



[REDACTED]

July 15, 2020

The Honorable [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Directorate General of Mobility and Transport
European Commission
Brussels, Belgium

Re: Urgent Need for Slot Usage Waiver for Full Winter 2020-21 IATA Season

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to request that the EU slot waiver be extended for the upcoming winter 2020-21 IATA season. This action is urgently needed so that airlines can plan to reduce their schedules according to the historically low levels of consumer demand and the myriad of global travel and operating restrictions applicable to international flying.

Delta is grateful for your efforts to secure the current slot waiver that applies for the current summer 2020 season, from March 1 through October 24, 2020. The EU's swift action in approving the summer season waiver was critical to enabling the industry to take drastically needed steps to reduce schedules and restructure operations in reaction to the COVID-19 crisis. The airline industry is in the middle of the worst crisis in its history and the situation has deteriorated further since the EU and other authorities approved slot usage waivers for the current summer season.

IATA is now predicting that airlines will lose a total of \$84.3 billion in 2020 and is predicting further significant losses already for 2021. Bookings for air travel are at historic lows globally. Overall bookings are down 82% year over year for June 2020 compared to 2019. At Delta, we continue to see severe weakness in demand both domestically and internationally. Travel year over year across the Delta network is currently down 85 percent. Unfortunately, recovery from the COVID-19 crisis is expected to be long and slow, with dampening demand for travel well into 2021 and beyond. It would be financially and environmentally irresponsible to operate historic service levels to comply with slot usage requirements.

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We strongly urge the EU to move quickly to approve an extension of the slot waiver now so that airlines can plan responsibly and reduce schedules according to anticipated low levels of consumer demand and continued global restrictions. Without the certainty of a waiver now, airlines will be forced to assume huge risks to schedules and networks that have been built and optimized over decades of planning. Airlines will need to plan to operate services solely to protect their post-recovery networks. By contrast, with a waiver in place, airlines can return slots early, thereby preserving historic rights for the future, while providing transparency for airports and consumers and permitting reallocation or re-timing of slots to optimize overall operations at individual airports.

Delta greatly appreciates your consideration of this request for urgent action.

Sincerely,

