

§ 41714. Availability of slots

(a) **MAKING SLOTS AVAILABLE FOR ESSENTIAL AIR SERVICE.**—

(1) **OPERATIONAL AUTHORITY.**—If basic essential air service under subchapter II of this chapter is to be provided from an eligible point to a high density airport (other than Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport), the Secretary of Transportation shall ensure that the air carrier providing or selected to provide such service has sufficient operational authority at the high density airport to provide such service. The operational authority shall allow flights at reasonable times taking into account the needs of passengers with connecting flights.

(2) **EXEMPTIONS.**—If necessary to carry out the objectives of paragraph (1), the Secretary shall by order grant exemptions from the requirements of subparts K and S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (pertaining to slots at high density airports), to air carriers using Stage 3 aircraft or to commuter air carriers, unless such an exemption would significantly increase operational delays.

(3) **ASSURANCE OF ACCESS.**—If the Secretary finds that an exemption under paragraph (2) would significantly increase operational delays, the Secretary shall take such action as may be necessary to ensure that an air carrier providing or selected to provide basic essential air service is able to obtain access to a high density airport.

(4) **ACTION BY THE SECRETARY.**—The Secretary shall issue a final order under this subsection on or before the 60th day after receiving a request from an air carrier for operational authority under this subsection.

(b) **SLOTS FOR FOREIGN AIR TRANSPORTATION.**—

(1) **EXEMPTIONS.**—If the Secretary finds it to be in the public interest at a high density airport (other than Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport), the Secretary may grant by order exemptions from the requirements of subparts K and S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (pertaining to slots at high density airports), to enable air carriers and foreign air carriers to provide foreign air transportation using Stage 3 aircraft.

(2) **SLOT WITHDRAWALS.**—The Secretary may not withdraw a slot at Chicago O'Hare International Airport from an air carrier in order to allocate that slot to a carrier to provide foreign air transportation.

(3) **EQUIVALENT RIGHTS OF ACCESS.**—The Secretary shall not take a slot at a high density airport from an air carrier and award such slot to a foreign air carrier if the Secretary determines that air carriers are not provided equivalent rights of access to airports in the country of which such foreign air carrier is a citizen.

(4) **CONVERSIONS OF SLOTS.**—Effective May 1, 2000, slots at Chicago O'Hare International Airport allocated to an air carrier as of November 1, 1999, to provide foreign air transportation shall be made available to such carrier to provide interstate or intrastate air transportation.

(c) **SLOTS FOR NEW ENTRANTS.**—If the Secretary finds it to be in the public interest, the Secretary may by order grant exemptions from the requirements under subparts K and S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (pertaining to slots at high density airports), to enable new entrant air carriers to provide air transportation at high density airports (other than Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport).

(d) **SPECIAL RULES FOR RONALD REAGAN WASHINGTON NATIONAL AIRPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Notwithstanding sections 49104(a)(5) and 49111(e) of this title, or any provision of this section, the Secretary may, only under circumstances determined by the Secretary to be exceptional, grant by order to an air carrier currently holding or operating a slot at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport an exemption from requirements under subparts K and S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (pertaining to slots at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport), to enable that carrier to provide air transportation with Stage 3 aircraft at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport; except that such exemption shall not—

(A) result in an increase in the total number of slots per day at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport;

(B) result in an increase in the total number of slots at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport from 7:00 ante meridiem to 9:59 post meridiem;

(C) increase the number of operations at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport in any 1-hour period by more than 2 operations;

(D) result in the withdrawal or reduction of slots operated by an air carrier;

(E) result in a net increase in noise impact on surrounding communities resulting from changes in timing of operations permitted under this subsection; and

(F) continue in effect on or after the date on which the final rules issued under subsection (f) become effective.

(2) **LIMITATION ON APPLICABILITY.**—Nothing in this subsection shall adversely affect Exemption No. 5133, as from time-to-time amended and extended.

