



# Gold Coast (Coolangatta) Airport Curfew Factsheet

# FACTSHEET

## Purpose of the Curfew

The Gold Coast Airport curfew was introduced to minimise the impact of aircraft noise on nearby residents. A limited number of aircraft operations are allowed during the curfew, including emergency service aircraft and any aircraft that needs to land for safety reasons. On average, there are 15 aircraft movements per month during the curfew.

## Legislation

Gold Coast Airport has a curfew in place under the [Air Navigation \(Coolangatta Airport Curfew\) Regulations 1999](#) (the Regulations), which apply to aircraft operations between 11.00pm and 6.00am (Queensland local time). The Regulations allow the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities (the Department) to permit operators to take-off or land during the curfew (a curfew dispensation).

## What can operate?

The curfew does not prevent all aircraft movements overnight. It limits aircraft movements between 11.00pm and 6.00am by restricting the types of aircraft that can operate, the number of flights permitted and the types of operation allowed. This enables a number of vital aviation services to be provided while limiting the effect of aircraft noise during curfew hours.

## Business Jets

Business jet aircraft are permitted to operate during the curfew. Business jets provide connections which may not be available on regular public transport flights due to curfew restrictions or traffic constraints.

These business jets must have a maximum take-off weight of less than 34,000kgs and meet the latest international noise standards. On average, there are four business jet movements per month during the curfew.

## Emergency Aircraft and Aircraft Emergencies

The vital, often life-saving operations carried out by emergency services aircraft, including police, aeromedical and search and rescue aircraft are too important to cease operations during the curfew.

In addition, any aircraft involved in an emergency is allowed to land, and take-off to resume the flight interrupted by that emergency, during the curfew. This includes flights where the aircraft has insufficient fuel to divert to another airport, or where the aircraft needs to land to ensure the safety of the aircraft, or anyone on board.



Photo courtesy of the Royal Flying Doctor Service

## Small Propeller-Driven Aircraft

Small (less than 34,000kgs) propeller-driven aircraft that meet international noise standards are also allowed to operate during the curfew. These aircraft provide regional transport connections and overnight freight.



Example of a small propeller-driven aircraft

## Freight Aircraft

The Regulations allow four flights per week at Gold Coast Airport by freight aircraft with noise levels specified in the Regulations. To date no operators use these flights, due to the proximity of Brisbane Airport, which has no curfew and well established distribution facilities.

## Take-offs After Curfew

If an aircraft is granted permission to commence its taxi (meaning the aircraft can move under its own power) to the runway by Air Traffic Control before 11.00pm, it is permitted to depart after 11.00pm.

## Quota Movements

To cater for periods of peak travel demand, such as special events and school holidays an annual quota of 24 domestic passenger jet movements are allowed:

- For take-offs or landings from 11.00pm-11.45pm Eastern Standard Time (EST) when Daylight Savings Time is not in force in NSW.
- When Daylight Savings Time is in force in NSW, Eastern Daylight Time (EDT), landings only (no take offs are allowed) from 11.00pm-11.30pm EDT.
- If an airline uses a curfew quota movement, they are required to advise the Department within seven days, and provide reasons for using the quota movement.

## Diversions

An aircraft may ask to be diverted to land at Gold Coast airport as an Alternate Airport to address an urgent medical situation, or to avoid severe weather.

- If an aircraft on an international service is diverted to Gold Coast Airport it may land, and take-off to resume its flight, during the curfew period.
- If a domestic aircraft is diverted to Gold Coast Airport during the curfew it may land, but may not take-off during the curfew period.

## Curfew Dispensations

In exceptional circumstances aircraft operators may apply for approval to take-off or land during curfew hours (a curfew dispensation). The following primary criteria are used to determine whether 'exceptional circumstances' apply. The circumstances are:

- Immediate in origin (e.g. they occurred in the preparations for take-off, or during take-off or flight from another airport arriving into Gold Coast Airport).
- Could not be reasonably foreseen (e.g. baggage offload, unforeseen mechanical failures, re-screening for security reasons).
- Not reasonably met by alternative arrangements (e.g. flight cancellations, other aircraft, transport to other airports etc.).

Where all three of these criteria are satisfied, the following matters may be taken into account to determine whether a dispensation should be granted:

- By what margin the movement falls into the curfew period (i.e. whether shortly after 11.00pm or shortly before 6.00am)
- Whether the cause of the delay is within the control of the operator
- The noise level of the aircraft
- The number of passengers involved, and
- The severity of the likely hardship.

It is the responsibility of the aircraft operator to demonstrate that every reasonable effort has been made to avoid the need to seek permission to take-off or land during the curfew.

## For More Information

This fact sheet is intended as a guide. For detailed criteria on operations, please review the [Regulations](#) and the [Dispensation Guidelines](#) on the Department website: [Curfew Information for Coolangatta Airport](#)