



BRIEFINGS//

Jetstar Pilot Federation

TO // All Jetstar Pilots

FROM // JPF Committee

DATE // 6 December 2024

RE // Open Time System

There has been considerable discussion among Jetstar pilots about the potential implementation of an 'Open Time' system.

Under Clause 50 of the current EA, the Company and unions are required to commence consultation on creating an Open Time system no later than 12 months before the Agreement expires. This clause outlines the possibility for pilots to transfer work and associated entitlements voluntarily, with the goal of increasing flexibility without incurring additional costs for the company.

50. OPEN TIME SYSTEM

*50.1 No later than 12 months prior to the nominal expiry date of this Agreement, the Company and the unions covered by this Agreement will commence consultation on the **creation of an open time system allowing for the transfer of work and associated entitlements between pilots.***

50.2 If the Company and the unions covered by this Agreement agree on an open time system, the system will override any other provisions of this Agreement to the extent of any inconsistency.

*50.3 Participation in any such open time system will be voluntary. By participating in such a system, **by putting work into, or picking up work from Open Time,** the pilot agrees to the provisions of the scheme and authorises any transfer of entitlements that occurs under the scheme.*

*50.4 The guiding principle of any such Open Time System, **will be to increase flexibility for pilots while not incurring an additional cost to the Company.***

The AFAP recently met with Jetstar management to explore ways an Open Time system could be implemented in line with the EA. We discuss this further below.

What is an Open Time System?

Internally, the AFAP JPF Committee has been debating the merits of Open Time, drawing on insights from other operators like Qantas, Virgin, and the legacy of Ansett's Open Time system.

While "Open Time" is often discussed, it is apparent from our discussions with members and our recent discussions with Jetstar management that there is no common understanding of what pilots actually expect from such a system, or indeed whether pilots actually want such a system.

Is it truly an Open Time system, or are pilots seeking something closer to a **Trip Swap system?**

Open Time vs. Trip Swap

An 'Open Time System' traditionally allows airlines to advertise and assign un-crewed flying to pilots who volunteer for the work and preserve reserve coverage for short notice removals. The key features of these systems, like those at Ansett and Qantas, include a lower EFA threshold, a flat hourly rate, and no hard credit or WDO payments, otherwise known as a "power by the hour" pay structure.

This remuneration structure was driven by Oldmeadow Consulting (a key architect of the Qantas grounding) and was designed to have pilots incentivised to fly each hour to achieve high pay, reducing sick leave removals. Basically, the aim is to roster 15-20 hours EFA each roster but with this pay at risk. If pilots lose flying they are driven to volunteer for extra work through Open Time. For the business, it does not care which pilot flies each duty as the cost of each flight hour is flat with same hourly rate and no premium payments for working days off.

Using Qantas SH pilots as example, they do not have the capacity to recover lost hours through WDO payments as pilots are paid per hour worked on days off the same as any other duty. Further Qantas pilots might extend to complete a duty for no extra pay (as flight hours remain same) but spill the next days duty due to rest requirements. This pilot then loses the next days flying and will likely look to chase Open Time.

This structure is currently under review by the AFAP Qantas Pilot Council in short haul negotiations with further updates available [here](#). As pilots will be aware an AIPA endorsed deal was voted down, with the AFAP QPC recommending a no vote. A key factor in the no vote was the lack of protection of credited hours that the AFAP QPC and SH pilots are seeking to address the above EFA income being at risk.

Virgin attempted to implement a similar remuneration structure in 2021 to facilitate a functional Open Time system but this was never implemented due to the failure to deliver on a Crew Management System (CMS) which included an automated Open time facility. Interestingly Virgin has been on a hybrid pay structure under EA2021 which retained WDO payments. They have run a trip swap system which has allowed only minimal duty swaps as Virgin do not allow pilots to swap a duty for a DDO as the other pilot would receive a WDO payment. Virgin also operate an Open Time system for allocation of WDOs which has had limited success in improving transparency of allocation of extra work.

Trip Swap?

In our discussions with Jetstar pilots they tend to express a preference for a **Trip Swap/Trip Dump system**, which would allow for the swapping or offloading of unwanted duties, without compromising base salary or the current WDO system.

The Open Time clause in the EA outlined above, seems to blend Open Time and Trip Swap/dump as one concept.

