

ACL Guidance – UK Government Alleviation – Middle East Conflict

Northern Summer 2026 (NS26) & Northern Winter 2026 (NW26) Scheduling Seasons

1. PURPOSE

The following paper provides guidance on the process and ACL's treatment of cancellations following the UK Government's decision to provide additional alleviation from the utilisation requirement.

2. APPLICATION

The UK Government has written to ACL advising of its policy to provide alleviation during the NS26 and NW26 scheduling seasons. A Statutory Instrument (SI) implementing a temporary change in the Regulation has been laid before Parliament. Subject to approval by Parliament, the SI is expected to come into force on 19 June 2026. In the unlikely event that the SI should not be approved by Parliament, any alleviation granted under this guidance would be reversed.

3. SCOPE

The UK Slot Regulation applies to **Level 3 – Coordinated Airports situated in the UK**. This guidance **does not** apply to airports outside the UK, where the Regulation or policy in those jurisdictions will apply.

The alleviation only applies to slots allocated for NS26 and NW26. The provision provides an opportunity to return a total of 10% of slots allocated for NS26, and return a total of 10% of slots allocated for NW26. Both slot returns are in addition to the 20% already afforded to airlines in the Regulation under the 80/20 provision.

Slots returned under this additional provision must be scheduled to operate on or after 19 June 2026 when the amendment to the Regulation comes into force. Any slots returned for flights scheduled before that date would be cancelled and be counted towards the standard 20% permitted cancellations.

The following requirements are stipulated in the SI:

- The first 5% slot return must be made by a specified date for each season to qualify for alleviation.
- The second 5% slot return can be utilised throughout the remainder of the season.
- Airlines must inform passengers of the cancellation at least 14 days before the date in which the flights were due to depart.
- The airline has not at the time of returning the slot given written notification to ACL or the airport managing body that it has permanently ceased to operate air services at that airport or made a public statement to that effect.

4. REFERENCES

UK Government announcement of its intention to amend the UK Slot Regulation to provide alleviation during NS26 and NW26. Full details of the announcement can be found [here](#).

5. PROCESS FOR NORTHERN SUMMER 2026

During NS26, the utilisation target to gain historic entitlement for Northern Summer 2027 (NS27) will remain at 80%. This will apply to all allocated slots including newly allocated.

Any cancellations under these additional alleviation provisions will be counted as operated for the purposes of the utilisation calculation. To manage the slot return and to comply with the Regulation the process to be followed is:

1. ACL has calculated and attached the permitted number of cancellations for each airline at coordinated airports based on the schedule held at HBD (31 January 2026).
2. The permitted cancellations are based on each air carrier (AOC). Slots returned must be held as per the operator code for that AOC.
3. Airlines wishing to avail themselves of the first 5% provision must return slots before 10 July 2026.
4. Cancellations should be sent by SCR and airlines must indicate in the supplementary information that they are claiming alleviation under the **“first 5% DfT provision”**. Cancellations without the appropriate supplementary information will still be processed and count towards the standard 20% permitted cancellations.
5. Airlines wishing to utilise the second 5% provision can return slots throughout the remainder of the season as and when required before 11 October 2026. Slots should be returned via SCR with supplementary information claiming alleviation under the **“second 5% DfT provision”**. Cancellations without the appropriate supplementary information will still be processed and count towards the standard 20% permitted cancellations.
6. Slots returned under the additional alleviation provisions will be returned to the slot pool for reallocation on an adhoc, non-historic basis.
7. Cancellations beyond the additional alleviation provisions (maximum of a total slot return of 5%) will still be cancelled but not counted as operated (unless otherwise alleviated under Article 10(4) of the UK Slot Regulation) and will need to be funded by the 20% permitted cancellations under 80/20.

8. Slots cancelled need to have been held in the NS25 season or transferred/exchanged before 31 January 2026 to be eligible for alleviation. Newly allocated slots in NS26 are not eligible for alleviation.
9. It remains for the airline to decide whether, and which slots, to return. Returned slots do not need to be complete series.

