



Airline associations statement on benefit of global alignment of airport slot regulations

The African Airlines Association (AFRAA), Airlines for America (A4A), Airlines International Representation in Europe (AIRE), Arab Air Carriers Organization (AACO), Association of Asia-Pacific Airlines (AAPA), European Express Association, European Regions Airline Association (ERAA) International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Latin American and Caribbean Air Transport Association (ALTA) urge governments worldwide to ensure global alignment of slot rules to safeguard the consistent, fair, and transparent allocation of airport slots under the Worldwide Airport Slot Guidelines (WASG).

The WASG have provided the aviation industry with decades of stability and consistency in the application of slot management globally. The evidence of the success of global slot standards is seen in the constant growth in connectivity, route diversity and expansion to new markets, while utilisation of scarce airport capacity is increasing.

Due to the complexity of the global air transport network, and the growing number of slot coordinated airports worldwide, we call for governments to recognize the importance of the harmonization of slot rules in line with the WASG. Divergence from the WASG and fragmentation of slot regulation[rules] risks disruption to airline schedules and imperils the advances in global connectivity, efficiency, competition and choice from which the aviation industry and consumers have benefitted for many years. Moreover, attempts at unilateral changes to the slot rules can have unintended impacts on other aspects of the slot system. For example, a rule intended to promote connectivity could reduce competition; giving priority for larger aircraft to increase efficient use of capacity could harm regional connectivity; and changing the allocation method will add uncertainty and cost to the process and jeopardise the equitable access to slots in future. It is therefore crucial that governments recognise the role of the Worldwide Airport Slot Board (WASB) comprised of airports, airlines and slot coordinators, to lead and advise on policy change in the slot process, as the technically competent experts and users of the process.

We recognise there is constant need to evaluate the policies and process of slot coordination to identify improvements and fine-tune this finely balanced planning tool. Throughout its five decades of existence, the WASG has been continually updated and improved in order to reflect the pace of change in the air transport industry. In particular, in the last five years the WASG has gone through a Strategic Review, undertaken by the WASB industry groups, resulting in the adoption of several changes to its policies. Two of the most significant changes are that the new entrant definition has been enhanced and expanded to increase competition and access opportunities at congested airports, and slot performance monitoring has also been better defined to ensure optimal use of the slots allocated. Once these changes are adopted locally the benefits apply immediately. We therefore request Governments to align with the WASG dynamically, so that ongoing enhancements to the WASG are immediately reflected in national or regional rules and regulations.

We invite any governments interested in slot reform to work with the WASB, and adopt the WASG dynamically into their legislation to keep pace with industry change. Alignment with this highly successful global standard will ensure governments, their economies and citizens will continue to reap the benefits of an increasingly more interconnected, sustainable and efficient air transport network.