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The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

## **Schedule Coordination Guidelines for Hong Kong International Airport**

### **Introduction**

Since July 2008, Civil Aviation Department (CAD) has assumed the role of the Coordinator for Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) and has established Hong Kong Schedule Coordination Office (HKSCO) to perform the Coordinator's functions.

2. HKSCO adopts and maintains a neutral, transparent and non-discriminatory slot allocation mechanism in line with the IATA Worldwide Slot Guidelines (WSG) and any other local guidelines endorsed by Scheduling Advisory Committee (SAC).
3. The purpose of this document is to give a detailed outline of the slot allocation procedures applicable to HKIA. Airlines/aircraft operators are advised to read this document in conjunction with the prevailing IATA WSG.
4. Given that HKIA is a Level 3 airport, all airlines/aircraft operators must obtain a slot from HKSCO for each aircraft movement (arrival and departure) before operating at HKIA, except for the types of operation listed in Annex 1.
5. The allocation of slots is independent from the assignment of traffic rights under bilateral air service agreements. Airlines/aircraft operators should note that they would need both in order to carry out scheduled commercial operations. For charter operations, a charter permit would be applicable.

### **Coordination Parameters**

6. Constraints for airport capacity are declared as coordination parameters which are the operational limits of all technical, operational and environmental factors at the airport. Slots are allocated on the basis of the applicable coordination parameters.

7. The coordination parameters currently applicable at HKIA include the following capacity constraints as declared by the relevant stake-holders:

7.1 The airport maximum practical capacity of 420,000 movements per annum as set out in the HKIA Master Plan 2030;

7.2 Runway hourly capacity by Air Traffic Management Division of CAD;

7.3 Aircraft parking capacity and restrictions by Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK);

7.4 Terminal/passenger flow capacity by AAHK;

7.5 The day-night movement ratio of approximately 80:20 by AAHK; (“day” is from 2300 to 1359 UTC and “night” is from 1400 to 2259 UTC.)

7.6 Termination of Allocation of Slots to “Marginally Compliant Chapter 3” (MCC3) Aircraft Operating to/from Hong Kong.

8. Subject to review and finalization by SAC which is the overseeing coordination committee, HKSCO will inform airlines/aircraft operators of the declared coordination parameters and details of available airport capacity at least 7 days before the Initial Submission Deadline (for each scheduling season).

9. HKSCO allocates slots on the basis of the applicable coordination parameters and in accordance with the slot allocation principles, priority and criteria set out in the IATA WSG and any other local guidelines endorsed by SAC.

#### **Scheduling Advisory Committee (SAC)**

10. The SAC, chaired by Deputy Director-General of Civil Aviation, has been set up to oversee slot coordination matters. Members include HKSCO, ATMD, Airport Standards Division (APSD) of CAD, AAHK and airlines representatives nominated by the Board of Airline Representatives (BAR) of Hong Kong. The number of airline representatives was increased in July 2008 from two to five with a view to further enhancing the transparency of the process. SAC meets twice yearly and its Terms of Reference are as follows:

- 10.1 To provide a forum for discussion between CAD, AAHK and airline representatives on all matters relating to airport capacity constraints and slot coordination at HKIA.
- 10.2 To consider and establish the coordination parameters applicable at HKIA for slot coordination purpose.
- 10.3 To consider and endorse any local guidelines for HKIA taking into account the prevailing IATA WSG.
- 10.4 To review and monitor the efficient utilisation of slots and airport infrastructure.
- 10.5 To consider any matters relating to airlines' time keeping performance and actual slot utilisation.
- 10.6 To handle complaints from airlines about slot requests for seasonal scheduled services.

#### **Principles, Priority and Criteria for Slot Allocation**

11. Regarding slot allocation principles, priority and criteria, HKSCO follows Part 2 of the IATA WSG and any other local guidelines endorsed by SAC. In the event of conflicts arising between the interests of different aircraft operation categories, HKSCO will allocate slots based on the following broad priority order:

- 11.1 A series of scheduled services;
- 11.2 Ad-hoc services;
- 11.3 Other operations.

12. The process of slot allocation also depends on other critical operational constraints or factors such as the availability of general aviation/business aviation (GA/BA) aircraft parking stands at HKIA. The following Aeronautical Information Circulars (AICs), available at [www.hkac.gov.hk](http://www.hkac.gov.hk) and [www.hkgslot.gov.hk](http://www.hkgslot.gov.hk), give a detailed account of these constraints/factors and the requirements to be met and/or procedures to be followed by airlines/ aircraft operators.