Historic determination will be in accordance with our policy which can be found [here](#).

6. PROCESS FOR NORTHERN WINTER 2026

During NW26, the utilisation target to gain historic entitlement for Northern Winter 2027 (NW27) will remain at 80%. This will apply to all allocated slots including newly allocated.

Any cancellations under these additional alleviation provisions will be counted as operated for the purposes of the utilisation calculation. To manage the slot return and to comply with the Regulation the process to be followed is:

1. ACL will calculate the permitted number of cancellations for each airline at coordinated airports based on the schedule at HBD (31 August 2026) and distribute on or before 04 September 2026. For planning purposes, airlines are best placed to know which slots they intend to hold at HBD to make an indicative calculation.
2. The permitted cancellations are based on each air carrier (AOC). Slots returned must be held as per the operator code for that AOC.
3. Airlines wishing to avail themselves of the first 5% provision, must return slots to ACL via an SCR between 01 September 2026 and 15 November 2026 (NW26 return window). Airlines must indicate in the supplementary information that they are claiming alleviation under the **“first 5% DfT provision”**. Cancellations without the appropriate supplementary information will still be processed and count towards the standard 20% permitted cancellations.
4. Slots returned as part of the second 5% provision can be made throughout the NW26 season but before 14 March 2027. Slot returns should be sent by SCR with supplementary information claiming alleviation under the **“second 5% DfT provision”**. Cancellations without the appropriate supplementary information will still be processed and count towards the standard 20% permitted cancellations.
5. **Airlines seeking alleviation under this provision should not return those slots until after HBD.**
6. Slots returned under the additional alleviation provisions will be returned to the slot pool for reallocation on an adhoc, non-historic basis.

7. Cancellations beyond the additional alleviation provisions will still be cancelled but not counted as operated (unless alleviation is granted under Article 10(4) of the UK Slot Regulation) and will need to be funded by the 20% permitted cancellation under 80/20.
8. Slots cancelled need to have been held in the NW26 season or transferred/exchanged before 31 August 2026 to be eligible for alleviation. Newly allocated slots in NW26 are not eligible for alleviation.
9. It remains for the airline to decide whether, and which slots, to return. Returned slots do not need to be complete series.

Only the first 5% of slots returned during the first return window and 5% of slots in the second window will be eligible to be counted as operated. Any slots returned above this allowance will be cancelled but will count as part of the 20% of cancellations authorised under the 80/20 utilisation rule. It is for the carrier to ensure they remain within this allowance.

Historic determination will be in accordance with our policy which can be found [here](#).

7. ACL TREATMENT OF CANCELLATIONS

Where alleviation is granted, such alleviation will be based on slots held at the date the results table was created following HBD. Alleviation will apply where slots are returned by the airline prior to the planned operation and comply with defined conditions where applicable.

The cancelled operation will be counted as if it operated and therefore the use it or lose target set at HBD remains valid. The number of permitted cancellations will be available to airlines for any period where alleviation has not been granted.

8. UTILISATION OF SPARE CAPACITY/REINSTATEMENT OF FLIGHTS

Slots returned under the additional alleviation provisions will be available for reallocation on an adhoc, non-historic basis.

Any airline wishing to reinstate flights will be allocated slots based on the available capacity at the time the request is made.

The baseline will be maintained to reflect the historic position prior to alleviation.

9. APPLICATION OF ALLEVIATION UNDER ARTICLE 10(4) OF THE UK SLOT REGULATION

Requests for alleviation because of circumstances covered under Article 10(4) of the UK Slot Regulation should be made to ACL in normal way. Such requests will be considered independently of this guidance.

10. REPORTING

Following the first slot return deadline and again at the end of the season, ACL will publish the number of slots that each airline returned as part of the extended alleviation.

11. REVIEW

ACL will continue to monitor the process and will amend this guidance if required.