AFAP Position

The reality is that Jetstar is unlikely to agree to lower the EFA threshold unless pilots trade base salary and WDO payments. The AFAP does not agree that lowering the base salary in line with an **EFA threshold reduction and removing WDO payments** is a requirement for Open Time or Trip Swap systems.

Instead, we believe the focus should be on creating a **workable system under the current remuneration structure**, which would maintain current Over Time thresholds and the WDO system, while also providing greater flexibility for pilots.

The AFAP are supportive of pursuing an Open Time/ Trip Swap system that delivers benefits for our members within the current remuneration structure being:

- Lifestyle benefits = flexibility post roster publish to trade unwanted duties to achieve extra days off
- Remuneration benefits = extra WDOs/EFA payments for pilots who desire more work

However, it is important to bear in mind that the motivation of Jetstar to pursue an Open Time will be if it reduces sick leave removals and WDO payments.

Meeting with Jetstar

The AFAP provided an Open Time presentation to Jetstar focused on raising critical questions that need to be addressed prior to any meaningful progress on implementing an Open Time System under the current EA. These key questions include:

1. What are the core components of an Open Time System?
2. Do Pilots actually want an Open Time System, or would they prefer a Trip Swap System?
3. Is Jetstar open to implementing an Open Time system?
4. Can a system be achieved within the current EA?

The AFAP outlined a proposal addressing both Open time and Trip Swap through distinguishing between duties that are “un-crewed” and duties that are “unwanted”:

- **Un-crewed duties** = any duties that are placed into Open Time by Jetstar.
- **Unwanted duties** = any duties that are placed into Open Time by a pilot.

Pilot Expectations of Open Time

We outlined that pilots tend to have specific expectations from any Open Time or Trip Swap system:

- Ability to pick up uncrewed duties for a WDO.
- Ability to offload unwanted duties.
- Ability to pick up or swap unwanted duties without reducing their base salary.
- Retention of the current WDO system.

Importantly, we also outlined what pilots do NOT expect from an Open Time System:

- Picking up un-crewed duties for EFA which, without credit protection, could be lost later in the month.
- Prohibition on offloading or swapping unwanted rostered duties if they drop below 75 hours.
- A reduced Base Salary or loss of WDO payments.

Proposed General Rules for Open Time/Trip Swap System

The AFAP has proposed general rules for a potential Open Time/Trip Swap system that would work within the current Agreement framework:

1. **Un-crewed duties** can be placed into Open Time after roster publication, including duties that had not been previously assigned to pilots and duties that no longer have crew assigned because of UFD, FTG, 324, displacement, CAO limitations etc.
2. Pilots can **pick up un-crewed duties** from Open Time, ensuring compliance with **Jetstar’s FRMS** and maintaining WDO entitlements.
3. Pilots can **offload unwanted duties** into Open Time, with the duty reverting to the original pilot if not picked up.

4. Pilots can **pick up unwanted duties** from Open Time that comply with Jetstar's FRMS, contributing to the pilots' total credit hours.
5. A **transparent priority system** will be established to distribute available un-crewed duties.

Challenges and Complexities of Implementing Open Time

The AFAP presented to Jetstar some of the complexities and considerations associated with an Open Time /Trip Swap System, including:

1. Pilots offloading unwanted duties into Open time that results in their credit hours dropping below 75 hrs
 - a. Managing hours deficit
 - b. Hours deficit cap?
2. Pilots swapping unwanted duties with other pilots that are not like for like:
 - a. Different credit hour value
 - i. Guiding principles:
 - i) if both pilots start and remain above 75 hours post swap, swap allowed (no cost to business)
 - ii) if both pilots start and remain below 75 hours post swap, swap allowed (no cost to business)
 - iii) if one pilot starts above, and the other below 75 hours and then after the swap the delta above 75 hours for the pilot going above 75 is maintained (or less than the previous delta), swap allowed. (no cost to business, and perhaps even a saving!)
 - iv) if a pilot goes below 75 or goes above 75 after the swap (cost to business) then swap allow a swap at the company's discretion if its within X % of 75-hour deficit
 - b. Different trip composition (i.e. 2-day drip v 2 x 1 day trip)
 - c. Different base
3. Rules around picking up un-crewed duties and unwanted duties from Open time
 - a. Displacement of other rostered duties.
 - b. Duties commencing in another base
4. Open Time and Standby
 - a. Picking up un-crewed and unwanted duties off SBY
 - b. Offloading unwanted SBY into Open Time
 - c. Swap unwanted SBY duties with another Pilot
5. Open Time and Ground Duties
 - a. Swap ground training course to another day within the same roster (i.e. swap with another Pilot in same base)
 - b. Sim support duties –swap for another duty
6. Check/ Training CPTs
 - a. Swap sim instructor duties (within same base)
 - b. Swap line check (within same base)
 - c. Swap line training (within same base)
 - d. Pick up Open Time from another rank (e.g. RHS qualified CPTs picking up FO duties)