- 12.1 Termination of Allocation of Slots to “Marginally Compliant Chapter 3” (MCC3) Aircraft Operating to/from Hong Kong
- 12.2 Slot Compliance at Hong Kong International Airport
- 12.3 Parking Stand Booking System for General Aviation/ Business Aviation Aircraft at Hong Kong International Airport
- 12.4 Application Procedures for Local Helicopter Operations for Maintenance, Commercial and Airport Tenant Flights at Hong Kong International Airport
- 12.5 Application Procedures for Test, Training and Demonstration Flights
- 12.6 Callsign Confusion
- 12.7 New Additional Criteria for Slot Allocation at Hong Kong International Airport

### **The Slot Coordination Process**

- 13. Please see the full details in Part 3 of the IATA WSG.
- 14. Please refer to paragraphs 25 to 29 below for the process for airlines/aircraft operators to request for slots at HKIA.

### **Transparency of Slot Data**

- 15. Slot data of the current and next scheduling seasons, updated on a weekly basis, are available on HKSCO’s secured website (<https://sapps.cad.gov.hk/slot/>) which only allows access by airlines operating at HKIA. Slot data of past seasons are available on HKSCO’s public website ([www.hkgslot.gov.hk](http://www.hkgslot.gov.hk)).

### **Handling of Complaints**

- 16. Airlines/aircraft operators should understand that slots at HKIA, a Level 3 airport, may not be available at peak times due to saturation. 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 IATA 'Historics Baseline Date', i.e. 31 August for Winter scheduling season and 31 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 may be lodged according to the procedures stated in paragraphs 16.1 and 16.2 below.

- 16.1 Complaints about ad-hoc slot requests should be addressed to the Assistant Director-General of Civil Aviation (Air Traffic Management) via fax to (852) 2910 0186 or by email to: [adg-atm@cad.gov.hk](mailto:adg-atm@cad.gov.hk).
- 16.2 Complaints about seasonal slot requests should first be addressed to SAC. The complaint handling procedures are stated in 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 are appended at Annex 3.

### **Slot Compliance at HKIA**

17. To ensure the most efficient use of congested airport infrastructure, to maximise benefits to the greatest number of airport users and to avoid wastage of scarce and valuable airport capacity, all operators should comply with the slot clearances granted by HKSCO. For full details of CAD's policy on slot compliance at HKIA, please refer to the AIC entitled "Slot Compliance at Hong Kong International Airport" available at [www.hkatc.gov.hk](http://www.hkatc.gov.hk) and [www.hkgslot.gov.hk](http://www.hkgslot.gov.hk).

18. To avoid misuse of slots, airlines/aircraft operators should manage their slots portfolio in a proactive and vigilant manner.

19. Airlines/aircraft operators must not intentionally operate (or plan to operate) services at a significantly different time or use slots in a significantly different way than allocated by HKSCO - the times appearing on the passenger ticket and/or the Air Traffic Control flight plan should match the allocated slot times, bearing in mind that

slot times are based on the planned on-block (arrival) and off-block (departure) times, not the landing or take-off times.

20. Airlines/aircraft operators must not hold slots which they do not intend to operate. Airlines/aircraft operators which are proven to intentionally hold on to slots and fail to return them by the IATA WSG Slot Return Deadline may be given lower priority by HKSCO for their future slot requests.

### **Routine Slot Monitoring**

21. HKSCO conducts slot monitoring in order to ensure the most efficient use of the airport capacity and to identify intentional slot misuse.

22. HKSCO will regularly compare the most recent slot data held by HKSCO with the actual operated time of an airline/aircraft operator obtained from AAHK. HKSCO will also take into consideration information received from other sources including ATMD and other divisions within CAD, AAHK, airline company websites, handling agents, etc.

### **Seasonal Slot Monitoring**

23. The findings of routine slot monitoring will be compiled at the end of each scheduling season to form the basis for seasonal slot monitoring, the results of which will be presented at the SAC meeting. Evidence of intentional misuse of slots not accounted for by circumstances outside of the control of airlines/aircraft operators will be referenced by HKSCO in the process of determining the eligibility for historic precedence.

24. To enhance the transparency of its slot monitoring regime, HKSCO may consider publishing the results of slot usage by airlines/aircraft operators at HKIA.

### **Requests for Slots**

25. Requests for slots should be made by either the Online Coordination System (OCS as described in paragraph 34 below) or email to [hkgslot@cad.gov.hk](mailto:hkgslot@cad.gov.hk). Email applications should reach the HKSCO at least three working days before the planned operation.

26. Commencing 15 March 2016, slot requests from GA/BA operators are processed in real time on the OCS only. New users should register at [www.online-coordination.com](http://www.online-coordination.com). Any GA/BA operator who does not want to join OCS membership may engage its own agents to act on its behalf.

