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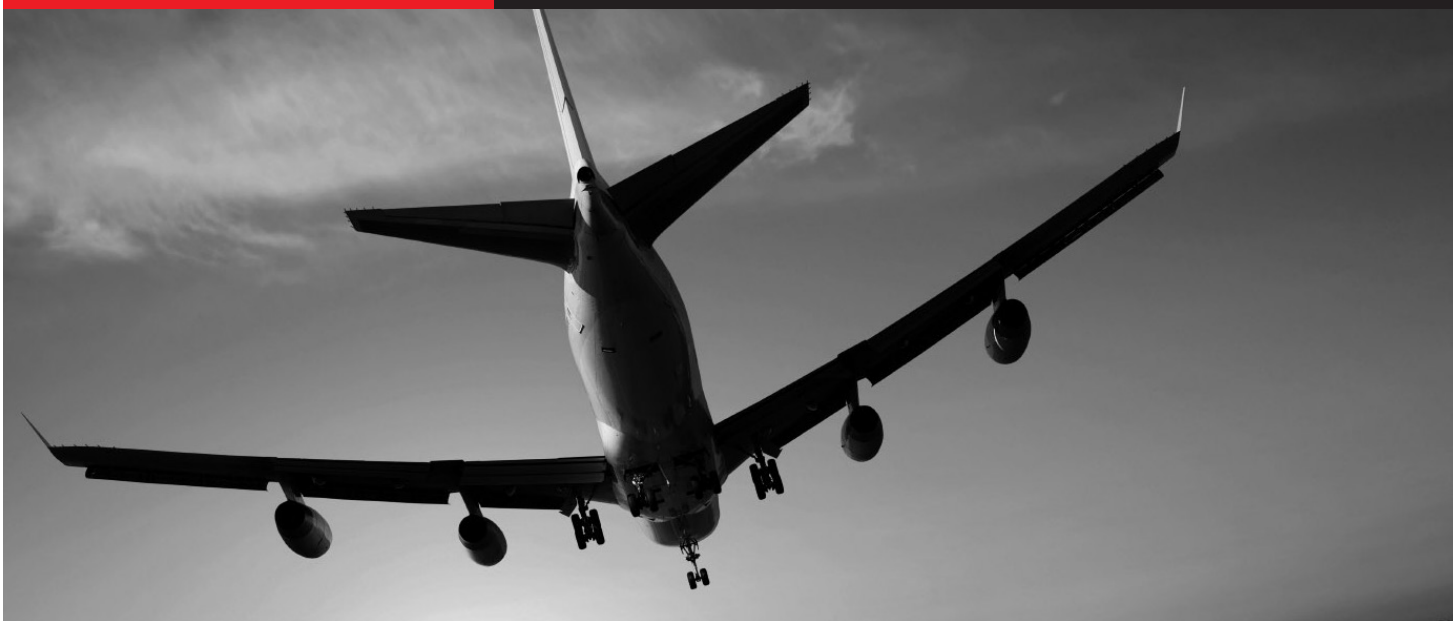

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The actuality of the International Airport of Mexico City (AICM) and the increase in Administrative Procedures for operations without a Slot.

by Rubén Mancilla

AUGUST NEWS on Mexican Aviation

COELUM: Pronunciation: 'che-l&m, is Latin for airspace or sky. The Romans began questioning the rights they had in the space above the land they owned and how high above them those rights would extend. They decided on, Ad coelum et ad inferos, meaning that their property rights would extend as high up as the heavens and all the way down to hell.

Audio message

The actuality of the International Airport of Mexico City (AICM) and the increase in Administrative Procedures for operations without a Slot.

by Rubén Mancilla

Mexico City's international airport (AICM) has had several problems affecting airlines and passengers in the past months, which do not seem to yield. The incidents are caused by diverse factors, such as the personnel in charge of air traffic control services, the lack of qualified staff in charge of the airport administration and the failure of airport infrastructure. To this, we can add the upcoming reduction of operations capacity.

" The same vices of the past continue, the AICM is like a body that is already sick, and we only count on aspirin to try and cure it.[1]"

Throughout this article, I will address the panorama of the AICM, its incoming temporary reduction of operations capacity and how this has affected the increase on the determination of Administrative Procedures by the Federal Civil Aviation Agency (AFAC).

