



Schedule Coordination Guidelines for Hong Kong International Airport

Background

The Civil Aviation Department (CAD), being the aeronautical authority in Hong Kong, has in the past appointed Cathay Pacific Airways (CPA) as the Schedule Coordinator (SC) for the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA). The current term of appointment of CPA as the Schedule Coordinator will expire on 5 July 2008. In view of the developments of the airline industry in Hong Kong, a review of the existing arrangement has been conducted. After the review and consultation with the airline industry, it has been decided that CAD will take up the schedule coordination function on 6 July 2008.

2. The Hong Kong Schedule Coordination Office (HKSCO) was set up under the Air Services Division of CAD in April 2008 in preparation for the take-over on 6 July 2008. After the take-over, HKSCO will continue to adopt a fair and transparent schedule coordination mechanism in line with the IATA Worldwide Scheduling Guidelines (IATA WSG), currently the 15th Edition. In addition, HKSCO will maintain and enhance the transparency of the schedule coordination process in accordance with the IATA WSG.

3. The purpose of this document is to provide airlines/aircraft operators with a detailed outline of the schedule coordination procedures which are applicable to HKIA. Since the procedures are based on the IATA WSG, references will be made to the relevant provisions of the IATA WSG. Airlines should therefore read this document in conjunction with the IATA WSG.

HKIA Schedule Coordination Process and Criteria

4. The IATA WSG provides the framework for slot allocation to be followed by world-wide SC and sets out the timetable of events in the scheduling process. The coordination process at HKIA will continue to be conducted in accordance with the IATA WSG.



5. HKIA is a Level 3 airport, i.e. a coordinated airport. Formal procedures will be implemented to allocate available capacity and coordinate schedules. In particular, HKSCO will continue to follow the principles and guidelines in Section 5 and Section 6 of the IATA WSG in processing slot requests and conducting schedule coordination.

Slot Clearance at HKIA

6. As in all coordinated airports, obtaining an airport slot (slot clearance) from HKSCO before operation at HKIA is mandatory for each aircraft movement (arrival and departure) except for certain types of operations. Special provisions for these types of operations are set out in **Annex 1**.

7. Traffic rights and airport slots are separate issues and airlines need both to carry out commercial operations.

Airport Capacity Constraints

8. HKSCO will take into account the following airport constraints when coordinating the schedules and allocating slots for HKIA: runway capacity, aircraft parking capacity and terminal/passenger flow capacity.

9. These airport constraints will be determined by the relevant authorities and reviewed twice annually by the overseeing coordination committee, the Scheduling Advisory Committee (SAC), before each scheduling period and declared to all airlines/aircraft operators via HKSCO.

Scheduling Advisory Committee

10. SAC, chaired by the Deputy Director-General of Civil Aviation, has been set up since the opening of HKIA to oversee schedule coordination matters. Members include HKSCO and representatives from CAD, Airport Authority of Hong Kong (AAHK) and airlines representatives nominated by the Board of Airline Representatives (BAR) of Hong Kong. The number of airline representatives will be increased from two to four in July 2008 in order to further enhance the transparency of the process. SAC meets twice yearly. The Terms of Reference of SAC are as



follows:

- To provide a forum for discussion between CAD, AAHK and airline representatives on all matters relating to airport capacity and schedule coordination for HKIA.
- To consider and establish the runway, terminal and apron capacity for HKIA for schedule coordination purposes.
- To consider and develop any local scheduling criteria for HKIA taking into account the IATA WSG.
- To review and monitor the effective utilization of runway slots and airport facilities.
- To consider any matters relating to airlines' time keeping performance and runway slot utilization.
- To handle complaints from airlines about slot requests for seasonal services.

Priorities for Coordination

11. HKSCO will allocate the airport slots within the declared capacity for each scheduling period based on the priorities as contained in the IATA WSG. A summary of the criteria is as follows:

Primary Criteria for Slot Allocation

Please see Section 6.8.1 of the IATA WSG.

Additional Criteria for Slot Allocation

Please see Section 6.8.2 of the IATA WSG.

Higher Priority for Regular Scheduled Services

Please see Section 5.9 of the IATA WSG.



12. Other issues which will be taken into consideration by HKSCO when allocating slots for HKIA are:

- Callsign Confusion – please refer to Aeronautical Information Circular (AIC) 03/06
- Training and Test Flights at Hong Kong International Airport – please refer to AIC 11/06

