published following its meetings.
- 9.5.2.10 Complaints regarding the functioning of or the advice issued by the Slot Performance Committee shall be directed in the first instance to the board of the Coordination Committee.

