



WSG Strategic Review

Summary of the changes to the WSG

Background

To address the challenges raised by a constantly changing and growing industry, in 2016 the aviation community agreed to establish an in-depth review of the slot guidelines, including the airport community, the airlines and the slot coordinators and facilitators to ensure that all stakeholders contribute and benefit from one global process.

In 2017 the scope, timelines, project details and management were established and agreed by the International Air Transport Association, Airports Council International and Worldwide Airport Coordinators Group. The work on the Strategic Review commenced by creating a Management Group to oversee the process.

Four Task Forces were created involving more than 80 aviation professionals who nominated themselves to work together to enhance the WSG, comprising of 25 airlines, including low cost, leisure and cargo carriers, 16 airports and 17 slot coordinator organizations, representing different regions and business models from around the world. The work is focusing on the following aspects of the guidelines:

- **Access to Congested Airports Task Force** - looking at the rules for access to congested airports maintaining fair, transparent and equal access to all.
- **Airport Levels Task Force** - looking at enhancements to Level 2 and Level 3 airport principles and improved capacity declaration process
- **Historic Determination Task Force** - reviewing the current processes involved in retaining slots and recommend improvements that can better support the aviation business
- **Slot Performance Monitoring Task Force** - looking at enhancing the application of slot performance monitoring and how the planning process can better support performance on the day

Changes endorsed and published in WSG edition 9

The first changes as a result of the work of the task forces were published in the 9th edition of the WSG, which was effective 1 January 2019. The new edition includes changes in the following areas:

- **Access to congested airports**
 - Introduction of minimum standards for publication of coordination data after the initial slot allocation date helping airports and airlines plan optimisation of infrastructure, routes and schedules and improving transparency of the slot allocation.
- **Determination of historic rights**
 - Airports, airlines and coordinators also agreed to perform a trial of an earlier series return deadline to assess its feasibility and the potential benefits it can bring to the slot planning process. It's envisaged this could result in more slots being returned and reallocated earlier in the process, as well as provide more certainty to the airport operator of the seasons planned schedule.
 - The results of the trial will be assessed after its completion in summer 2020 and a recommendation will be submitted to the Slot Board under the newly created governance structure of the WSG which includes airports, airlines and coordinators.
- **Airport demand and capacity analysis**
 - Enhancements to the airport demand and capacity analysis process to strengthen the best practices in the regular assessment of capacity and demand and the consultation process between all relevant stakeholders.

Changes endorsed and published in WSG edition 10

The most relevant changes as a result of the Review were endorsed for publication in WSG edition 10, effective 1 August 2019. The new edition includes significant changes and the introduction of new policies and processes in the following areas:

- **Access to Congested Airports**
 - **Changes to the primary criteria for initial slot allocation.** These changes are aimed at ensuring a fair balance between new entrants and non-new entrants by lowering the priority for retiming of existing slots to be on par with new entrant requests. The amendments also include a clarification that 50% of the slot pool should go to new entrants and the remaining 50% should go to non-new entrants. This provides a fair balance between new entrant and non-new entrant requests for both regular allocation and for the allocation of new capacity.
 - **Changes to the New Entrant definition from 5 to 7 slots at that airport on that day.** The analysis that was carried out by airports, airlines and coordinators based on data from 20 airports worldwide demonstrated that the change from 5 to 7 slots (though other alternatives were also considered and evaluated) would result in a reasonable number of airlines being able to benefit from larger access to the slot pool allocated to new entrants.
 - **Provisions to providing coordinators with information about airlines' and airports' business priorities and development plans.** These provisions in the WSG are aimed at assisting the coordinator in obtaining a holistic view of airline's and airport's business plans, priorities and operational constraints and how the available capacity may be allocated and impact these plans.
- **Slot Performance Monitoring**

New and enhanced slot performance monitoring standards were introduced in a dedicated chapter of the WSG to reinforce this process as an essential element of airport slot coordination and set clear roles and responsibilities of airports, airlines and coordinators.

 - **Introduction of key principles of slot monitoring.** The main objective is to provide a clear description of the slot monitoring process, highlighting its goals and the stages of slot monitoring process, and underlining that it is a continuous process, requiring accurate and reliable data provided in a timely manner and in the agreed format.
 - **Introduction of pre-operation and post-operation analysis.** The objective of this section is to help coordinators and airlines identify possible slot misuse issues before operation, when they can be corrected – thereby avoiding the need for any further action in the post-operation process.
 - **Enhanced objectives and principles of the Coordination and Slot Performance Committees** to emphasize the importance and the role these committees play in the process.
- **Airport Capacity Declaration**

Improvements to the airport capacity declaration process with additional clarity of the roles of airports and coordinators and the need to review coordination parameters twice a year.

Next steps

The task forces are continuing to work on delivering the next round of proposals for changes and enhancements to the slot guidelines by November 2019 when the Strategic Review will be completed. The changes will be reflected in the renamed **Worldwide Airport Slot Guidelines (WASG)**, to be published in the first half of 2020.

ACI, IATA and WWACG also agreed to reform the governance of the WSG and introduced a new industry-wide governance structure, which was included within a Memorandum of Understanding signed on 3 June 2019 between the three organizations. This agreement signals the industry-wide commitment to working collaboratively and as equal partners to ensure that slots at capacity-constrained airports around the world are allocated in a harmonized manner to airlines and aircraft operators using consistent policies, principles and processes in an open, fair, transparent and non-discriminatory manner.

The newly established Worldwide Airport Slot Board (WASB) comprising of airports, airlines and facilitators/slot coordinators will oversee the continuous improvement process of the slot guidelines and decide on future enhancements, additions and amendments to the WASG.