



**Dubai Airports**  
Connecting the World

# **Slot Performance Committee & Slot Adherence Policy for Airlines & Aircraft Operators at Dubai International Airport**

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## **1. Introduction**

Dubai Airport (DXB) currently handles 381,200 aircraft movements per year with a dual runway operation delivering a peak hour declared runway capacity of 62 movements per hour. With the annual unconstrained growth rate to 2020 forecast to be in the region of 6.7%, it is essential that capacity is maximised in all areas of the business. Maximising runway utilisation through continuous control of slot performance is critical to the future development and growth of DXB and its airline operators.

DXB is designated under the IATA Worldwide Slot Guidelines (WSG) as a Level 3 airport and has appointed Airport Coordination Limited (ACL) to coordinate slot allocation and adherence at the airport.

In order to ensure that all airlines and aircraft operators conform with the procedures governing the use of the DXB runways and adherence to allocated slots, it is recommended that a Slot Performance Committee be established to monitor slot performance. The Committee should also encourage improved adherence by reviewing individual operator performance and ultimately initiate punitive action against any operator who regularly and/or consistently fails to adhere to their allocated slot, operates without an approved slot, operates slots in a manner other than coordinated or fails to cancel slots. It is also recommended that a Slot Adherence Policy is published which defines the punitive action that may be applied in the event of any abuse under the areas referred to in the Policy.

### **Current Procedures**

Slot Performance information for airlines and aircraft operators is currently communicated by ACL individually with all non-performing airlines and addressed by the Aviation Business Development team during one to one account management meetings.

However, there is no formal forum where individual airline slot performance information is shared publicly with other airlines and DANS. A Slot Adherence Policy does exist for GA traffic at DXB, but apart from the standard IATA slot adherence policy, there is no sanctioning policy currently in place to govern airlines and aircraft operators. The absence of such a policy for airlines and aircraft operators means that DXB is limited in how effective it can be in taking appropriate and effective action to address poor performance.

## 2. Current Performance

The current slot performance at DXB can be seen from the table below.

S/W	Airline	Arrivals	Departure	Total
S13	OAL	54.9%	66.8%	60.8%
S13	EK	52.2%	71.9%	62.0%
S13	FZ	46.1%	67.4%	56.7%
S13	All	52.4%	69.1%	60.7%
W13	OAL	54.1%	64.1%	59.1%
W13	EK	50.5%	66.5%	58.5%
W13	FZ	40.1%	65.2%	52.6%
W13	All	50.3%	65.3%	57.8%

The overall average slot adherence performance was **60.7%** for the Summer 2013 season and **57.8%** during the following Winter 2013 season.

It should be noted that this differs from the On Time Performance (OTP) data as OTP does not capture flights which arrive early. However the slot performance data does include all flights that arrive earlier than 15 minutes prior to scheduled time of arrival (STA). Slot Performance is therefore a better measure of the airline performance and relates directly to the utilisation of assets.