(e) **STUDY.**—

(1) **MATTERS TO BE CONSIDERED.**—The Secretary shall continue the Secretary's current examination of slot regulations and shall ensure that the examination includes consideration of—

(A) whether improvements in technology and procedures of the air traffic control system and the use of quieter aircraft make it possible to eliminate the limitations on hourly operations imposed by the high density rule contained in part 93 of title 14 of the Code of Federal Regulations or to increase the number of operations permitted under such rule;

(B) the effects of the elimination of limitations or an increase in the number of operations allowed on each of the following:

(i) congestion and delay in any part of the national aviation system;

- (ii) the impact of noise on persons living near the airport;
- (iii) competition in the air transportation system;
- (iv) the profitability of operations of airlines serving the airport; and
- (v) aviation safety;

(C) the impact of the current slot allocation process upon the ability of air carriers to provide essential air service under subchapter II of this chapter;

(D) the impact of such allocation process upon the ability of new entrant air carriers to obtain slots in time periods that enable them to provide service;

(E) the impact of such allocation process on the ability of foreign air carriers to obtain slots;

(F) the fairness of such process to air carriers and the extent to which air carriers are provided equivalent rights of access to the air transportation market in the countries of which foreign air carriers holding slots are citizens;

(G) the impact, on the ability of air carriers to provide domestic and international air service, of the withdrawal of slots from air carriers in order to provide slots for foreign air carriers; and

(H) the impact of the prohibition on slot withdrawals in subsections (b)(2) and (b)(3) of this section on the aviation relationship between the United States Government and foreign governments, including whether the prohibition in such subsections will require the withdrawal of slots from general and military aviation in order to meet the needs of air carriers and foreign air carriers providing foreign air transportation (and the impact of such withdrawal on general aviation and military aviation) and whether slots will become available to meet the needs of air carriers and foreign air carriers to provide foreign air transportation as a result of the planned relocation of Air Force Reserve units and the Air National Guard at O'Hare International Airport.

(2) REPORT.—Not later than January 31, 1995, the Secretary shall complete the current examination of slot regulations and shall transmit to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation of the Senate and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the House of Representatives a report containing the results of such examination.

(f) RULEMAKING.—The Secretary shall conduct a rulemaking proceeding based on the results of the study described in subsection (e). In the course of such proceeding, the Secretary shall issue a notice of proposed rulemaking not later than August 1, 1995, and shall issue a final rule not later than 90 days after public comments are due on the notice of proposed rulemaking.

(g) WEEKEND OPERATIONS.—The Secretary shall consider the advisability of revising section 93.227 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, so as to eliminate weekend schedules from the determination of whether the 80 percent standard of subsection (a)(1) of that section has been met.

(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section and sections 41715–41718 and 41734(h), the following definitions apply:

(1) COMMUTER AIR CARRIER.—The term “commuter air carrier” means a commuter operator as defined or applied in subpart K or S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations.

(2) HIGH DENSITY AIRPORT.—The term “high density airport” means an airport at which the Administrator limits the number of instrument flight rule takeoffs and landings of aircraft.

(3) NEW ENTRANT AIR CARRIER.—The term “new entrant air carrier” means an air carrier that does not hold a slot at the airport concerned and has never sold or given up a slot at that airport after December 16, 1985, and a limited incumbent carrier.

(4) SLOT.—The term “slot” means a reservation for an instrument flight rule takeoff or landing by an air carrier of an aircraft in air transportation.

(5) LIMITED INCUMBENT AIR CARRIER.—The term “limited incumbent air carrier” has the meaning given that term in subpart S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations; except that—

(A) “40” shall be substituted for “12” in sections 93.213(a)(5), 93.223(c)(3), and 93.225(h);

(B) for purposes of such sections, the term “slot” shall not include—

(i) “slot exemptions”;

(ii) slots operated by an air carrier under a fee-for-service arrangement for another air carrier, if the air carrier operating such slots does not sell flights in its own name, and is under common ownership with an air carrier that seeks to qualify as a limited incumbent and that sells flights in its own name; or

(iii) slots held under a sale and license-back financing arrangement with another air carrier, where the slots are under the marketing control of the other air carrier; and

(C) for Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, the Administrator shall not count, for the purposes of section 93.213(a)(5), slots currently held by an air carrier but leased out on a long-term basis by that carrier for use in foreign air transportation and renounced by the carrier for return to the Department of Transportation or the Federal Aviation Administration.

