

ACL Guidance – Military action and related airspace restrictions over the Middle East and Gulf Region

1. PURPOSE

The following paper provides guidance in response to airspace restrictions being imposed by Regulatory Authorities requiring air operators to amend operational flight plans resulting in increased block time requirements and possible cancellation of services.

2. REFERENCES

AIRPORTS SLOT ALLOCATION (AMENDMENT) (EU EXIT) REGULATIONS 2021 OF DECEMBER 2021 amending Council Regulation (EEC) No 95/93 on common rules for the allocation of slots at United Kingdom airports as amended including by EU Regulation 2020/459 of 30 March 2020 and by Commission Delegated Regulation 2020/1477 of 14 October 2020.

Council Regulation (EEC) No 95/93, as amended by Regulation (EC) No 793/2004

Worldwide Airport Slot Guidelines (WASG)

8.8 Justified non-utilisation of slots

9.2.3 Misuse of slots

3. SCOPE

The following guidance will apply for the period 13 April – 15 May 2024 and will be kept under review as the situation evolves.

4. REQUIREMENT TO RE-CLEAR SLOTS & SLOT MONITORING ACTIVITIES

Airlines are not required to re-clear slots. Air operators can maintain their planned slots if operating late due to increased block times caused by airspace closures and available routings.

ACL will take into consideration the political situation when performing slot monitoring activities. Air operators are required to operate to the cleared slot whenever possible and the burden of proof remains with the operator to demonstrate the performance is directly related to the political situation and the available airspace.

Operators that require to retime slots should make a request to ACL in the normal method using a SCR. ACL will review the request against available capacity. ACL will be pragmatic when reviewing infrastructure constraints but is unable to guarantee the slot will be cleared at the time required. ACL can only accept overages where it is unlikely to cause prejudice to the airport operation.

Changes will be made on a non-historic basis but will continue to count towards the utilisation target even if the change is greater than 60 mins (including outside the hour for Heathrow).

Once a slot has been retimed or a request was made and declined our normal slot monitoring activities will apply.

5. REQUEST FOR ALLEVIATION FOR CANCELLED FLIGHTS

ACL will grant alleviation to operators that are required to cancel services as a direct result of any airspace closure.

Commercial considerations would not be considered as a reason for alleviation.

Consequential impact and/or cancellations caused directly by this measure may also be considered for alleviation in order to allow operators flexibility to mitigate the impact. The burden of proof remains with the carriers to demonstrate that the consequential impact is as a direct result of the airspace closures.

Carriers should inform ACL as soon as possible of cancellations related to this situation to confirm alleviation will granted.

5. REVIEW

ACL will continue to monitor the situation closely and will adapt our position and amend this guidance as required.