



Air Navigation Regulations 2026

April 2026

The Australian Government has remade the Air Navigation Regulations 2016 as the Air Navigation Regulations 2026. The new Regulations maintain the well-established international aviation regulatory framework, with minor administrative and operational updates to improve clarity and efficiency for international airlines.

Overview

The *Air Navigation Regulations 2026* create the regulatory framework for ensuring compliance with Australia's bilateral air services arrangements. This is achieved through a system of international airline licensing, data collection, and the approval of timetables for international air services. The Regulations also support Australia's implementation of the *Convention on International Civil Aviation* (the Chicago Convention).

Existing requirements (unchanged)

International airlines operating to Australia must continue to meet Australia's aviation regulatory safety and security requirements, including requirements to:

- hold a [Foreign Air Transport Air Operator Certificate](#) issued by the Civil Aviation Safety Authority; and
- hold an approved [Transport Security Program](#) administered by the Department of Home Affairs;
- hold an [International Airline Licence](#) issued by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts;
- submit international air services **timetables for approval** ahead of the Northern Summer and Northern Winter international airline scheduling periods;
- provide a [Compliance Declaration](#) when submitting timetable applications;
- seek **approval for variations to an approved timetable** where changes fall outside the permitted circumstances.

What is changing

The Regulations make minor updates to improve regulatory clarity, efficiency and consistency. Key changes include:

- updated timeframes and administrative processes to support efficient regulation;
- expanded and streamlined circumstances where timetable variations are **not** required;
- removal of redundant provisions while retaining appropriate compliance and enforcement mechanisms; and
- enabling, in the future, international air services timetables to be submitted electronically and certain routine administrative actions to be undertaken using computer programs.

When you do **not** need to apply for a timetable variation

Under the updated Regulations, international airlines **do not need to apply for a timetable variation** in the following circumstances:

- **Temporary service cancellations**, where the approved timetable is not permanently changed.
- **Minor timing adjustments**, where the timing of a particular service changes but the service is completed within 48 hours of the scheduled time.
- **Changes to departure or arrival times** that do not change the number of services operated on the route per week.
- **Temporary route changes or diversions**, where passengers or cargo are not uplifted or discharged during the detour.
- **Additional services** on routes without capacity limits under the relevant bilateral air services arrangement.
- **Additional services within allocated capacity**, where the airline is subject to capacity allocation and the additional services do not exceed the airline's allocation determined by the International Air Services Commission (IASC).
- **Code share services**, where:
 - the airline operates services under a code share arrangement;
 - the difference from the approved timetable results from operational changes by the operating airline; and
 - the airline is not subject to capacity allocation on the route by the IASC.

Airlines must still apply for a timetable variation if changes fall **outside** these permitted circumstances. Airlines should check the specific criteria in the [Air Navigation Regulations 2026](#) or contact the Department for advice.

Transitional arrangements

Airlines do **not** need to take any action to transition to the *Air Navigation Regulations 2026*:

- existing international airline licences and licence conditions continue;
- existing timetable approvals remain in force; and
- references to the *Air Navigation Regulations 2016* are taken to refer to the corresponding provisions in the 2026 Regulations.

Airlines and licence holders are **not required to reapply** because of the commencement of the new Regulations.

More information

For further information, including guidance on airline licensing, timetable approvals and compliance obligations, please visit the Department's website: www.infrastructure.gov.au/infrastructure-transport-vehicles/aviation/international-aviation

For further enquiries, please contact the International Policy and Regulation Team at international.aviation@infrastructure.gov.au