



Guidance to the Slot Manager—Publication of Information

September 2026

This document provides guidance to the Slot Manager for publishing information about slot utilisation, gate movements and compliance with demand management legislation relevant to Sydney Airport, comprising:

- *Sydney Airport Demand Management Act 1997* (the Act)
- Sydney Airport Demand Management Regulations 2025 (the Regulations) and
- Sydney Airport Slot Management Scheme 2025 (the Scheme).

The publication of information by the Slot Manager gives stakeholders clear visibility into slot allocation and utilisation at Sydney Airport and will drive airline accountability, improve efficiency, and enhance transparency in slot management at Sydney Airport.

Section 47 of the Regulations—Publication of information by the Slot Manager

The guidance outlines the information to be published by the Slot Manager as required by subsections 70E(2) and (3) of the Act and section 47 of the Regulations.

As per subsection 47(1) of the Regulations, the information to be published are:

- a) the utilisation of slots at Sydney Airport during the period,
- b) gate movements at Sydney Airport during the period,
- c) information in relation to off-slot movements and failures to use an allocated slot at Sydney Airport given by operators to the Slot Manager during the period,
- d) compliance by operators with the requirements of the Act during the period.

Subsection 47(2) of the Regulations requires the Slot Manager to publish specific ‘information’ four times a year, 40 business days after the end of a publication period or at any other time the Slot Manager considers appropriate. The publication periods align with the middle and end of slot scheduling seasons.¹

¹ The four publication periods are defined at subsection 47(3) of the Regulations, with the periods starting the last Sunday in March, the second Saturday in July, the last Sunday in October and the second Saturday in January respectively.

Guidance on the information to be published by the Slot Manager

The four sections below provide guidance on the specific information to be published by the Slot Manager, as specified in subsection 47(1) of the Regulations.

The report associated with the middle of the scheduling season should cover information from the start of the scheduling season to the date of the mid-season (March to July and October to January)¹. The report associated with the end of scheduling season should cover information from the start of the scheduling season to the end of the scheduling season (March to October and October to March). These time periods are referred to as 'reporting periods'. The Slot Manager may compile equivalent scheduling seasons together for a historical picture.

The report will contain information either aggregated for the 'reporting period' or broken down 'per calendar day'. Information at an aggregated level increases the understanding of airline and route performance and information per calendar day will provide a detailed historic database of flights in and out of Sydney Airport.

The Slot Manager should work with airline operators, Airservices Australia, the airport operator at Sydney Airport and the department to ensure that all data has been reviewed by relevant entities and that no commercially sensitive information is published. The Slot Manager should not publish 'commercially sensitive information'².

Key elements to include across the reporting:

- Definitions of key technical terms used in the publication (see **Appendix A** for key definitions),
- Visualisations of any comparative data or time series data, including line and bar graphs where applicable,
- All data should be in Sydney's local time zone, AEST or AEDT.

Subsection 47(1) (a)—the utilisation of slots at Sydney Airport during the period

Purpose of slot utilisation information

Subsection 47(1)(a) enables information to be published by the Slot Manager in relation to slot utilisation at Sydney Airport during the period. It is intended to increase transparency and accountability in how slots are allocated and used by operators at Sydney Airport including transparency on information given by operators in relation to off-slot movements and failures to use an allocated slot.

Information to be published regarding slot utilisation for the relevant publication period

- international and domestic rates of slot utilisation and non-utilisation, including a breakdown of domestic (non-NSW) and regional (NSW) slot utilisation for the reporting period,
- detail of utilised and unutilised slots across peak and off-peak periods by operator, operator type and route including:
 - number of slots allocated at HBD
 - number of additional slots allocated after HBD
 - number of slots returned after HBD
 - number of slots not returned and not operated
 - number of flights declared exempt
 - number of actual movements.

² The Slot Manager may face civil penalties if it uses or discloses "protected information", which includes commercially sensitive information as per section 70G of the Act. Commercially sensitive information is information the disclosure of which could reasonably be expected to substantially prejudice the commercial interests of a person.