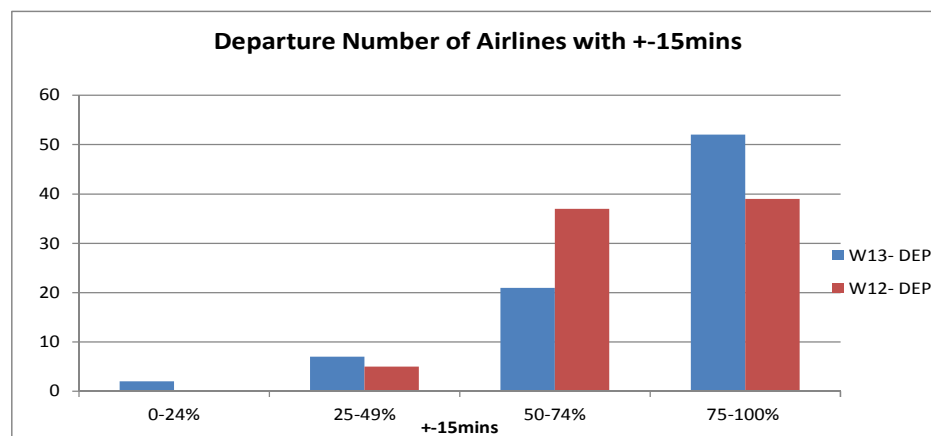
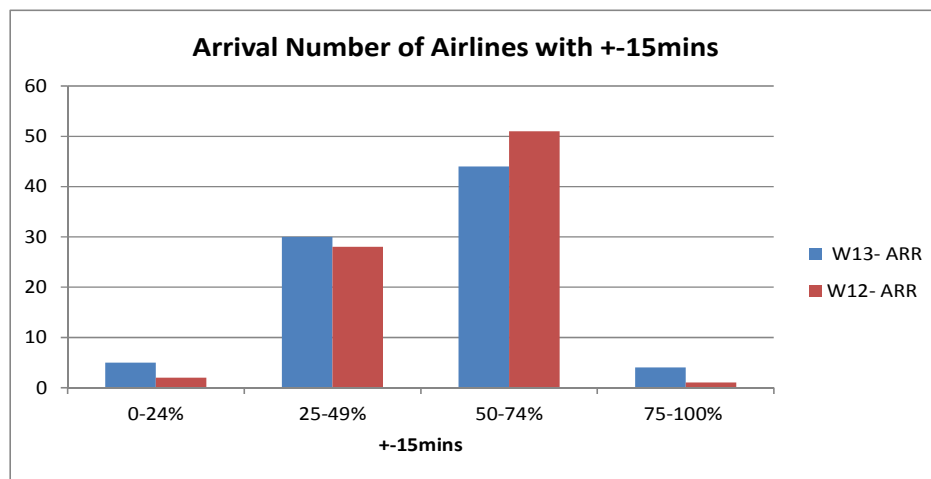
**Slot Adherence Definition:** A flight which arrives or departs within 15 minutes or less of the scheduled arrival time (STA) or scheduled departure time (STD) for that flight. It should however be noted that the allocated slot is for the specific STA/STD for the movement and does not mean a 15 minute buffer either side. The Coordinator will address the worst offenders first but also has the right to address any performance which falls within the definition above if it is deemed appropriate. However, for the avoidance of confusion, this does not mean that every flight within this period will have action taken against the operator. The Coordinator will only address the worst offenders.

**OTP Definition:** A flight that arrives no later than 15 minutes after its STA or departs no later than 15 minutes after its STD.

**STD/STA Definition:** In relation to the above, STD is defined as the time that the aircraft is scheduled to be off blocks and STA as the time that the aircraft is scheduled to be on blocks ie scheduled push back and scheduled on stand times.

### 3. Benchmarking

It is difficult to get access to directly comparable data from similar sized airports elsewhere but the information below provides a benchmarking insight in to the most recent slot performance data available from London Heathrow.



#### **4. Slot Performance Committee**

The IATA WSG recommends that the Slot Performance Committee (SPC) should be a sub-committee of the Coordination Committee at Level 3 airports. However, as DA does not currently have a Coordination Committee it is proposed that the DA SPC will be a sub-committee of the Operations Board, Chaired by the EVP Operations.

The specific role of the SPC is to enhance the performance and effective utilisation of the airport infrastructure available through slot monitoring activities, with the objective of improving punctuality and combating slot misuse. The objective of such a committee is to optimize the use of congested and constrained facilities, therefore maximizing the utilisation of allocated capacity.

#### **Function of the Committee**

The principle role and tasks of the committee are to:

- analyse the slot performance of all airlines and aircraft operators using the airports;
- identify any airline or aircraft operator that regularly and/or intentionally abuses the procedures of slot allocation;
- notify the airport managing body of such abuse
- communicate with the airlines or aircraft operators concerned and seek explanations for specific instances of apparent misuse;
- if the response to such requests are considered by the Committee to be inadequate or unreasonable, a set of disciplinary procedures may be recommended and initiated through the appropriate body;
- if required, airlines on the Committee may act as mediator between the coordinator and an airline in the event of differences of interpretation on slot performance;

#### **Membership**

DA as the airport managing body will provide the Chairman and Secretary for the Committee.