> ***"The same vices of the past continue, the AICM is like a body that is already sick, and we only count on aspirin to try and cure it."***

AICM temporary reduction of capacity and the current problem

- From the start of the W22-23 Season, the airport's operating capacity will be reduced by 15% of its actual capacity, from 61 to 52 operations per hour.
- Initially, the temporary reduction will extend throughout the W22-23 and S23 Seasons.
- The above was determined in conjunction with the International Air Transport Association (IATA) assessment and its guidelines "Managing temporary reductions of airport capacity".
- The evaluation of compliance with the assigned slots will continue per Article 96 of the Airport Law Rule within 15 minutes of tolerance of the assigned schedule.
- Cancellations and modifications will continue to be in effect within the 48 hours before the effective operation.
- Any modification of the assigned time slots may continue after the start of the following season, considering the availability based on the temporary reduction.
- Any new cargo operation can only be performed from 23:00 to 05:59 (+1) local time; only historical slots will be maintained with the corresponding reduction.
- The reduction process will only apply from 07h00 to 22:59 local time and any other time with more than 52 operations per hour.
- Only carriers with more than eight schedules per day for the HBD (Historic Baseline Date) assessment as of August 31 will be subject to the referenced reduction.[2]

1.-...said Rodrigo Perez Alonso, former director of CANAERO - La 4T destinará 46 mdp para reparar daños estructurales en terminales del AICM. In Milenio retrieved from https://www.milenio.com/negocios/aicm-destinaran-46-mdp-atender-danos-estructurales-terminales
2.- Retrieved from AICM PROCESO DE REDUCCIÓN TEMPORAL DE CAPACIDAD AICM, DE FECHA 25 DE AGOSTO DE 2022.

Of the 30,270 flights delayed in the first quarter of 2022, the Federal Civil Aviation Agency (AFAC) stated that only 7,045 could be attributable to the airlines, 23.7%; while the remaining 23,225 cannot be charged to them, 76.7%.[3]

Increase of Administrative Procedures for operations without Slot

According to Article 93 of the Airports Law, the airport administrator is in charge of determining the landing and take-off schedules, per the bases established by the airport administrator. Since September 2017, the AICM, as an overcrowded airport, has its general bases for allocating landing and take-off times at airports in saturation conditions.

On these Bases, it's established that no carrier or operator should perform operations without a slot assigned; in case the airport administrator detects that there has been an operation without a space allocated should notify the Airport Commander immediately so he can give sight to the AFAC to proceed with the corresponding administrative procedure and the imposition of a penalty that can range from $19,244 to MXN 96,220.

"From the start of the W22-23 Season, the airport's operating capacity will be reduced by 15% of its actual capacity, from 61 to 52 operations per hour."

As I mentioned above, these bases have been in force since 2017. The problem is that the airport administrator and the AFAC did not comply with them as they should. They do not initiate so many administrative procedures for operations without slots because there were not so many flashlights around the AICM. Also, it did not face as many problems as today. Still, with the reduction of operations capacity, the airport administrator is much stricter and aware and looks for any pretext to give sight to the AFAC and proceed with the imposition of sanctions.

In my opinion, another cause of the awareness of the airport administrator and the AFAC for the determination of administrative procedures for operations without a slot assigned until now is also due to the idea that the problems are intentionally generated to sabotage the AICM, to justify the transfer of operations to the Felipe Angeles International Airport (AIFA) and, thus, give life and sustenance to the president whim. Since the beginning of operations at the AIFA, administrative procedures initiated by the AFAC for operations carried out at the AICM and the attempt to impose fines for operations without an assigned slot started to occur commonly and continuously.

We can conclude that all the airlines that seek to operate to the AICM must know and comply with the AICM Bases for the allocation of landing and take-off times at airports in saturation conditions since all the airlines that are operating are facing these determinations of the authority for the beginning of Administrative Procedures for operations without slot, when previously it was unnoticed by the administration. They did not exercise this faculty as often as now.

Derived from the operation reduction capacity and all the problems surrounding the AICM, all carriers and operators are under the spotlight. They should comply with the Bases to avoid the imposition of sanctions and the loss of historical slots assigned.