(6) REGIONAL JET.—The term “regional jet” means a passenger, turboprop-powered aircraft with a certificated maximum passenger seating capacity of less than 71.

(7) NONHUB AIRPORT.—The term “nonhub airport” means an airport that had less than .05 percent of the total annual boardings in the United States as determined under the Federal Aviation Administration's Primary Airport Enplanement Activity Summary for Calendar Year 1997.

(8) SMALL HUB AIRPORT.—The term “small hub airport” means an airport that had at least .05 percent, but less than .25 percent, of the total annual boardings in the United States as determined under the summary referred to in paragraph (7).

(9) MEDIUM HUB AIRPORT.—The term “medium hub airport” means an airport that each year has at least .25 percent, but less than 1.0 percent, of the total annual boardings in the United States as determined under the summary referred to in paragraph (7).

(i) 60-DAY APPLICATION PROCESS.—

(1) REQUEST FOR SLOT EXEMPTIONS.—Any slot exemption request filed with the Secretary under this section or section 41716 or 41717 (other than subsection (c)) shall include—

- (A) the names of the airports to be served;
- (B) the times requested; and
- (C) such additional information as the Secretary may require.

(2) ACTION ON REQUEST; FAILURE TO ACT.—Within 60 days after a slot exemption request under this section or section 41716 or 41717 (other than subsection (c)) is received by the Secretary, the Secretary shall—

- (A) approve the request if the Secretary determines that the requirements of the section under which the request is made are met;
- (B) return the request to the applicant for additional information relating to the request to provide air transportation; or
- (C) deny the request and state the reasons for its denial.

(3) 60-DAY PERIOD TOLLED FOR TIMELY REQUEST FOR MORE INFORMATION.—If the Secretary returns under paragraph (2)(B) the request for additional information during the first 20 days after the request is filed, then the 60-day period under paragraph (2) shall be tolled until the date on which the additional information is filed with the Secretary.

(4) FAILURE TO DETERMINE DEEMED APPROVAL.—If the Secretary neither approves the request under paragraph (2)(A) nor denies the request under paragraph (2)(C) within the 60-day period beginning on the date the request is received, excepting any days during which the 60-day period is tolled under paragraph (3), then the request is deemed to have been approved on the 61st day, after the request was filed with the Secretary.

(j) EXEMPTIONS MAY NOT BE TRANSFERRED.—No exemption from the requirements of subparts K and S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, granted under this section or section 41716, 41717, or 41718 may be bought, sold, leased, or otherwise transferred by the carrier to which it is granted, except through an air carrier merger or acquisition.

(k) AFFILIATED CARRIERS.—For purposes of this section and sections 41716, 41717, and 41718, an air carrier that operates under the same designator code, or has or enters into a code-share agreement, with any other air carrier shall not qualify for a new slot or slot exemption as a new entrant or limited incumbent air carrier at an airport if the total number of slots and slot exemptions held by the two carriers at the airport exceed 20 slots and slot exemptions.

(Added Pub. L. 103-305, title II, §206(a)(1), Aug. 23, 1994, 108 Stat. 1584; amended Pub. L. 104-287, §5(9), Oct. 11, 1996, 110 Stat. 3389; Pub. L. 105-66, title III, §345, Oct. 27, 1997, 111 Stat. 1449; Pub. L.

105-102, §2(24), Nov. 20, 1997, 111 Stat. 2205; Pub. L. 105-154, §2(a)(1)(C), (2), Feb. 6, 1998, 112 Stat. 3; Pub. L. 106-181, title II, §231(a), (d)(2)-(4), Apr. 5, 2000, 114 Stat. 106, 112; Pub. L. 112-95, title IV, §414(c), (d), Feb. 14, 2012, 126 Stat. 92.)