- by operator and overall, arrival/departure, provide the allocation and subsequent utilisation rates of PRSS slots
- number of declared exemptions granted per reporting period and exemption codes by international or domestic flight
- the number of slots applicable to a Ministerial Direction, where feasible
- number of no-slot movements per calendar day and
- total number of no-slot movements by operator and operator type during the reporting period.

Subsection 47(1) (b)—gate movements at Sydney Airport during the period

Purpose of gate movement information

Outside of peak hours, Sydney Airport is not at capacity for gate movements. As per Sydney's [Master Plan 2045](#), the number of passengers going through the airport is expected to increase by 75% over the next 20 years.

The publication of gate movement will ensure accurate records are kept and support effective slot management and compliance monitoring. It will also increase public awareness of the slot management system at Sydney Airport.

Information to be published regarding number of gate movements for the relevant publication period

- For each calendar day, provide number of movements per hour with a breakdown by:
 - arrivals and departures
 - international & domestic flights
 - domestic (non-NSW) and regional (NSW) flights
- For each calendar day, provide planned movements at HBD versus actual movements with a breakdown by:
 - arrivals and departures
 - international & domestic flights
 - domestic (non-NSW) and regional (NSW) flights
 - peak and off-peak movements on week days (information not required on weekends)

Subsection 47(1) (c)—information in relation to off-slot movements and failures to use an allocated slot at Sydney Airport given by operators to the Slot Manager during the period

Purpose of off-slot and failures to use an allocated slot information

Failures to use an allocated slot and off-slot movements can cause disruption at airports and have flow-on effects to other aircraft. The increased reporting seeks to reduce rates of failures to use an allocated slot and off-slot movements through improving awareness of their impacts and supporting any administrative action by the Slot Manager or regulatory action by the department.

Information to be published regarding off-slot movements and failures to use an allocated slot

For off-slot movements provide the following information:

- number of off-slot movements, filterable by operator, route, sector type, service type, arrival/departure, peak/off-peak and broken down by:
 - number of early movements
 - number of late movements
 - percentage of total gate movements that were early or late compared to on-time movements.

- the reasons provided by operators to the Slot Manager for off-slot movements by operator, service type and route for the reporting period, (noting that reporting from Northern Summer 2026 and subsequent seasons is expected to include reasons for early movements).

For failure to use and allocated slot provide the following information:

- number of allocated slots that operators failed to use, filterable by operator, route, sector type, service type, arrival/departure, peak/off-peak and broken down by:
 - slots not returned and not operated
 - slots returned on the scheduled day of operation
 - slots returned between day 7 and day 1 before the scheduled day of operation
 - slots returned after HBD but more than 7 days before the scheduled day of operation
 - slots for which a declared exemption was granted
- the reasons provided for failing to use allocated slots broken down by return timeframes and filterable by operator, service type, operational/scheduling window and route.

Subsection 47(1) (d)—compliance by operators with the requirements of the Act during the period

Purpose of information regarding operator compliance with the Act

Transparency in administrative and regulatory action is critical for industry and public confidence. Regular publication of key information regarding actions taken against non-compliance is intended to provide stakeholders with confidence that the enforcement provisions of the Act are being enacted.

Information to be published regarding compliance with the Act

Performance against the use it or lose it test (section 10 of the Scheme) and the conditions test (section 11 of the Scheme) by operator for any relevant conditions, including:

- number of series and slots allocated
- number of series and slots retained through the use it or lose it test
- number of series and slots lost through the use it or lose it test
- number of series and slots retained through the conditions test
- number of series and slots lost through the conditions test
- number of slots in the series declared exempt

The Slot Manager should also report on actions it has taken to encourage compliance by operators with the requirements of the Act, including:

- number of compliance notices of administrative actions given by the Slot Manager under section 32 of the Scheme by civil penalty category as outlined in section 10A of the Act (see **Appendix B** for suggested format). Report on all compliance notices given, even if relating to the same slot misuse instance.
- Report on operators failing or refusing to comply with section 42 of the Regulations, which allows the Slot Manager to request access to records from airlines, including but not limited to:
 - requests for information on apparent instances of slot misuse
 - requests for remedial action
 - reasons for off-slot and 'failure-to-use an allocated slot'

This document will be updated at a minimum every two years.