12. PERMITTED REDUCTIONS – NS26

Airport	LTN
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Dan Air (DN)	120	6	6
easyJet Europe (EJU)	524	26	26
easyJet UK (EZY)	28,316	1,415	1,415
EL AL Israel Airlines (LY)	660	33	33
European Air Transport (QY)	1,110	55	55
FlyOne (5F)	130	6	6
FlyOne Romania (OE)	410	20	20
Israir Airlines (6H)	360	18	18
Jazeera Airways (J9)	316	15	15
Jet2.com (LS)	2,542	127	127
MNG Airlines (MNB)	60	3	3
Ryanair (FR)	10,078	503	503
SunExpress (XQ)	420	21	21
TUI Airways (TOM)	101	5	5
Wizz Air (W6)	6,180	309	309
Wizz Air Malta (W4)	7,128	356	356
Wizz Air UK (W9)	14,266	713	713
Grand Total	72,721	3,631	3,631

Airport	LBA
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Aurigny Air Services (GR)	74	3	3
easyJet Europe (EJU)	570	28	28
easyJet UK (EZY)	200	10	10
Emerald Airlines (EA)	2,640	132	132
Jet2.com (LS)	11,158	557	557
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (KL)	1,260	63	63
Ryanair (FR)	7,152	357	357
Ryanair UK (RK)	120	6	6
SunExpress (XQ)	242	12	12
TUI Airways (TOM)	236	11	11
Wizz Air (W6)	300	15	15
Wizz Air Malta (W4)	320	16	16
Grand Total	24,272	1,210	1,210

Airport	LHR
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Aegean Airlines (A3)	1,620	81	81
Aer Lingus (EI)	8,520	426	426
Aeromexico (AM)	420	21	21
Air Algerie (AH)	300	15	15
Air Astana (KC)	180	9	9
Air Canada (AC)	3,780	189	189
Air China (CA)	1,020	51	51
Air France (AF)	2,940	147	147
Air India (AI)	2,700	135	135
Air Peace (P4)	180	9	9
Air Serbia (JU)	540	27	27
Alaska Airlines (AS)	312	15	15
All Nippon Airways (NH)	420	21	21
American Airlines (AA)	8,928	446	446
Asiana Airlines (OZ)	840	42	42
Austrian Airlines (OS)	1,680	84	84
Avianca (AV)	420	21	21
Azerbaijan Airlines (J2)	180	9	9
Beijing Capital Airlines (JD)	120	6	6
Biman Bangladesh Airlines (BG)	300	15	15
British Airways (BA)	149,430	7,471	7,471
Brussels Airlines (SN)	1,200	60	60
Bulgaria Air (FB)	300	15	15
Cathay Pacific (CX)	2,220	111	111
China Airlines (CI)	300	15	15
China Eastern Airlines (MU)	420	21	21
China Southern Airlines (CZ)	960	48	48
City Airlines (VL)	2,100	105	105
Croatia Airlines (OU)	240	12	12
Delta Air Lines (DL)	4,440	222	222
Egyptair (MS)	1,296	64	64
EL AL Israel Airlines (LY)	660	33	33
Emirates (EK)	2,520	126	126
Ethiopian Airlines (ET)	420	21	21
Etihad Airways (EY)	1,680	84	84
European Air Transport (QY)	752	37	37
Eurowings (EW)	4,920	246	246
Eva Air (BR)	420	21	21
Finnair (AY)	1,680	84	84
Gulf Air (GF)	840	42	42
Hainan Airlines (HU)	180	9	9
Iberia (IB)	3,360	168	168
Icelandair (FI)	840	42	42
ITA Airways (AZ)	840	42	42
Japan Airlines (JL)	840	42	42
JetBlue Airways (B6)	1,259	62	62
Kenya Airways (KQ)	420	21	21
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (KL)	3,180	159	159
KM Malta Airlines (KM)	900	45	45
Korean Air (KE)	540	27	27
Kuwait Airways (KU)	780	39	39
Loganair (LM)	2,280	114	114
LOT Polish Airlines (LO)	1,260	63	63
Lufthansa (LH)	5,820	291	291
Malaysia Airlines (MH)	840	42	42
Middle East Airlines (ME)	840	42	42
Oman Air (WY)	660	33	33
Pakistan International Airlines (PK)	240	12	12

