



Misuse of Slots Enforcement Code

Annual Report – 2021/2022

1. Introduction

ACL is the UK's designated airport slot coordinator. We work with 72 airports across the globe to ensure efficient use of capacity and better operational performance for the benefit of airport operators, airlines and passengers.

Part of ACL's regulatory function is to monitor the use of slots to identify misuse at the UK's coordinated airports. This is an important contributor to ensuring fair and efficient access to limited airport resources. The aim of monitoring and enforcement is to encourage operators to improve their slot performance at airports through better scheduling and operations and thus to contribute to smoother, more efficient airport operations. This benefits all operators and their customers, the travelling public and freight shippers.

This report covers the period 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022 and so covers the Winter 2021 and Summer 2022 IATA seasons.

Information on how ACL monitors and investigates slots misuse, how we take enforcement action against misuse and carrier's rights can be found on the ACL website at <https://www.acl-uk.org/slot-sanctions/>

2. Monitoring activity

ACL's monitoring process is explained on our web site (<https://www.acl-uk.org/slot-sanctions/>).

Due to the significant impact on the aviation industry of the Covid-19 pandemic, for S20 onwards we have revised our monitoring focus to provide more leeway to carriers. However, ACL's monitoring activities remain important as they help ensure airports are best able to plan for what is flown and to allow fair access to resources.

Our coordination teams continue to work hard to monitor use of slots and to identify serious misuse, the number of queries increased on the previous year as traffic levels increased but remain below pre-pandemic levels.

The following charts provide some insight into the number and types of misuse we are seeing at our airports but the continuing impact of Covid-19 and capacity reductions on operations has meant that the number of queries raised on an airport by airport basis is less stable.

Figure 3 shows that the number of queries sent in the reporting period for off-slot operations has remained at last year's level. This is partly due to the greater tolerance ACL is applying to reflect changes in block times because of reduced flying in some regions. As traffic demand increases, slot monitoring of off-slot operations will also return to standard tolerance levels to reflect the impact of such issues on stakeholders. Conversely, the number of queries sent for no-slot operations has increased, which is partly reflective of the fact that more ad hoc operations (including cargo) are taking place and those carriers may be less used to operating at constrained airports. The percentage of queries raised for each category has remained similar to last year.

