

AMENDMENT TO THE REGULATIONS OF THE AIRPORTS LAW

JUNE 2026

Executive Summary:

The amendment to the Regulations to the Airports Law introduces significant changes to how airport saturation is assessed in Mexico, replacing the previous approach with a three-tier saturation classification. Under the new framework, the grounds for declaring saturation are expanded, slot coordination is extended to airports at potential risk of saturation, the requirements for retaining grandfather rights are revised, and oversight powers over slot usage are reinforced. These provisions will require industry participants to revisit their operational and compliance practices in light of a broader regulatory landscape backed by stronger supervisory mechanisms

On June 9, 2026, the “**Decree amending and supplementing various provisions of the Regulations of the Airports Law**” (the “**Decree**”) was published in the Official Gazette of the Federation (“**DOF**”), which entered into force on June 10, 2026. The amendment introduces a new regulatory framework for the management of aerodrome capacity and the allocation of takeoff and landing time slots in Mexico.

KEY ASPECTS

New aerodrome classification system and expansion of the *slots* regime.

The most significant modification is the creation of a three-tier aerodrome classification system: Level 1 (sufficient capacity), Level 2 (potential risk of saturation), and Level 3 (declared saturation). Under the previous regime, **formal slot coordination only applied to aerodromes declared to be in saturation conditions. With the Decree, this regime also extends to Level 2 aerodromes**, which means that airlines operating at aerodromes with a potential risk of saturation will be subject to the general bases for slot allocation.

Historic priority: simplified standard.

The Decree simplifies the requirements for retaining historic priority (grandfather rights). Previously, airlines were required to demonstrate a minimum occupancy of 80% and have no attributable delays within 15 minutes of the assigned schedule. Now, it suffices to demonstrate **80% occupancy** in the equivalent prior season, eliminating the punctuality component. However, it must be confirmed that the new bases for slot allocation, which publication in the DOF is expected by early September at the latest, do not reintroduce this requirement or an equivalent one.

Additionally, the series of time slots is redefined: previously, a minimum of 5 time slots in any season was required; now **5 slots in the winter season and 7 in the summer season are required**, with periods subject to international standards. The **50%** reserve pool rule for newcoming operators remains unchanged.

Discipline in the use of slots.

While the previous regime already provided for the loss of grandfather rights for improper use, the Decree introduces **graduation** criteria based on the severity, intentionality, and recurrence of the conduct. Furthermore, the schedule coordinator (who previously only supervised and assessed) now has the express authority to *determine* cases of improper use. This provides greater certainty to the sanctioning process, but also increases the risk for airlines that hold slots without operating or that operate at times significantly different from those assigned.

Expanded saturation criteria.

The grounds for declaring an aerodrome saturated are expanded. On the aerodrome side, the causes now include not only lack of runways or positions, but also taxiways, ramps, visual aids, and other related infrastructure. Regarding the terminal buildings, access roads, parking facilities, and passenger service areas are incorporated as additional factors. In practice, this may ease saturation declarations, which could accelerate the transition of aerodromes to levels with greater slot regulation.

The flight priority order remains unchanged (first, scheduled passenger flights; second, charter passenger flights; third, scheduled cargo flights; and, finally, charter cargo flights). Likewise, the three-business-day deadline for resolving slot requests is maintained.

NEXT STEPS AND DEADLINES

Milestone	Estimated date
Entry into force	June 10, 2026
Saturation classification of aerodromes (Levels 1–3) by AFAC	September 2026 (60 business days)
New <i>slot</i> allocation bases	September 2026 (60 business days)

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Airlines must (i) verify the effective utilization of their *slots* to protect their historic priority under the new simplified standard, (ii) anticipate that currently non-saturated aerodromes may become subject to the slot allocation bases under the new saturation criteria, and (iii) strengthen their internal scheduling controls to avoid conduct that, under the new graduated criteria, may be classified as improper use and result in loss of historic priority.

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