Process of Coordination

13. Please see Section 6 of the IATA WSG.

Complaints Handling Arrangement

14. Airlines/aircraft operators should understand that slots at HKIA, a coordinated airport, may not be available at peak times. It is essential that airlines/aircraft operators operating or planning to operate at HKIA develop an alternative plan if they are unable to acquire their desired slots. Requesting new or changing slots after the ‘Start of use-it-or-lost-it calculation’ date, i.e. 31st August for Winter scheduling season and 31st January for Summer scheduling season, will usually have lesser chance to succeed. Experience has shown that such undesirable situations are usually due to airlines/aircraft operators’ inadequacy in their planning resulting in late request/change of slots. Airlines/aircraft operators should try to adhere to the IATA submission deadline to avoid disappointment. Although HKSCO will try to offer the most suitable alternative slots, it may still not meet the plan of the airlines/aircraft operators. If the matter cannot be resolved between the airlines/aircraft operators and HKSCO in a mutually acceptable way, a complaint can be made as follows:

- (a) Complaints about ad-hoc slot requests should be addressed to the Assistant Director-General of Civil Aviation (Air Services) at fax: (852) 2877 8542 or by email to: adg-as@cad.gov.hk.
- (b) Complaints about seasonal slot requests should first be addressed to SAC. SAC’s complaint handling procedures are at **Annex 2**. If SAC cannot



resolve the matter, the complainant may bring the matter further to the Committee on Slot Complaints chaired by the Transport and Housing Bureau (THB). The terms of reference of the Committee on Slot Complaints is at **Annex 3**.

Use of Slots and Slot Monitoring at HKIA

15. To achieve the most efficient use of scarce capacity at HKIA and to minimize the risk of slot abuse, it is absolutely essential that airlines/aircraft operators, once slots have been allocated to them, manage their slots portfolio in a proactive and alert manner.

16. Airlines/aircraft operators must not intentionally operate (or plan to operate) at a time which is different from the allocated slot – the time on the passenger ticket and/or the Air Traffic Control flight plan should match the allocated slot. Slots for HKIA are the on/off block times, not the landing or take off times.

17. Airlines/aircraft operators must not hold slots which they do not intend to operate. Airlines/aircraft operators that intentionally hold on to slots and return them after the IATA Slot Handback Deadline will be given lower priority by HKSCO for their future slot requests. Please see Section 6.10.3 of the IATA WSG.

18. Slot monitoring will be conducted by HKSCO to ensure that the most efficient use is made of the scarce capacity, that an adequate level of service quality is maintained and that the quality, flexibility and effectiveness of the coordination process are improved.

Regular Slot Monitoring

19. HKSCO will compare, on a weekly and monthly basis, the most recent slot information held by HKSCO with the actual operated time of an airline/aircraft operator from AAHK. HKSCO will also take into consideration information received from various sources including Air Traffic Management Division (ATMD) of CAD, airline company websites, handling agents etc. The results will be reported at the SAC meeting.



Seasonal Slot Performance Monitoring

20. After the end of each scheduling season, the seasonal slot performance monitoring which is the aggregated result of all the regular slot monitoring will be used to determine the eligibility for granting of the historical precedence. Off-slot operations with significant and/or repetitive deviations might not be eligible for any historical precedence.

21. In future, HKSCO may upload such poor performance of relevant airlines/aircraft operators on its website in order to enhance the transparency of the process.

Transparency of Scheduling Information

22. In order to ensure that the slot allocation process is conducted in a neutral, non-discriminatory and transparent way, a website (www.hkgslot.org) has been made available where authorized users (mainly airlines/aircraft operators) can obtain the complete slot listing at all stages of the allocation process, enquire about the slot availability and other useful information about the slot situation at HKIA.

23. HKSCO will continue to maintain the above website and may introduce enhanced functions to further increase the transparency if necessary.

Requests for Slots

24. With effect from 6 July 2008, requests for slots including ad-hoc flights (e.g. general aviation and etc.) must be sent via **email** only to HKSCO at hkgslot@cad.gov.hk at least three working days in advance during office hours. As the HKSCO scheduling software will only handle correctly formatted messages, please ensure all Slot Clearance Request (SCR) to request, change or delete slots are in IATA SSIM manual chapter 6 formats. SCR should be plain text placed directly in the email body. No attachment or special character should be used.

25. HKSCO will only accept SCR messages sent via email. No SITA message will be accepted. **Requests sent via fax/telephone will only be accepted in case email communication has broken down due to unforeseen reason.** The



address and contacts of HKSCO are as follows:

Room 6T-015, Terminal 1,
Hong Kong International Airport,
1 Cheong Hong Road,
Lantau, Hong Kong.
Fax: (852) 2182 1209
Email: hkgslot@cad.gov.hk

Mr. Franco Ngan
Tel: (852) 2182 1218

Mr. Eric Wong
Tel: (852) 2182 1243

Office Hours

26. HKSCO provides services from 0900-1800L (0100-1000UTC) daily except Saturdays, Sundays and gazetted public holidays (please refer to the relevant AIC posted on <http://www.hkatc.gov.hk/> on the gazetted public holidays in Hong Kong). For flight requests outside office hours, (i.e. evenings, weekends, public holidays), please refer to AIC 01/07.

