news



NEW AIRPORT SLOT RULES WILL LEAK JOBS OUT OF EUROPE

New study concludes EU impact assessment on slots was based on inaccurate analyses

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An authoritative independent study, released today, (carried out for the European Regions Airline Association and the European Business Aviation Association by internationally renowned consultants Mott MacDonald) shows that the European Commission's proposed amendments to slot allocation regulation in the EU are based on incomplete and inaccurate analyses. The study confirms that any gains from changes in slot allocation rules are likely to benefit non-EU economies, would lead to job losses throughout Europe and be detrimental to Europe's air service connectivity, its economic and social well-being; particularly within the peripheral often disadvantaged regions of Europe.

The study identifies significant weaknesses in the impact assessment undertaken for the European Commission (on which its proposals are based) which include key areas that are inadequately analysed or include miscalculated or inaccurate economic and social benefit data. For example, the EC's impact assessment acknowledges that regional air services would be adversely affected by the new slot proposals but fails to assess their impact on regional airports and economies in Europe's peripheral areas. Our study concludes that the EC's proposals would lead to job losses in peripheral areas which would exceed any job gains at Europe's core airports.

The European Commission is constrained in direct action that it can take to increase capacity at individual airports. However, by concentrating solely on amendments to the existing slot allocation regulation it has forfeited an opportunity to create additional airport capacity by facilitating the use of 'best practices' at Europe's congested airports.

The Commission is uniquely placed to stimulate innovative solutions for increasing airport capacity at an EU level, by maximising the hourly aircraft movement rates to match the current 'best in class' standards achieved by the top performing European airports. However, it has failed to do so, with the policy options put forward unlikely to bring about the necessary outcome. For example, adding slot reservation fees, aimed at increasing slot utilisation, will add cost, administrative burdens and complexity to airlines and business aircraft operators. Equally, future technological solutions from SESAR are totally ignored. Such changes would generate substantial capacity, whereas current proposals mandate additional processes that add costs and no benefit.

Mike Ambrose, Director General, ERA said: "It is not surprising that the superficial and incomplete analyses in the impact assessment undertaken for the Commission have resulted in flawed proposals. The Mott MacDonald study confirms that a more robust analysis would have demonstrated their serious adverse economic and social consequences to the EU peripheral regions."

"The importance of non-scheduled operations is barely acknowledged by the EC's proposal," said Fabio Gamba, CEO, European Business Aviation Association. "The reality is that our historical rights and investments at primary and secondary airports have been totally disregarded. In consequence, our gradual marginalisation will have a negative impact on businesses and local communities during a time of great social and economic uncertainty. Solving the capacity crunch cannot be done to the detriment of a crucial part of the economy; it must incorporate it."

ERA and EBAA are calling for the European Parliament and Council to reconsider some of the fundamental proposals made by the Commission and will expose the failings to the regional and national representatives across Europe to ensure that the negative aspects of the proposed regulatory amendments are removed.

The ERA /EBAA study is available to download in a presentation format. Please click here to access.

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