Airport	LHR
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Qantas (QF)	840	42	42
Qatar Airways (QR)	3,540	177	177
Riyadh Air (RX)	420	21	21
Royal Air Maroc (AT)	540	27	27
Royal Brunei Airlines (BI)	180	9	9
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	420	21	21
RwandAir (WB)	420	21	21
Saudia (SV)	1,860	93	93
Scandinavian Airlines (SK)	5,820	291	291
Shenzhen Airlines (ZH)	300	15	15
Singapore Airlines (SQ)	1,800	90	90
SriLankan Airlines (UL)	420	21	21
Swiss International Air Lines (LX)	4,980	249	249
TAM Airlines (JJ)	420	21	21
TAP Air Portugal (TP)	2,640	132	132
Thai Airways (TG)	840	42	42
Tianjin Airlines (GS)	240	12	12
Tunisair (TU)	60	3	3
Turkish Airlines (TK)	2,460	123	123
United Airlines (UA)	8,400	420	420
Uzbekistan Airways (HY)	120	6	6
Vietnam Airlines (VN)	300	15	15
Virgin Atlantic (VS)	13,440	672	672
Vueling (VY)	2,520	126	126
WestJet (WS)	420	21	21
Grand Total	290,677	14,530	14,530

Airport	MAN
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Aegean Airlines (A3)	229	11	11
Aer Lingus (EI)	1,262	63	63
Air Canada (AC)	124	6	6
Air France (AF)	1,510	75	75
Air Transat (TS)	310	15	15
Aurigny Air Services (GR)	720	36	36
Biman Bangladesh Airlines (BG)	120	6	6
British Airways (BA)	2,666	133	133
Brussels Airlines (SN)	720	36	36
Cathay Pacific (CX)	420	21	21
City Airlines (VL)	780	39	39
Corendon Airlines (XC)	298	14	14
Corendon Airlines Europe (XR)	150	7	7
easyJet Europe (EJU)	2,849	142	142
easyJet Switzerland (EZS)	110	5	5
easyJet UK (EZY)	23,714	1,185	1,185
Egyptair (MS)	512	25	25
Emerald Airlines (EA)	3,536	176	176
Emirates (EK)	1,554	77	77
Ethiopian Airlines (ET)	420	21	21
Ethihad Airways (EY)	932	46	46
Eurowings (EW)	1,184	59	59
FedEx (FX)	240	12	12
Finnair (AY)	762	38	38
Freebird Airlines Europe (MI)	20	1	1
Gulf Air (GF)	300	15	15
Hainan Airlines (HU)	420	21	21
Iberia Express (I2)	178	8	8
Icelandair (FI)	300	15	15
IndiGo (6E)	840	42	42
Jet2.com (LS)	18,078	903	903
Juneyao Airlines (HO)	232	11	11
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (KL)	2,460	123	123
Kuwait Airways (KU)	180	9	9
Loganair (LM)	4,562	228	228
Lufthansa (LH)	1,680	84	84
Luxair (LG)	224	11	11
Norwegian Air International (D8)	314	15	15
Norwegian Air Shuttle (DY)	434	21	21
Pakistan International Airlines (PK)	300	15	15
Pegasus Airlines (PC)	840	42	42
Qatar Airways (QR)	1,268	63	63
Riyadh Air (RX)	126	6	6
Royal Air Maroc (AT)	264	13	13
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	178	8	8
Ryanair (FR)	28,892	1,444	1,444
Ryanair UK (RK)	5,099	254	254
Saudia (SV)	420	21	21
Scandinavian Airlines (SK)	1,928	96	96
Singapore Airlines (SQ)	300	15	15
SunExpress (XQ)	2,087	104	104
Swiss International Air Lines (LX)	1,260	63	63
TAP Air Portugal (TP)	574	28	28
TUI Airways (TOM)	10,091	504	504
Turkish Airlines (TK)	1,614	80	80
Virgin Atlantic (VS)	1,618	80	80
Vueling (VY)	784	39	39
Grand Total	132,987	6,630	6,630