HISTORICAL AND REVISION NOTES

PUB. L. 105-102

This amends 49:41714(d)(1) to make a conforming cross-reference necessary because of the restatement of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-500, 100 Stat. 1783-373, Public Law 99-591, 100 Stat. 3341-376) by section 2(26) of this Act as chapter 491 of title 49.

Editorial Notes

AMENDMENTS

2012—Subsec. (h)(5)(A). Pub. L. 112-95, §414(c)(1), substituted “40” for “20”.

Subsec. (h)(5)(B). Pub. L. 112-95, §414(c)(2), amended subpar. (B) generally. Prior to amendment, subpar. (B) read as follows: “for purposes of such sections, the term ‘slot’ shall include ‘slot exemptions’; and”.

Subsec. (j). Pub. L. 112-95, §414(d), substituted “, except through an air carrier merger or acquisition.” for period at end.

2000—Subsec. (a)(3). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(d)(2), struck out before period at end “; except that the Secretary shall not be required to make slots available at O’Hare International Airport in Chicago, Illinois, if the number of slots available for basic essential air service (including slots specifically designated as essential air service slots and slots used for such purposes) to and from such airport is at least 132 slots”.

Subsec. (b)(2). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(d)(3), inserted “at Chicago O’Hare International Airport” after “a slot” and struck out before period at end “if the withdrawal of that slot would result in the withdrawal of slots from an air carrier at O’Hare International Airport under section 93.223 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, in excess of the total withdrawn from that air carrier as of October 31, 1993”.

Subsec. (b)(4). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(d)(4), amended heading and text of par. (4) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “This subsection and exemptions issued under this subsection shall cease to be in effect when the final rules issued under subsection (f) become effective.”

Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(a)(4), reenacted subsec. heading and struck out “(1) IN GENERAL.—” before “If the Secretary finds”, “and the circumstances to be exceptional” before “, the Secretary may by”, and par. (2) heading and text. Text of par. (2) read as follows: “Exemptions issued under this subsection shall cease to be in effect on or after the date on which the final rules issued under subsection (f) become effective.”

Subsec. (h). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(a)(5)(A), in introductory provisions, substituted “and sections 41715-41718 and 41734(h)” for “and section 41734(h)”.

Subsec. (h)(3). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(a)(5)(B), struck out “as defined in subpart S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations” before period at end.

Subsec. (h)(5) to (9). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(a)(5)(C), added pars. (5) to (9).

Subsec. (i). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(a)(1), amended heading and text of subsec. (i) generally. Prior to amendment, text read as follows: “Within 120 days after receiving an application for an exemption under subsection (a)(2) to improve air service between a nonhub airport (as defined in section 41731(a)(4)) and a high density airport subject to the exemption authority under subsection (a), the Secretary shall grant or deny the exemption. The Secretary shall notify the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation and the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the grant or denial within 14 calendar days after the determination and state the reasons for the determination.”

Subsecs. (j), (k). Pub. L. 106-181, §231(a)(2), (3), added subsecs. (j) and (k).

1998—Subsecs. (a)(1), (b)(1), (c)(1), (d). Pub. L. 105-154 substituted “Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport” for “Washington National Airport” wherever appearing in text and in subsec. (d) heading.

1997—Subsec. (d)(1). Pub. L. 105-102 substituted “sections 49104(a)(5) and 49111(e) of this title” for “sections 6005(c)(5) and 6009(e) of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Act of 1986”.

Subsec. (i). Pub. L. 105-66 added subsec. (i).

1996—Subsec. (e)(2). Pub. L. 104-287 substituted “Transportation and Infrastructure” for “Public Works and Transportation”.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE OF 2000 AMENDMENT

Amendment by Pub. L. 106-181 applicable only to fiscal years beginning after Sept. 30, 1999, see section 3 of Pub. L. 106-181, set out as a note under section 106 of this title.

RETURN OF WITHDRAWN SLOTS

Pub. L. 106-181, title II, §231(d)(5), Apr. 5, 2000, 114 Stat. 112, provided that: “The Secretary [of Transportation] shall return any slot withdrawn from an air carrier under section 41714(b) of title 49, United States Code, before the date of the enactment of this Act [Apr. 5, 2000], to that carrier on April 30, 2000.”