27. The service hours of HKSCO are from 0845-1730L (0045-0930 UTC) daily except Saturdays, Sundays and gazetted public holidays. Please visit website [www.ais.gov.hk](http://www.ais.gov.hk) for the AIC regarding the gazette public holidays in Hong Kong. As H24 service is not provided, the HKSCO can only try the best to process those genuinely urgent cases, such as on-the-day and out-of-hours slot requests, in good faith.

28. As the HKSCO scheduling software can only process correctly formatted messages, all scheduling-related messages emailed to HKSCO, such as Slot Clearance Request (SCR) for requesting new slots or revisions to existing slot clearances, must be in compliance with the message formats as per Chapter 6 of the IATA Standard Schedules Information Manual (SSIM). File attachments or special characters should not be included in these standard-format messages.

29. HKSCO is not equipped to receive SITA messages. Requests via fax or telephone will only be accepted in the event of the unforeseen failure of the email facilities. The contact details of HKSCO are as follows:

Civil Aviation Department Headquarters,  
1 Tung Fai Road,  
Hong Kong International Airport,  
Lantau, Hong Kong  
Fax: (852) 2910 6894  
Email: [hkgslot@cad.gov.hk](mailto:hkgslot@cad.gov.hk)

For the attention of the following HKSCO officers:

Senior Operations Officer (Schedule Coordination)  
Tel: (852) 2910 6898; or

Operations Officer (Schedule Coordination) 1  
Tel: (852) 2910 6896; or

Operations Officer (Schedule Coordination) 2  
Tel: (852) 2910 6897; or

Operations Officer (Schedule Coordination) 3  
Tel: (852) 2910 6263

### **On-the-day Schedule Changes**

30. Given that slots are allocated for planning purposes, in the event of planning a short-noticed or on-the-day service/operation, e.g. a positioning flight for recovering an aircraft-on-ground situation, a slot clearance must be obtained from HKSCO before commencing such an operation to/from HKIA.

31. Notwithstanding paragraph 30 above, airlines/aircraft operators are not required to notify HKSCO for on-the-day equipment changes and/or operational variations (eg, delayed flights, weather disruptions etc) to their allocated slots, unless a new slot is required.

32. Should an airline/operator no longer require a slot that it is holding, the HKSCO should be notified by SCR as soon as practicable prior to the relevant slot times in order that HKSCO may in time re-allocate the slot to another interested party.

### **Activation of the Flight Rescheduling Control System**

33. Following a prolonged disruption to airport operations such as flow control, typhoon and closure of runway, the Flight Rescheduling Control System (FRCS) will be activated by AAHK with a view to resuming normal airport operations in an orderly manner. During the activation of the FRCS, slot clearance requests for all flights to be operated during the recovery period will be handled by AAHK. Airlines/aircraft operators and/or their handling agents should be conversant with the relevant procedures stipulated in the HKIA Emergency Procedures Manual.

### **The Online Coordination System**

34. The Online Coordination System (OCS) is an internet portal through which authorized users may gain restricted access to the HKSCO scheduling server for real-time checking of slot availability and obtaining/revising slot(s). Presently the OCS is available for use by registered GA/BA users for managing their own slot

portfolios.

**Update/Revision**

35. This document, including Annexes 1, 2 and 3 thereto, is subject to regular review and will be updated or revised where necessary for the purpose of compliance with the prevailing IATA WSG, other sound international slot coordination practices and/or local guidelines endorsed by SAC.

**Types of Operations Exempted from Obtaining Slot Clearances**

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

- END -

**Scheduling Advisory Committee**  
**Slot Complaints Handling Procedures**

**Procedures**

1. If an airline/aircraft operator is not satisfied with the slots allocated for its seasonal services<sup>1</sup>, the airline/aircraft operator concerned should first approach HKSCO to try to resolve the problem.
2. HKSCO 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 HKSCO; and
  - (b) an explanation for not accepting HKSCO’s response if one has been made.
4. Upon receipt of the slot complaint and all the information referred to in paragraph 3 above, SAC should arrange, by giving its members a 2-week notice, 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 endorsed by SAC.
7. If the complaint cannot be resolved by SAC, the complainant may refer the

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<sup>1</sup> 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 Traffic Management) of the Civil Aviation Department.

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 HKSCO 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 Coordinator 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 the Coordinator/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 Slot Guidelines and any local guidelines endorsed by SAC. The Committee may ask the complainant and the Coordinator 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 the Coordinator 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 the Coordinator/ the SAC as appropriate in writing of the Committee's advice on his Slot Complaint.

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