27. Please note that schedule changes or new requests concerning aircraft movements must be submitted to HKSCO during normal office hours. Requests outside office hours should not be made unless they are urgent cases with sufficient justification. In order that the service outside office hours is not to be misused, all such slot requests must also be filed to HKSCO at hkgslot@cad.gov.hk for reference and monitoring. In the event of any intentional misuse, HKSCO will give a lower priority to their future slot requests or refuse to grant further slots for repeated offenders.

28. HKSCO is considering to introduce the Online Coordination Service in future, which enables registered users to manage their own slot portfolios (add/change/delete flights) directly in HKSCO's database, via the internet. The exact timing will be announced once this is ready.



Revision

29. This document (including the information, procedures and arrangements in the Annexes) will be reviewed, updated or revised to reflect the changes in practice, revisions of the IATA WSG or developments in the airline industry. Airlines will be informed by email if there are changes to this document and the revised document will be published on CAD's website.



Types of Operations Exempted from Obtaining Airport Slots

Due to their special nature, the following types of operations may operate at HKIA without a slot allocated by HKSCO:

- a) Emergency Landings – including diversions or quick returns after takeoff
- b) State Aircraft – including Heads of State flights, flights carrying Government Ministers, or flights carrying visiting dignitaries from abroad on an official visit
- c) Military Flights – including military flights carrying supplies or on mission
- d) Humanitarian Flights – including Medical Emergencies, Donor Flights, Search and Rescue, Air Ambulance flights and Hong Kong Government Flying Service flights
- e) Technical Flights – including Radar and ILS calibration flights, aerial survey flights, RFI and NAVAID check flights



**Scheduling Advisory Committee
Slot Complaints Handling Procedures**

Procedures

1. If an airline/aircraft operator is not satisfied with the slots allocated for its seasonal services¹, the airline/aircraft operator concerned should first approach SC to try to resolve the problem.
2. SC and airline/aircraft operator should both make their best endeavours to try to resolve the problem. If this fails, the airline/aircraft operator may write to the Scheduling Advisory Committee (SAC) to lodge a complaint (“slot complaint”).
3. When writing to SAC, the airline/aircraft operator (“the complainant”) should provide -
 - (a) copies of the correspondence with SC; and
 - (b) an explanation for not accepting SC’s response if one has been made.
4. Upon receipt of the slot complaint and all the information referred to in

¹ Given the need for prompt resolutions for complaints relating to ad hoc services, all such complaints relating to the day-to-day allocation of slots for ad hoc services will be handled by the Assistant Director-General of Civil Aviation (Air Services) of the Civil Aviation Department.



paragraph 3 above, SAC should arrange for a special meeting to be conducted to consider the matter.

5. The complainant may request or be invited to attend and address the SAC special meeting.

6. SAC would try to resolve the problem taking into account the prevailing IATA WSG and any local scheduling guidelines issued by SAC.

7. If the complaint cannot be resolved by SAC, the complainant may refer the matter to the Committee on Slot Complaints.

8. Secretariat support to the SAC special meeting on any slot complaint should be provided by officers who are not currently involved in the schedule coordination duties. Whilst SC or any other member of HKSCO may provide information at the request of SAC, he/she should not participate in the deliberation about the complaint.

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Committee on Slot Complaints (“Committee”)

Terms of Reference

To consider complaints made by airline/aircraft operators aggrieved by the decisions of the Schedule Coordinator (SC) concerning the allocation of slots for the airlines’/aircraft operators’ seasonal services (“Slot Complaints”), with a view to giving advice on such Slot Complaints to the complainants and SC/the Scheduling Advisory Committee (SAC) as appropriate.

Membership

Permanent Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) with (Chairman)
Deputy Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) as his
alternate

Two lay members (with no direct connection with any airline
operating at the Hong Kong International Airport)

Assistant Secretary for Transport and Housing (Transport) (Secretary)



Procedures

1. Any airline/aircraft operator with a Slot Complaint (“the complainant”) may write to the Committee provided that:
 - (a) the Slot Complaint has been considered by SAC in accordance with the procedures set out in Annex 2; and
 - (b) the complainant does not accept SAC’s response.

2. When writing to the Committee, the complainant should provide:
 - (a) copies of its correspondence with SAC; and
 - (b) an explanation for not accepting SAC’s response.

3. The Committee may conduct its business in any way that it thinks fair, reasonable and efficient. In considering Slot Complaints, the Committee will make reference to the IATA Worldwide Scheduling Guidelines and any local scheduling guidelines established by SAC. The Committee may ask the complainant and SC to attend the meeting and provide additional information, and may invite members of SAC to attend and share their views. At a meeting to consider a Slot Complaint, both the complainant and SC shall be entitled to address the meeting.

4. When giving advice on Slot Complaints, the Committee shall ensure that the advice sets out a fair summary of the views expressed at the meeting.

5. The Secretary of the Committee will notify the complainant, and SC/SAC as appropriate in writing of the Committee’s advice on his Slot Complaint.

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