Figure 1: Total queries sent by ACL by UK airport – Summer seasons

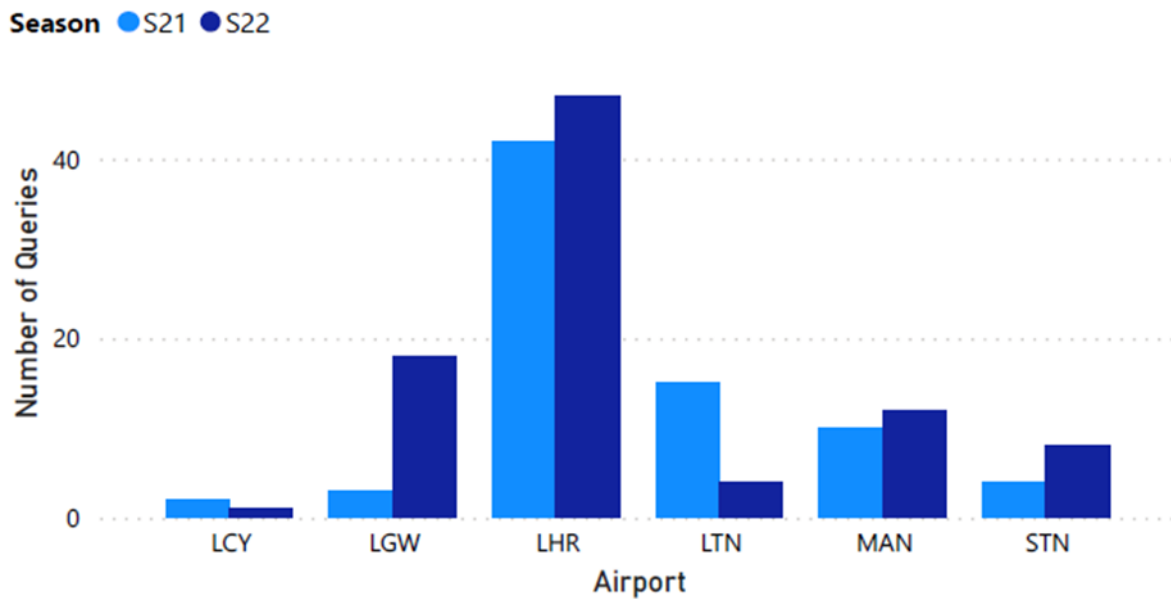
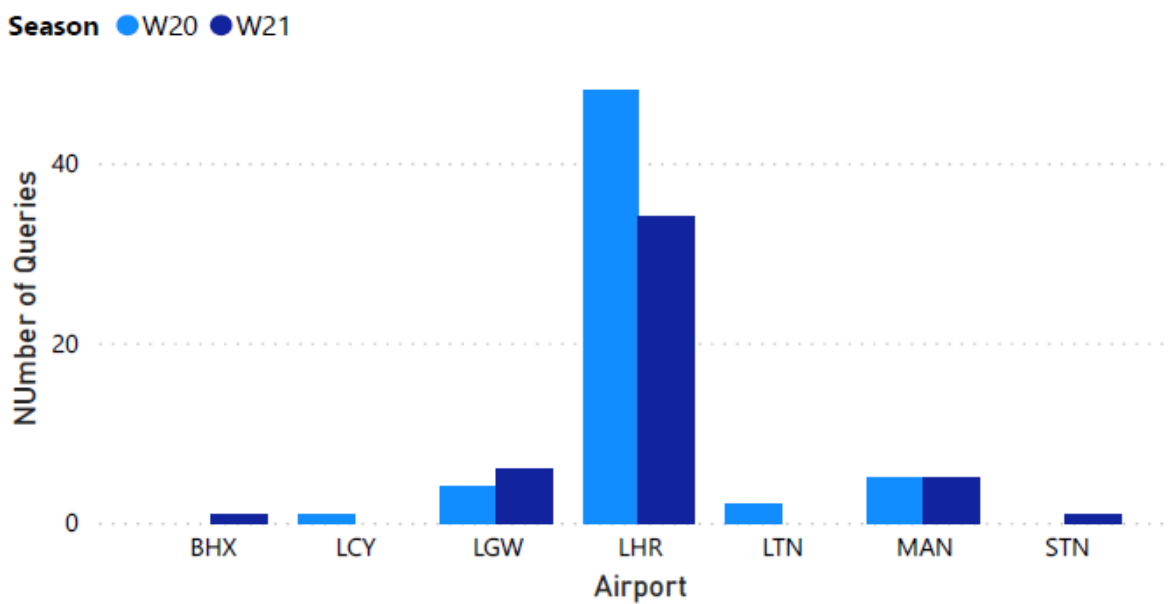


Figure 2: Total queries sent by ACL by UK airport – Winter seasons



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Figure 3: Total queries sent by ACL split by season and type of misuse.