§ 41715. Phase-out of slot rules at certain airports

(a) **TERMINATION.**—The rules contained in subparts S and K of part 93, title 14, Code of Federal Regulations, shall not apply—

(1) after July 1, 2002, at Chicago O’Hare International Airport; and

(2) after January 1, 2007, at LaGuardia Airport or John F. Kennedy International Airport.

(b) **STATUTORY CONSTRUCTION.**—Nothing in this section and sections 41714 and 41716-41718 shall be construed—

(1) as affecting the Federal Aviation Administration’s authority for safety and the movement of air traffic; and

(2) as affecting any other authority of the Secretary to grant exemptions under section 41714.

(c) **FACTORS TO CONSIDER.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Before the award of slot exemptions under sections 41714 and 41716-41718, the Secretary of Transportation may consider, among other determining factors, whether the petitioning air carrier’s proposal provides the maximum benefit to the United States economy, including the number of United States jobs created by the air carrier, its suppliers, and related activities. The Secretary should give equal consideration to the consumer benefits associated with the award of such exemptions.

(2) **APPLICABILITY.**—Paragraph (1) does not apply in any case in which the air carrier requesting the slot exemption is proposing to use under the exemption a type of aircraft for which there is not a competing United States manufacturer.

(Added Pub. L. 106-181, title II, §231(b)(2), Apr. 5, 2000, 114 Stat. 108.)

Editorial Notes

PRIOR PROVISIONS

A prior section 41715 was renumbered section 41719 of this title.

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section applicable only to fiscal years beginning after Sept. 30, 1999, see section 3 of Pub. L. 106-181, set out as an Effective Date of 2000 Amendments note under section 106 of this title.

§ 41716. Interim slot rules at New York airports

(a) **EXEMPTIONS FOR AIR SERVICE TO SMALL AND NONHUB AIRPORTS.**—Subject to section 41714(i), the Secretary of Transportation shall grant, by order, exemptions from the requirements under subparts K and S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (pertaining to slots at high density airports) to any air carrier to provide nonstop air transportation, using an aircraft with a certificated maximum seating capacity of less than 71, between LaGuardia Airport or John F. Kennedy International Airport and a small hub airport or nonhub airport—

(1) if the air carrier was not providing such air transportation during the week of November 1, 1999;

(2) if the number of flights to be provided between such airports by the air carrier during any week will exceed the number of flights provided by the air carrier between such airports during the week of November 1, 1999; or

(3) if the air transportation to be provided under the exemption will be provided with a regional jet as replacement of turboprop air transportation that was being provided during the week of November 1, 1999.

(b) **EXEMPTIONS FOR NEW ENTRANT AND LIMITED INCUMBENT AIR CARRIERS.**—Subject to section 41714(i), the Secretary shall grant, by order, exemptions from the requirements under subparts K and S of part 93 of title 14, Code of Federal Regulations (pertaining to slots at high density airports), to any new entrant air carrier or limited incumbent air carrier to provide air transportation to or from LaGuardia Airport or John F. Kennedy International Airport if the number of slot exemptions granted under this subsection to such air carrier with respect to such airport when added to the slots and slot exemptions held by such air carrier with respect to such airport does not exceed 20; except that the Secretary may grant not to exceed 4 additional slot exemptions at LaGuardia Airport to an incumbent air carrier operating at least 20 but not more than 28 slots at such airport as of October 1, 2004, to provide air transportation between LaGuardia Airport and a small hub airport or nonhub airport.

(c) **STAGE 3 AIRCRAFT REQUIRED.**—An exemption may not be granted under this section with respect to any aircraft that is not a Stage 3 aircraft (as defined by the Secretary).

(d) **PRESERVATION OF CERTAIN EXISTING SLOT-RELATED AIR SERVICE.**—An air carrier that provides air transportation of passengers from LaGuardia Airport or John F. Kennedy International Airport to a small hub airport or