



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

### **Introduction**

The Civil Aviation Department (CAD) has assumed the role of Schedule Coordinator (SC) for the Hong Kong International Airport (HKIA) since 6 July 2008.

2. The Hong Kong Schedule Coordination Office (HKSCO) has been set up under the Air Services Division of CAD to take up the schedule coordination function. HKSCO adopts a fair and transparent schedule coordination mechanism in line with the prevailing IATA Worldwide Slot Guidelines (IATA WSG). In addition, HKSCO is committed to maintaining and enhancing 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 are made to the relevant provisions of the IATA WSG. Airlines/aircraft operators 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 is conducted in accordance with the IATA WSG.

5. HKIA is a Level 3 airport and formal procedures are implemented to allocate available capacity and coordinate schedules. In particular, HKSCO follows the principles and guidelines in Section 5 to Section 8 of the IATA WSG in processing slot requests and conducting schedule coordination.



### **Slot Clearance at HKIA**

6. As in all Level 3 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/aircraft operators need both to carry out commercial operations.

### **Airport Capacity Constraints**

8. HKSCO takes 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 to oversee schedule coordination matters. Members include HKSCO and representatives from CAD, Airport Authority Hong Kong (AAHK) and airlines representatives nominated by the Board of Airline Representatives (BAR) of Hong Kong. The number of airline representatives has been increased from two to five since July 2008 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 allocates the airport slots within the declared capacity for each scheduling period based on the priorities as contained in the IATA WSG. Please refer Section 7 of the IATA WSG for these primary and additional criteria. In the event of conflict arising between the interests of different aircraft operation categories, priority should be given to a series of scheduled services and then ad-hoc services.

12. Other issues which are also taken into consideration by HKSCO when allocating slots for HKIA are the Aeronautical Information Circulars (AICs) on the following subjects as promulgated by Air Traffic Management Division (ATMD) of CAD:

- Callsign Confusion; and
- Application Procedures for Non-Traffic Flight Operations

– Please refer to relevant AICs for details which can be obtained from ATMD website [www.hkatc.gov.hk](http://www.hkatc.gov.hk) and also HKSCO website [www.hkgslot.gov.hk](http://www.hkgslot.gov.hk).



### **Process of Coordination**

13. Please see the full details in Section 8 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 'Historics Baseline Date', i.e. 31<sup>st</sup> August for Winter scheduling season and 31<sup>st</sup> 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 Slot Return Deadline will be given lower priority by HKSCO for their future slot requests.

18. Slot monitoring is 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 compares, 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 also takes into consideration information received from various sources including ATMD, 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, is used to determine the eligibility for granting of the historic precedence. Off-slot operations with significant and/or repetitive deviations might not be eligible for any historic precedence.

21. In future, HKSCO may publish 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.gov.hk](http://www.hkgslot.gov.hk)) has been made available where interested parties (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 continues to maintain the above website and may introduce enhanced functions to further increase the transparency if necessary.

### **Requests for Slots**

24. 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](mailto:hkgslot@cad.gov.hk) preferably 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 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](mailto:hkgslot@cad.gov.hk)



Mr. M.T. Cheuk  
Tel: (852) 2182 1218

Mr. Eric Wong  
Tel: (852) 2182 1245

Miss Birdie Yuen  
Tel: (852) 2182 1241

### On-the-day Schedule Changes

26. Slots are allocated for planning purposes. SCR must also be used to request services planned on-the-day of operation, e.g. a new positioning flight, and clearance from HKSCO must be obtained before the services are operated. Airlines/aircraft operators are not required to notify HKSCO for on-the-day equipment changes and/or operational variations (e.g. delayed flights to operate within 24 hours from the cleared slot, weather disruption but not requiring the activation of the Flight Rescheduling Control System, etc) to their allocated slots. Only significant operational variations (delay more than 24 hours from the cleared slot) will require the submission of SCR for new slot. HKSCO should be notified of all slots that are no longer required so that they can be reallocated to other operators. HKSCO should also be notified of on-the-day cancellations by SCR.

### Flight Rescheduling Control System

27. 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 which can be found in the HKIA Emergency Procedures Manual Part 16.

### Office Hours

28. HKSCO provides services from 0900-1800L (0100-1000UTC) daily except Saturdays, Sundays and gazetted public holidays (please refer to the relevant AIC posted on website [www.hkatc.gov.hk](http://www.hkatc.gov.hk) on the gazetted public holidays in Hong Kong). For slot requests outside office hours, (i.e. evenings, weekends, public holidays), please refer to the AIC on “Processing of Air Services Matters Outside Office Hours” which can be obtained from the ATMD website [www.hkatc.gov.hk](http://www.hkatc.gov.hk) and also HKSCO



website [www.hkgslot.gov.hk](http://www.hkgslot.gov.hk).

29. 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](mailto: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.

30. HKSCO will implement the Online Coordination System (OCS) in phases. The OCS phase 1 will enable General/Business Aviation operators to manage their own slot portfolios via the internet (i.e. add / edit / delete those flights cleared by OCS). A new webpage ([www.hkgslot.gov.hk/Online\\_Coordination.html](http://www.hkgslot.gov.hk/Online_Coordination.html)) has been added to HKSCO website where interested parties can obtain further details of OCS operation at HKIA.

### **Revision**

31. 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. This document is available for download at both CAD and HKSCO websites.



## **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 services<sup>1</sup>, 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 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 issued by SAC.

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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 Services) of the Civil Aviation Department.



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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