In relation to the concept of an hours deficit, this is proposed on the basis there is currently no ability for pilots to trade flying below their base salary, thus a system that enables pilots to pay back those hours (go into debt) is the most likely to gain acceptance by Jetstar and facilitate increased participation of pilots.

A new EA could of course include a mechanism for pilots to individually trade flying below their base salary. This would provide scope for those pilots who wish to work less to do so without placing higher guaranteed income at risk for all pilots by pursuing a lower EFA threshold.

Ultimately where the EFA threshold sits is irrelevant so long as we come up with a transfer system that is effectively cost neutral for Jetstar.

Jetstar Feedback

The AFAP's Open Time presentation opened up important dialogue between the AFAP and Jetstar management regarding the concept of Open Time.

Jetstar agreed that there were differing views and expectations amongst pilots regarding Open Time, but that ultimately pilots are just seeking greater flexibility to swap or offload rostered duties.

In terms of whether Jetstar has a great desire to implement an Open Time system, it appeared to be ambivalent, but confirmed they are open to exploring further because they understand that is what pilots want.

Two pertinent points that the Company conveyed to the AFAP were:

1. They are very aware pilots will have little appetite to give up WDOs to implement a traditional Open Time system (similar to the Ansett system pilots often talk about)
2. While it recognises that a lower EFA threshold could be mutually beneficial, Jetstar is not willing to entertain this during the life of the current Agreement, and its position is unlikely to change from previous negotiations where it attributes a cost to each hour below 75 hours pilots would be expected fund (i.e. lower base salaries).

On a positive note, Jetstar advised that it is currently exploring a new Crew Management System (CMS) which includes an automated Trip trade module. While it was unable to elaborate on further details or timelines at this time, a new CMS with trip trade functionality could provide a significant opportunity to achieve what pilots ultimately want; greater flexibility and ability to swap and offload unwanted duties.

In the meantime, Jetstar is exploring improvements to the current trip swap system, which currently allows pilots (same base/rank/type) to swap:

- Like for like duties (same number of duties or same number of duties and days off) irrespective the delta in credit hours; and
- Not like-for like duties (combination of duties/days off where a pilot may reduce their total days off but one) within a 2-hour credit variation.

The AFAP will continue to engage with Jetstar to refine the Open Time and Trip Swap proposals and ensure any system aligns with pilot expectations and industrial realities. The goal remains a system that enhances flexibility for pilots while maintaining the integrity of the current remuneration and workday off systems.

Next EA Negotiations

Under the current EA it is unlikely a system that meets our members expectations for flexibility post roster publish is achievable given the complexities outlined above and the response and expectations from Jetstar.

This will drive the discussion of Open Time/ Trip Swap systems into the next negotiation beginning next year. Our approach to Open Time/ Trip Swap systems and the broader remuneration position we take into the next EA negotiations will be driven by members through surveys and direct feedback. The AFAP are open to pursuing any system provided it is meeting out members expectations and does not unreasonably transfer the income risk to pilots.

Your pilot representatives are on hand if you have any questions regarding above. Alternatively, you can contact your AFAP industrial officers Deanna Cain, Pat Larkins or Andrew Molnar via email deanna@afap.org.au, patrick@afap.org.au, or andrew@afap.org.au or call (03) 9928 5737.

Regards,

AFAP Jetstar Pilot Federation Committee

Andrew Ward, Ben Bollen, Chris Gibson, Christo Hailes, Clinton Baxter, Daniel Blakemore, Darren Fielder, Darren Davis, Dominic Corcoran, Ed Greenidge, Jake Gainger, Jordan Moras, Paul Hogan and Raj Krishnan