The airlines operating at DXB will provide representatives with scheduling experience from two or three airlines that best represent the traffic mix at the airport but should include a mix of based carriers, Emirates and Fly Dubai, and other airlines (OAL). The OAL representatives will be identified and provided at the discretion of the Airport Operators Committee (AOC).

The DANS Head of Customer Liaison will also attend as the air traffic control (ATC) representative and ACL will attend as the Coordinator for DA in an advisory capacity.



## **Frequency**

The SPC will be convened initially on a monthly basis but may be held a minimum of every 3 months, at the discretion of the Chair, depending on slot performance or at the request or recommendation of ACL.

ACL will be the initial point of contact with all airlines and aircraft operators with regards to slot performance. This will allow them to identify issues and resolve them quickly without the need to wait for an SPC. Issues that cannot be resolved directly by ACL or require potential punitive action will be escalated to the SPC.

Under certain circumstances it may be necessary to convene an extra-ordinary SPC to address specific decisions that are required on an urgent basis. Under these circumstances the SPC Chair will convene a meeting with a quorum consisting of a minimum of the SPC Chair, Secretary, ACL and at least one airline member. This may take the form of a telephone conference call to expedite any decisions required.

## **5. Slot Adherence Policy**

The following policy will be applied and implemented via the SPC. The principle behind the Slot Adherence Policy is not to drive any financial income for DA but rather to deliver a sustained improvement in slot performance. For the full process and decision gateways please refer to the slot adherence flowcharts attached.

ACL will be responsible for monitoring the slot performance for all airlines and aircraft operators at DXB.

Abuse may be considered to be, but not restricted to, any of the following:

- a one off operation outside the allocated slot
- regular operations outside the allocated slot
- operating an aircraft type different from that approved for the slot
- operation without approved slot
- failure to cancel approved slot
- operation of a slot in a manner other than coordinated

### **One Off/Regular Operation Outside Allocated Slot**

If ACL identifies an aircraft operator who would appear to be abusing their allocated slot then they will initially contact the airline involved seeking an explanation for the apparent abuse. If

ACL are not happy with the response, or the airline does not provide a response, then ACL will again contact the airline demanding an immediate improvement.

If no immediate improvement is forthcoming then ACL will issue a final warning letter to the concerned airline advising them that punitive action may be taken if no improvement is

made. If there is still no improvement then ACL will refer the case to the SPC for further action.

The SPC will review the case and if appropriate DA will issue a fine to the concerned airline.

If the fine is not paid and/or there is no improvement then DA may instruct ACL to remove any slots held by that airline, deny all future slot requests or deny the airline the right to access the facilities and services available at the airport.

For all written correspondence requiring a response, ACL will allow a maximum period of 5 working days to receive a response from the concerned airline or aircraft operator. If no response is received they will again contact the airline or aircraft operator who will be afforded a final 5 day period to respond. If no response is forthcoming then ACL will escalate the issue in accordance with the Slot Adherence Policy.

### **Operation Without An Approved Slot**

ACL will be responsible for monitoring all commercial flights to ensure that they operate with an approved slot. If ACL identifies any incidences of an airline operating without an approved slot they will contact the airline seeking an explanation. Normally this initial contact will be via telephone or e mail.

If it is considered that the airline deliberately operated without a slot then ACL will issue a warning letter to the airline involved and request written confirmation that this practise will not be repeated. The airline will be afforded 5 working days to respond. If the airline fails to respond to the letter and/or there are any additional movements without an approved slot, then ACL will refer the case to the SPC and if appropriate DA will issue a fine to the concerned airline.

If the fine is not paid and/or there is no improvement then DA may instruct ACL to remove any slots held by that airline, deny all future slot requests or deny the airline the right to access the facilities and services available at the airport.

For all written correspondence requiring a response, ACL will allow a maximum period of 5 working days to receive a response from the concerned airline or aircraft operator. If no response is received they will again contact the airline or aircraft operator who will be afforded a final 5 day period to respond. If no response is forthcoming then ACL will escalate the issue in accordance with the Slot Adherence Policy.

