



SLOTS – Latest European rules developments

Directorate General for Mobility and Transport
Directorate Air Transport
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(Legislation and Industry Guidelines overview)
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● **Background (1)**

- Importance of slots - conditional to use traffic rights
- Scarcity of the capacity - demand for the capacity continuously growing
- Danger of **capacity crunch** - result: less efficient European air transport industry
- no “golden bullet” solution available
- complex issue



● **Background (2)**

- aim of the Commission: ensure the fullest and most efficient use of existing capacity at congested Community airports while maximising consumers' benefits and promoting the competition

● **Basic principles of the slot allocation process**

European Union: Regulation (EEC) No 95/93 on common rules for the allocation of slots at Community airports (**Slot Regulation**)

Worldwide: **IATA** Worldwide Scheduling Guidelines (**WSG**) - industry guidelines, no force of law

not contradictory, go hand in hand, mutual influence

Slot Regulation

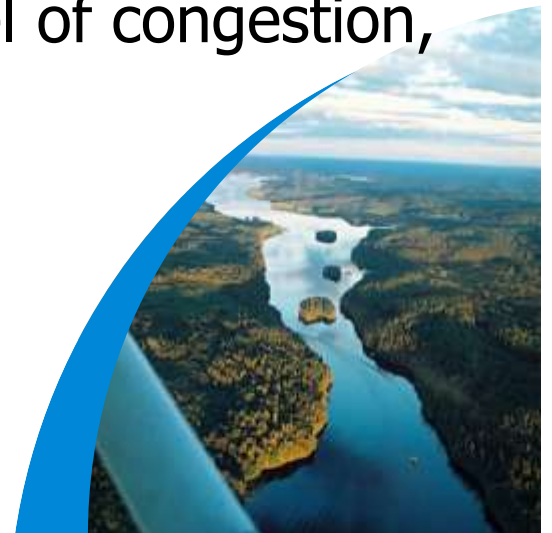
- aim: uniform, common, legally binding and directly applicable European framework
- equitable, non-discriminatory and transparent allocation of slots
- adopted in 1993, the most important amendment in 2004 (evolution of the sector meanwhile)

● Airport levels

Level 1 (non-coordinated airports): capacity adequate to meet the demand

Level 2 (schedules facilitated airports): potential for congestion but schedules facilitator seek to avoid shortfalls through cooperation and voluntary exchanges

Level 3 (coordinated airports): high level of congestion, slots are allocated by coordinator



● Coordinator / schedules facilitator

- **Independence:** functional separation from any single interested party, system of financing
- Acting in neutral, non-discriminatory and transparent manner
- one coordinator / schedules facilitator can be appointed for more than one airport

● **Coordination committee**

- Membership: air carriers, managing body of the airport, air traffic control authorities, GA
- Tasks: questions related to the capacity, local rules proposals, coordination parameters, mediation on complaints

● Slots allocation procedure (1)

- allocated on the administrative basis (first come first served)
- **grandfather rights** / historic rights
- **Use-it-or-lose-it rule**, 80/20 rule
(Babysitting of slots; Financial crisis – waiver)
- Priority: commercial air services (scheduled and programmed non-scheduled air services), if competing request within the same category -year round operation

● **Slots allocation procedure (2)**

- additional rules: industry guidelines (IATA WSG), **local rules**
- ad hoc slots – single requests on a short notice (GA/BA)
- **Slot pool:** not allocated slots, new capacity, slots handed back
- 50 % reserved for **new entrant**

● Slot exchanges and transfers

- slots may be transferred or exchanged between airlines in certain specified circumstances - express confirmation of the coordinator required
- **secondary trading** – Communication COM/2008/227 (up to MS, UK vs. Spain, transparency required)

● Enforcement

- Flight plans / slots consistency
- Withdrawal of slots from an air carrier without a valid operating licence (e.g. bankruptcy)
- 'off slot' or 'no slot' operations - loss of historical rights
- MS shall ensure sanctions (misuse of slots) – rather low-key politic

● Latest developments

Airport Capacity Observatory

- Inaugurated in November 2008
- 3 Working Groups
- WG 2 – Analytical report

● **Communication on the application of Slots Regulation COM(2008) 227 final**

- Stakeholders identified difficulties in following areas:
 - Independence of the coordinator
 - New entry
 - Transparency of schedule data
 - Local guidelines
 - Secondary trading
 - Consistency between slots and flight plans

● **Waiver: Regulation (EC) No 545/2009**

- Temporary suspension of the 80/20 rule (waiver) – adopted for summer season 2009 due to the economical and financial crisis, allowed air carriers to adjust their capacities (in SS 2010 air carriers entitled to the same series of slots as at start of SS 2009)

● **Way forward**

- **Impact assessment analysis** for the possible revision of the Slot Regulation
- Consultant should be ready to start in June 2010
- Public consultation on the Europa website
- Stakeholders' hearing will be organised



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