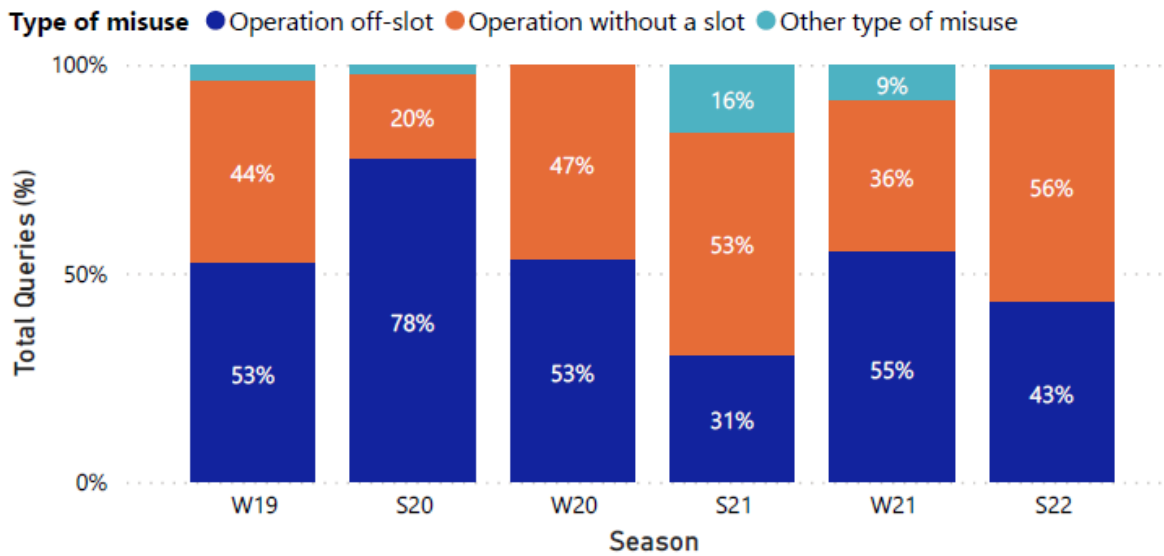


Figure 4: Total queries sent by ACL split between Seasonal and ad-hoc

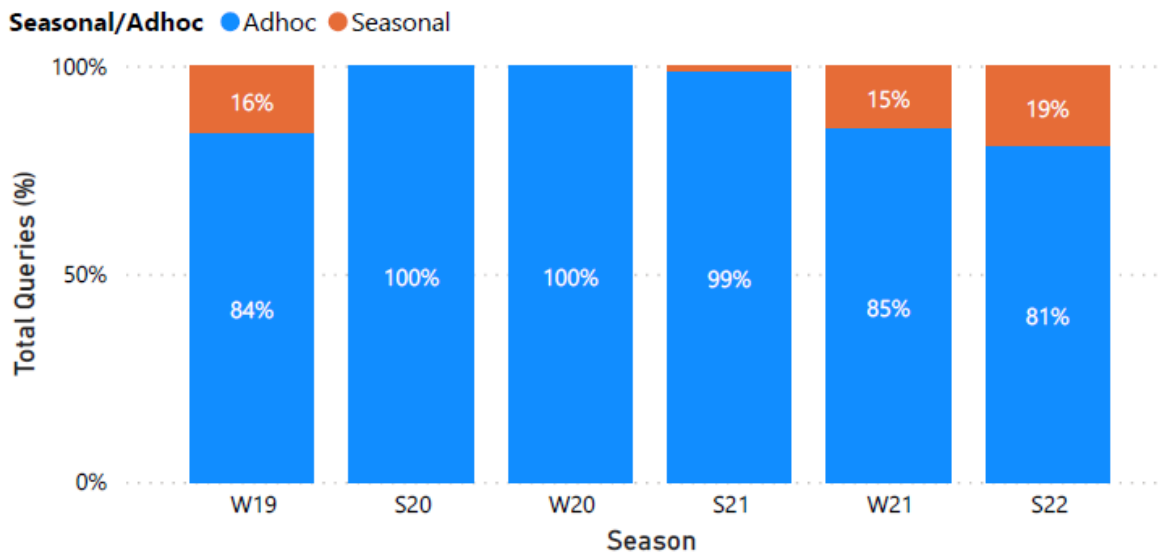
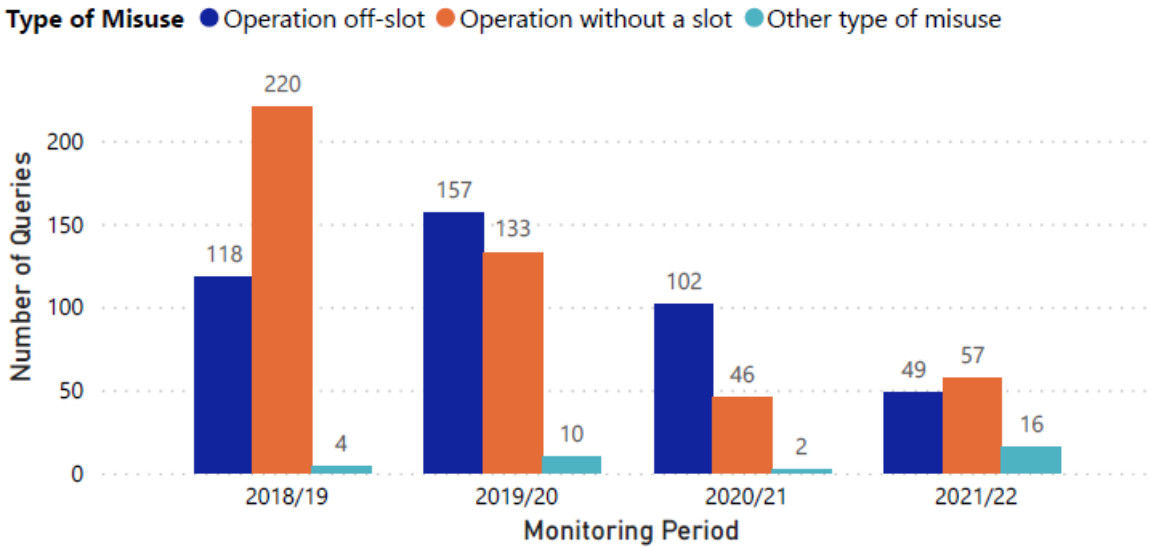