3.- Retrieved from Aeropuerto Internacional de la Ciudad de México AICM | Agencia Federal de Aviación Civil | Gobierno | gob.mx (www.gob.mx)

What a US Recession would mean for Mexican Aviation.

After the travel restrictions that were implemented as security measures due to the pandemic that COVID-19 caused were lifted, Mexico quickly became an accessible destination, particularly for US travelers. This being a result of no travel restrictions, purchase power for average US travelers being higher than in other countries, and the abundance of weekly flights and destinations available to these travelers. Mexico heavily relies on American tourism considering seven out of ten international passengers come or go to the United States of America. Mexico has been able to recover from the pandemic and surpass the pre-pandemic traffic levels. The recession would not only impact Mexican tourism and the aviation industry, but it would also impact the rise in fuel prices, the downgrade of Mexico to Category 2 status, as well as the global uncertainties. *www.simpleflying.com/us-recession-mexican-aviation-impact/* August 03, 2022.

Aviation in Mexico.

It is no doubt that the Mexico City International Airport (AICM) is one of the most important airports internationally. Not only is Mexico an international hub for tourism but because of its geographical location it allows for an efficient interconnection of people and merchandise from north to south in America and coast to coast in Asia and Europe. However, it's important to note how the infrastructure of the AICM has progressively weakened leading to its saturation, organizational inefficiency, and the lack of training for its employees. The issues with the infrastructure along with the delays, cancellations, and lack of cleanliness has become a reoccurring situation that is now a part of the AICM's narrative. *www.elsoldemexico.com.mx/analisis/aviacion-en-mexico-8698796.html* August 06, 2022.

AICM Director rules out risks at Terminal 2; it will not be closed during maintenance.

Carlos Velázquez Tiscareño, Director of the Mexico City International Airport (AICM), ruled out that Terminal 2 will have to be closed for maintenance work as a result of sinkholes in the building. Velázquez Tiscareño affirmed, upon leaving a meeting with President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, that several routes are being analyzed to ensure the airport's safe operation for users. "It is a fact that the Terminal will not be closed during the works, they will be working on repairs, but operations will continue as normal." A few weeks ago, López Obrador assured that the Terminal 2 building of the AICM was at risk of collapse due to land subsidence, so it was necessary to shore it up and perhaps another administration would evaluate whether this building should be rebuilt. *www.forbes.com.mx/director-del-aicm-descarta-riesgos-en-terminal-2-no-se-cerrara-durante-mantenimiento/* August 08, 2022.

The Senate has requested an urgent meeting with the airline industry.

The Mexican Senate has called for a meeting with airport and airline authorities to review the infrastructure of aerial facilities, particularly, the Mexico City International Airport. A legislator from the state of Yucatán, Jorge Carlos Ramírez Marín, has called for this meeting to analyze the challenges that the aviation industry has faced in the past few years, including the Category downgrade emitted by the United States Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). He and the other legislators working on this meeting have called for the collaboration of multiple national and international airlines that operate in Mexico. The end goal of this meeting is to guarantee operational safety and efficiency, legal certainty, and to promote a high quality of services provided. *www.a21.com.mx/organismos/2022/08/17/solicitan-en-senado-reunion-urgente-con-industria-aerea* August 17, 2022.

AICM announces temporary 15% reduction in its hourly operations starting in October.

On August 24, 2022, the Mexico City International Airport (AICM) announced an agreement to temporarily decrease from 61 to 52 operations per hour in the saturated schedules of the airport which range from 07:00 to 22:59 hrs, starting at the beginning of the winter season on October 31; with the purpose of improving the quality of services to the public. Such resolution will be submitted to the consideration of the Federal Civil Aviation Agency (AFAC) for its final approval, and once accepted, it will be communicated to the operators and organizations of this airport. *www.enelaire.mx/anuncia-aicm-reduccion-temporal-del-15-en-sus-operaciones-por-hora-a-partir-de-octubre/* August 25, 2022.

In this month extract was prepared by P. Arandia, R. Nerio, J. García, A. Pérez, P. Nava, J. Mora.

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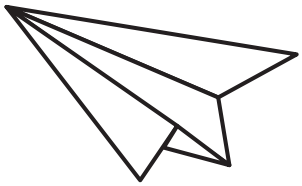

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