Version	Release date	Approver	Reason for update
1.0	January 2026	Andrew Morgan, A/g Assistant Secretary	Initial Release
1.1	February 2026	N/A	Clarifications to 47(1) (d)
1.2	Sept 2026	Ben Meagher	Clarifications

Appendix A - Key Definitions

A **Declared exemption** is granted where the Slot Manager determines that an operator's failure to use an allocated slot was due to circumstances outside the operator's control. A slot granted a declared exemption is taken to have been operated for 'use it or lose it' calculations. A declared exemption is also an exception to a civil penalty for a *failure to use a slot*.

Failure to use an allocated slot refers to any slot that an operator held on HBD and did not operate or any slot that was requested after the HBD deadline and was not operated, regardless if the operator handed back the slots.

Gate movement means the first movement of an aircraft after its external doors have been closed in preparation for an aircraft movement that is a take-off or the last movement of an aircraft immediately before the moment when, after an aircraft movement that is a landing, the aircraft parks at a bay.

Historical Baseline Date (HBD) 31 January for the Northern Summer and 31 August for the Northern Winter slot scheduling seasons. Slot series held by operators at HBD are eligible to receive historical precedence for the following equivalent slot scheduling season.

No-slot movements refer to aircraft conducting a gate movement without an allocated slot.

Off-slot movements refer to aircraft movements that are early or late by more than 15 minutes for flights less than 3 hours or by more than 30 minutes for flights longer than 3 hours.

Note: this is different from BITRE's* method of recording off-slot movements. BITRE record domestic late gate movements as delays, and do not include early gate movements. For demand management purposes, it is important that aircraft are neither early nor late to their gate movements as this has knock-on impacts on demand management at Sydney Airport.

*The **Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (BITRE)** provides statistical time series and research on infrastructure and transport issues to inform Australian Government policy development and wider community understanding.

Peak period for slots is 7 to 11 am and 5 to 8 pm on weekdays. This may differ from actual peak hours at Sydney Airport, however it is defined under the Scheme to apply to protected regional services slot series to ensure peak time travel to regional areas is protected.

Operator type refers to either passenger flights or freight flights.

Scheduling seasons are Northern Winter or Northern Summer periods. Equivalent slot scheduling seasons refer to the preceding or following year's Northern Winter or Northern Summer periods.

A **slot** is permission for a gate movement.

A **slot group** is between 2 and 4 (inclusive) slots in a season that are held by an airline that operate on the same weekday and time e.g. Sundays at 5pm.

Slot series are 5 or more slots in a season that are held by an airline that operate on the same weekday and time e.g. Sundays at 5pm.

Use it or lose it test is a test that applies to slot series. To retain historical precedence to a slot series for the following equivalent slot scheduling season, an operator must operate at least 80% of the slots in a slot series.

Appendix B—Example table of information

Table 1: Count of administrative actions taken by the Slot Manager for each civil penalty example

	Scheme s32A: Inform and warn of the action that may be taken in response to non-compliance	Scheme s32B: Refer the non-compliance to the Compliance Committee	Scheme s32C: Refer the non-compliance to the Minister for possible action under Part 5 of the Act	Scheme s32D: Enter into a performance plan	Scheme s32E: Suspend the slot, slot group or slot series allocated to the operator	Scheme s32F: Cancel the slot, slot group or slot series allocated to the operator.
Act s15: failing to use an allocated slot	174	7	9	0	5	36
Act s16: conducting a gate movement without an allocated slot	199	15	1	0	0	0
Act s17: conducting a gate movement outside the period for which the slot is allocated	175	9	0	60	8	13
Act s18: conducting flight operations otherwise than in accordance with prescribed requirements for a slot	150	2	6	0	9	3
Act s19: applying for the allocation of slots without reasonably practicable plans to use the gate movements permitted by the slots	15	19	3	0	9	8
Act s20: failing to return certain unused slots to the Slot Manager, or to transfer the slots to another operator.	5	7	26	0	2	9