Airport	BHX
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Aer Lingus (EI)	780	39	39
Air France (AF)	1,550	77	77
Air India (AI)	360	18	18
Aurigny Air Services (GR)	420	21	21
Corendon Airlines (XC)	98	4	4
easyJet Europe (EJU)	1,088	54	54
easyJet Switzerland (EZY)	120	6	6
easyJet UK (EZY)	8,508	425	425
Emerald Airlines (EA)	4,592	229	229
Emirates (EK)	1,076	53	53
Eurowings (EW)	816	40	40
Freebird Airlines (FH)	76	3	3
Jet2.com (LS)	12,487	624	624
Jump Air (JUP)	300	15	15
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (KL)	1,980	99	99
Loganair (LM)	1,382	69	69
Lufthansa (LH)	1,981	99	99
Maersk Air Cargo (SRR)	420	21	21
Pegasus Airlines (PC)	420	21	21
Qatar Airways (QR)	436	21	21
Ryanair (FR)	14,795	739	739
Ryanair UK (RK)	360	18	18
Saudia (SV)	240	12	12
Scandinavian Airlines (SK)	390	19	19
SunExpress (XQ)	1,306	65	65
Swiss International Air Lines (LX)	524	26	26
TUI Airways (TOM)	6,672	333	333
Turkish Airlines (TK)	1,068	53	53
Vueling (VY)	408	20	20
Wizz Air Malta (W4)	1,230	61	61
Zimex Aviation (XM)	300	15	15
Grand Total	66,183	3,299	3,299

Airport	STN
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Aegean Airlines (A3)	74	3	3
Air Algerie (AH)	540	27	27
AirZeta (KJ)	120	6	6
AJet (VF)	1,612	80	80
arkia (IZ)	326	16	16
BA CityFlyer (CJ)	325	16	16
Cargolux (CV)	180	9	9
China Cargo Airlines (CK)	240	12	12
China Southern Airlines (CZ)	420	21	21
Corendon Airlines (XC)	312	15	15
easyJet Europe (EJU)	660	33	33
easyJet UK (EZY)	3,228	161	161
Emirates (EK)	1,134	56	56
European Air Transport (QY)	1,530	76	76
FedEx (FX)	1,497	74	74
FlyOne (5F)	148	7	7
Freebird Airlines (FH)	38	1	1
HiSky (H7)	240	12	12
HiSky Europe (H4)	120	6	6
Hong Kong Air Cargo (RH)	180	9	9
Jet2.com (LS)	12,239	611	611
Pegasus Airlines (PC)	3,839	191	191
Qatar Airways (QR)	682	34	34
Royal Air Maroc (AT)	210	10	10
Royal Jordanian (RJ)	326	16	16
Ryanair (FR)	80,078	4,003	4,003
Ryanair UK (RK)	10,220	511	511
Silk Way West Airlines (7L)	60	3	3
Southwind Airlines (2S)	60	3	3
SunExpress (XQ)	1,486	74	74
Transavia (HV)	282	14	14
TUI Airways (TOM)	1,430	71	71
Turkish Airlines (TK)	1,074	53	53
UPS Airlines (UPS)	600	30	30
Grand Total	125,510	6,264	6,264