### **Operating An Aircraft Type Different From That Approved For The Slot**

ACL will be responsible for monitoring the actual type of aircraft flown and ensuring that it is in line with the type declared when the slot was allocated. When ACL identify a change that was not brought to their attention and they consider this change to be potential abuse, ACL will contact the airline seeking an explanation. Normally this initial contact will be via telephone or e mail.



If it is considered that this was an abuse of the slot then ACL will issue a warning letter to the airline involved and request written confirmation that this practise will not be repeated. The airline will be afforded 5 working days to respond. If the airline fails to respond to the letter and/or there are any additional unauthorised aircraft type changes, then ACL will refer the case to the SPC and if appropriate DA will issue a fine to the concerned airline.

If the fine is not paid and/or there is no improvement then DA may instruct ACL to any slots held by that airline, deny all future slot requests or deny the airline the right to access the facilities and services available at the airport.

For all written correspondence requiring a response, ACL will allow a maximum period of 5 working days to receive a response from the concerned airline or aircraft operator. If no response is received they will again contact the airline or aircraft operator who will be afforded a final 5 day period to respond. If no response is forthcoming then ACL will escalate the issue in accordance with the Slot Adherence Policy.

### **Failure To Cancel Slots**

ACL will be responsible for monitoring the use of slots allocated to individual airlines and to ensure that all slots allocated but not used are cancelled in a timely manner. If an airline fails to use a slot or series of slots and ACL suspect that they have deliberately failed to cancel those slots then ACL will contact the concerned airline seeking an explanation. Normally this initial contact will be via telephone or e mail.

If ACL consider that this was an abuse of the slot and/or the airline fails to respond, then ACL will issue a warning to the airline involved and request confirmation that this practise will not be repeated. If the airline fails to respond to the request and/or there are any further cases where they are suspected of deliberately failing to cancel slots, then ACL will issue a final warning letter to the airline.

If there are any further cases where they are suspected of deliberately failing to cancel slots, then ACL will refer the case to the SPC and if appropriate DA will issue a fine to the concerned airline.

If the fine is not paid and/or there is no improvement then DA may instruct ACL to remove any slots held by that airline, deny all future slot requests or deny the airline the right to access the facilities and services available at the airport.

For all written correspondence requiring a response, ACL will allow a maximum period of 5 working days to receive a response from the concerned airline or aircraft operator. If no response is received they will again contact the airline or aircraft operator who will be afforded a final 5 day period to respond. If no response is forthcoming then ACL will escalate the issue in accordance with the Slot Adherence Policy.

### **Operation Of A Slot In A Manner Other Than Coordinated**

This category will include any other operation not covered above that is considered to be potential abuse or misuse of an allocated slot. Identification of potential abuse under this category will be initiated by the Coordinator who will contact the airline involved to gather further information to assess whether additional action or escalation to the SPC is required. If the Coordinator considers

that further action is justified then they will initiate the appropriate action or escalate the case to the SPC depending upon the particulars of that specific case.

Some examples of potential abuse under this category would include, but not be limited to, allocation of a slot for a specific service but utilising the slot for an alternative service i.e. applying for a slot for a passenger movement but utilising the slot for a cargo movement etc.

#### **Potential Action By The Coordinator/SPC**

The Coordinator will be empowered to initiate the following action without the need to consult the SPC:

- a) remove historic slots based on the 80:20 rule
- b) issue warnings as appropriate including warnings of escalation to SPC
- c) removal of slots from non-operating carriers

#### **Potential Action by the SPC**

- a) implement financial fines
- b) removal of slots from poorly performing carriers
- c) removal of any or all slots

#### **Commercial Sensitivity**

An airline will have the right to request a meeting with the SPC without any other airline representative being present if that airline feels that there is commercial sensitivity relating to the circumstances which would be adversely impacted should the matter be discussed openly.

Any such request will be accommodated at the discretion of the SPC Chair.