Figure 5: Number of queries sent by ACL by monitoring period and type of misuse.



3. Examples of corrective action facilitated by ACL’s monitoring activities

Where possible, we engage with carriers to encourage behavioural change to improve future slot performance without the need to formally sanction misuse.

The following case studies show some of the success we have had during the W21 and S22 seasons.

LHR

W21

- Biman Bangladesh flights identified as operating significantly off slot. Following our query, BG reviewed its slot holding to reflect changes in operating patterns related to crew rest on positioning flights
- China Southern identified as operating off slot. Following ACL query, CZ amended block times to better reflect the flight times being experienced
- British Airways flight identified as arriving consistently early. BA agreed to review block time following ACL’s query
- British Airways flight identified as arriving early due to incorrect block time. Following our query, BA amended the block time which corrected the issue

S22

- Air China identified as operating off slot. Following ACL query, Air China reviewed its process for re-clearing slots.
- China Eastern identified as operating off slot. Following ACL query, MU amended block times to better reflect the flight times being experienced
- A number of carriers were identified as not following the out of hours process for obtaining a slot. Airlines reminded of the process and discussed with airport to ensure all were aware of what is required.

4. Sanctions levied for slot misuse

For the period 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022, ACL levied the following sanctions for slots misuse:

- 12 October 2021 - £5,000 sanctioned against British Airways for one operation without a slot at London Heathrow airport during S21
- 6 January 2022 - £2,000 sanctioned against Ethiopian Airlines for one operation without a slot at London Heathrow airport during W21
- 20 June 2022 - £2,000 sanctioned against British Airways for one operation without a slot at London Heathrow airport during S22
- 22 August 2022 – £2,000 sanctioned against easyJet for two operations without a slot at London Gatwick airport during S22

5. Independent reviews

Under section 14 of the Enforcement Code, carriers can request an independent review of ACL's decision to impose a financial sanction for slots misuse. More information on this can be found on our website at <https://www.acl-uk.org/acls-monitoring-sanctions-process/>

For this reporting period, no independent reviews were brought.