Airport	LGW
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Air Arabia (G9)	840	42	42
Air Arabia Maroc (3O)	208	10	10
Air China (CA)	840	42	42
Air Europa (UX)	840	42	42
Air France (AF)	840	42	42
Air India (AI)	599	29	29
Air Mauritius (MK)	290	14	14
Air Peace (P4)	600	30	30
Air Transat (TS)	992	49	49
AirAsia X (D7)	240	12	12
airBaltic (BT)	906	45	45
Animawings (A2)	360	18	18
Atlantic Airways (RC)	58	2	2
Aurigny Air Services (GR)	2,640	132	132
Azerbaijan Airlines (J2)	420	21	21
BA CityFlyer (CJ)	10	-	-
BA Euroflyer (A0)	19,678	983	983
Beijing Capital Airlines (JD)	32	1	1
British Airways (BA)	4,348	217	217
China Eastern Airlines (MU)	1,026	51	51
China Southern Airlines (CZ)	446	22	22
Condor (DE)	1,242	62	62
Corendon Airlines (XC)	172	8	8
Corendon Airlines Europe (XR)	82	4	4
Croatia Airlines (OU)	106	5	5
easyJet Europe (EJU)	9,830	491	491
easyJet Switzerland (EZY)	1,515	75	75
easyJet UK (EZY)	69,971	3,498	3,498
Emirates (EK)	1,680	84	84
Enter Air (ENT)	361	18	18
Ethiopian Airlines (ET)	240	12	12
Eurowings (EW)	1,106	55	55
Freebird Airlines Europe (MI)	16	-	-
Gulf Air (GF)	180	9	9
Iberia Express (I2)	840	42	42
Icelandair (FI)	626	31	31
Isles of Scilly Skybus (8Y)	718	35	35
Jet2.com (LS)	4,227	211	211
JetBlue Airways (B6)	220	11	11
Kenya Airways (KQ)	244	12	12
KM Malta Airlines (KM)	480	24	24
Luxair (LG)	298	14	14
Mavi Gok Aviation (4M)	138	6	6
Norse Atlantic UK (Z0)	1,040	52	52
Norwegian Air International (D8)	3,656	182	182
Norwegian Air Shuttle (DY)	3,102	155	155
Nouvelair Tunisie (BJ)	284	14	14
Pegasus Airlines (PC)	168	8	8
Qanot Sharq Airlines (HH)	120	6	6

Airport	LGW
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Qatar Airways (QR)	726	36	36
Royal Air Maroc (AT)	606	30	30
Ryanair (FR)	4,680	234	234
Singapore Airlines (SQ)	420	21	21
Sky Express (GQ)	418	20	20
SkyAlps (BQ)	176	8	8
SunExpress (XQ)	1,456	72	72
Swiss International Air Lines (LX)	840	42	42
TAP Air Portugal (TP)	1,560	78	78
TUI Airways (BY)	2,522	126	126
TUI Airways (TOM)	7,085	354	354
Tunisair (TU)	300	15	15
Turkish Airlines (TK)	1,680	84	84
Turkmenistan Airlines (T5)	120	6	6
Uganda Airlines (UR)	240	12	12
UR Airlines (UD)	60	3	3
Uzbekistan Airways (HY)	60	3	3
Vueling (VY)	9,314	465	465
WestJet (WS)	454	22	22
Wizz Air (W6)	1,568	78	78
Wizz Air Malta (W4)	13	-	-
Wizz Air UK (W9)	4,851	242	242
XiamenAir (MF)	124	6	6
Grand Total	178,148	8,885	8,885

Airport	LCY
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Air Dolomiti (EN)	656	32	32
Aurigny Air Services (GR)	890	44	44
BA CityFlyer (CJ)	18,740	937	937
ITA Airways (AZ)	1,754	87	87
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (KL)	2,482	124	124
Loganair (LM)	480	24	24
Luxair (LG)	1,886	94	94
Swiss International Air Lines (LX)	1,566	78	78
Grand Total	28,454	1,420	1,420

Airport	BRS
Season	S26

Airline	Slots held at HBD	First 5% DfT provision	Second 5% DfT provision
Aurigny Air Services (GR)	420	21	21
easyJet Europe (EJU)	3,466	173	173
easyJet Switzerland (EZS)	40	2	2
easyJet UK (EZY)	22,366	1,118	1,118
Edelweiss Air (WK)	118	5	5
Emerald Airlines (EA)	1,740	87	87
Freebird Airlines (FH)	76	3	3
Jet2.com (LS)	6,110	305	305
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines (KL)	1,462	73	73
Loganair (LM)	780	39	39
Pegasus Airlines (PC)	180	9	9
Ryanair (FR)	9,899	494	494
SunExpress (XQ)	244	12	12
TUI Airways (TOM)	3,345	167	167
Vickers (VSB)	1,080	54	54
Grand Total	51,326	2,562	2,562