### **6. Appeal Procedure**

Appeals against SPC decisions relating to fines imposed or slot removal can be submitted by any impacted airline. Appeals must be submitted to the SPC within 7 days of the date of the fine or slot removal being advised to the relevant airline. The appeal letter must detail the grounds for the airline's appeal and should present mitigating information not previously brought to the attention of the SPC.

All appeals will be considered by the CEO DA who will review any new mitigation that should be considered before making his decision. The decision will be confirmed in writing to the relevant airline and will be full and final with no further appeal possible.

Fines must be paid in full within 30 days of the date of the fine being issued. Any airline having their historical slots removed will be given 30 days' notice prior to the slot being removed.

## 7. Fine Structure

a) Initial Slot Abuse	up to 20,000 AED
b) Repeated Slot Abuse	up to 100,000 AED
c) Operation Without A Slot	up to 50,000 AED
d) Repeated Operation Without A Slot	up to 100,000 AED
e) Failure To Cancel A Slot	up to 10,000 AED
f) Repeated Failure To Cancel Slots	up to 50,000 AED
g) Operation Of Aircraft Type Not Allocated	up to 10,000 AED
h) Repeated Operation Of Aircraft Type Not Allocated	up to 50,000 AED

## 8. Non Payment Of Fine

As previously stated, the principle behind the Slot Adherence Policy is not to drive any financial income for DXB but rather to deliver a sustained improvement in slot performance. As such it is necessary to have a punitive element for those airlines that consistently operate out with the WSG and Local Rules.

Prior to any fine being imposed by the SPC, each airline will be afforded every opportunity to provide any information or mitigation relating to their case and would have been given the opportunity to improve their performance prior to any fine being imposed.

The non-payment of any fine imposed will therefore be considered unacceptable by DA and the ultimate sanction of the loss of historical slot rights may be imposed in such cases.

## 9. Stakeholder Responsibility

It is imperative that the relevant airport stakeholders co-operate to ensure that the slot performance improves significantly.

### Responsibility of Airport Operations Control Centre (AOCC)

The AOCC will be responsible for monitoring all flights on a daily basis and identifying any potential arrival or departure which does not have an approved slot. If the AOCC identifies such a flight then they will immediately advise ACL, the relevant Handling Agent and DANS.

### Responsibility of Handling Agent

Handling agents will not be allowed to commence check-in for any flight if it does not hold a valid slot or if that flight intends to check-in out with its scheduled slot time with the intention of operating off slot. Only the basic level of service will be provided to such operators which will relate to passenger welfare concerns.

Handling agents will also ensure that only the basic levels of handling will be provided, either over wing or under wing, to any aircraft operating in to DXB without an approved slot or attempting to operate outside of their approved slot.

It is important to reiterate that no airline or aircraft operator is permitted to operate without an approved slot and this should be reflected in all commercial arrangements that handling agents enter in to with their respective airline or aircraft operator customers.

#### **Responsibility Of ATC (DANS)**

When advised by the AOCC of an inbound arrival without an approved slot, DANS will advise the aircraft that it does not have an approved slot and should divert to its alternate. If the aircraft refuses to divert then DANS will allow the aircraft to land but will advise the aircraft that it will be parked on a remote stand upon landing and will be provided with the minimum level of handling.

When advised by the AOCC of a departure without an approved slot, DANS will ensure that no push back permission is granted to that aircraft until confirmation of permission is communicated from the AOCC.

DANS will direct any enquiries relating to this denial of push back approval to the AOCC .

#### **10. Dubai Civil Aviation Authority (DCAA) Landing Permit**

All aircraft operators wishing to land at DXB must initially obtain a DCAA Landing Permit prior to operating. A sample of the relevant document is attached at Fig. 5 for information.

It should be noted that DCAA specifically state that the permission is granted with the following condition:

**“Schedule is approved with the condition that you are required to obtain slot clearance regarding operating times from the facilitator, Airport Coordination Ltd, (ACL) appointed by Dubai Airport Company (DAC).”**

Any operator who lands at DXB without an approved slot is therefore in breach of their DCAA landing permit.

