

ACL Guidance on the use of Local Rule 4 at London Heathrow

Airlines have requested guidance on the use of Local Rule 4 to manage short term events related to lack of resources.

Local Rule 4 does not require cancellations for events that impact for 24 hours or less. Such events were envisaged to be managed through the management of on the day flow restrictions and extended operating hours. Whilst not all events could be considered at the time of writing the Local Rule it does set out the intention and magnitude of measures to be applied.

Under the UK Slot Regulation, there is no provision that allows the coordinator to remove an allocated slot from an air carrier once it has been allocated. As such any cancellations requested under Local Rule 4 will be considered as **voluntary** under the Regulation. ACL makes no guarantee that such cancellation will be granted alleviation from the utilisation requirement and will look at each situation on a case by case basis after the event.

When making cancellations, air carriers need to satisfy themselves that such cancellations fall within Article 10(4) of the Slot Regulation if they plan to seek alleviation.

Provision of alleviation during Summer 2022 relating to reductions to capacity mandated through NOTAMS enforced by HAL

ACL has been informed that the cancellations for Summer 2022 requested under the NOTAMs issued by HAL are mandated and will be enforced by HAL through Heathrow Airport's operating procedures and Conditions of Use.

On that basis, ACL will grant alleviation for those cancellations made in order to comply with the capacity reductions mandated under those NOTAMs during the Summer 2022 season.

Decisions on alleviation are not normally done until after the event, so carriers are requested not to submit requests for alleviation until after 1 August 2022. Requests for alleviation will not be reviewed or processed by ACL until after 1 August and we will confirm each request prior to the SHL deadline for Summer 2023.

Our decision to confirm the availability of alleviation in the exceptional circumstances of Summer 2022 should not be taken as any indication or guarantee on how ACL will deal with requests for alleviation arising from any future capacity strategies implemented by HAL (including through HADACAB procedures or otherwise). The above guidance is based on the UK Slot Regulation and ACL's interpretation of Local Rule 4. It does not consider any alternative measures that the airport managing body may seek to rely upon in requesting operators to cancel flights.