#### **11. Guidance & Local Rule**

Some general guidance and a copy of the relevant Local Rule are provided below for information purposes.

DXB was designated as an IATA Level 3 airport – Coordinated from the start of the Summer 2010 season. This move reflects increasingly scarce capacity at its peak hours of operation and the intention to implement a slot process that can promote best utilisation of the capacity in these periods.

**ADDITIONAL RULES PERTAINING TO THE ALLOCATION AND WITHDRAWAL OF ALLOCATED SLOTS AT DXB. THIS LOCAL RULE IS APPLICABLE TO ALL OPERATIONS:**

1. Airlines that repeatedly or intentionally operate services at a time significantly different from the allocated slot as part of a series of slots, or use slots in a significantly different way from that indicated at the time of allocation, shall not be entitled to historic status for that series of slots regardless of the utilisation of the slots during the season. The coordinator or SPC may decide to withdraw from that airline the series of slots in question for the remainder of the season and place them in the pool after having heard the airline concerned and after issuing a single warning.
2. If an airline is unable to achieve 80% usage of any series of slots, the coordinator or SPC may decide to withdraw from that airline the series of slots in question for the remainder of the scheduling period and place them in the pool after having heard the air carrier concerned.
3. The Coordinator or SPC may withdraw slots allocated to an airline for any services without a recognised destination and place them in the pool on 31 January for the following summer season or on 31 August for the following winter season after having heard the air carrier concerned and after issuing a single request for the airline to declare a destination.
4. The coordinator or SPC may withdraw the series of slots provisionally allocated to an airline in the process of establishing itself and place them in the pool on 31 January for the following summer season or on 31 August for the following winter season if the undertaking does not hold an operating license or equivalent on that date or if it is not stated by the competent licensing authority that it is likely that an operating license or equivalent will be issued before the relevant season commences.

**Definitions**

**Airport Slot**

An airport slot shall mean the permission given by a coordinator to use the full range of airport infrastructure necessary to operate an air service at a coordinated airport on a specific date and time for the purpose of landing or take-off. Aircraft operators must not intentionally operate, or plan to operate, at a time which is different from the allocated slot time. The allocated slot time must match the time published on the passenger ticket and/or the initial flight plan filed for that flight.

Operators must adhere to the airport slot time and obtaining early push back or landing sequencing from ATC will not override the allocated slot time.

Airport slot times are considered to be within +/- 15 from the time stated as the scheduled time of arrival/departure (STA/STD) for that flight.

**Airline**

A commercial airline shall mean an air transport undertaking holding a valid operating license or equivalent at the latest on 31 January for the following summer season or on 31 August for the following winter season.

### **Series Of Slots**

A series of slots shall mean at least five slots having been requested for the same time on the same day of the week regularly in the same season and allocated in that way or, if that is not possible, allocated at approximately the same time

### **Slot Clearances**

All operators must have a slot allocated by the slot co-ordinator before operating at a co-ordinated airport, except in the case of a declared emergency landing. Slot requests should be made in sufficient time prior to the planned operation. On the day and out of hours slot requests will be discouraged but will be permitted under certain circumstances.

Departure slots should be secured as far in advance of the operation but must be secured a minimum of 30 minutes prior to the operation if booked using the Online Co-ordination website. Requests via SITA or e mail must be made a minimum of 24 hours in advance.

Arrival slots must be secured prior to the aircraft departing from its point of origin.

### **Slot Monitoring Triggers**

Routine slot monitoring by the co-ordinator will analyse potential slot abuse by monitoring operations outside of the following trigger times:

Any evidence presented to the SPC which confirms intentional off –slot operations will be considered to be slot abuse and the Slot Adherence Policy will be applied. For example if the allocated slot time is 0555 but the airline intentionally plans to operate at 0615 then this will be considered as slot abuse.

### **Early Operations**

Operators wishing to advance the planned time of a flight must re-clear airport slots. Early arrival due to unforeseen circumstance eg unexpected tail winds would be considered an exception.