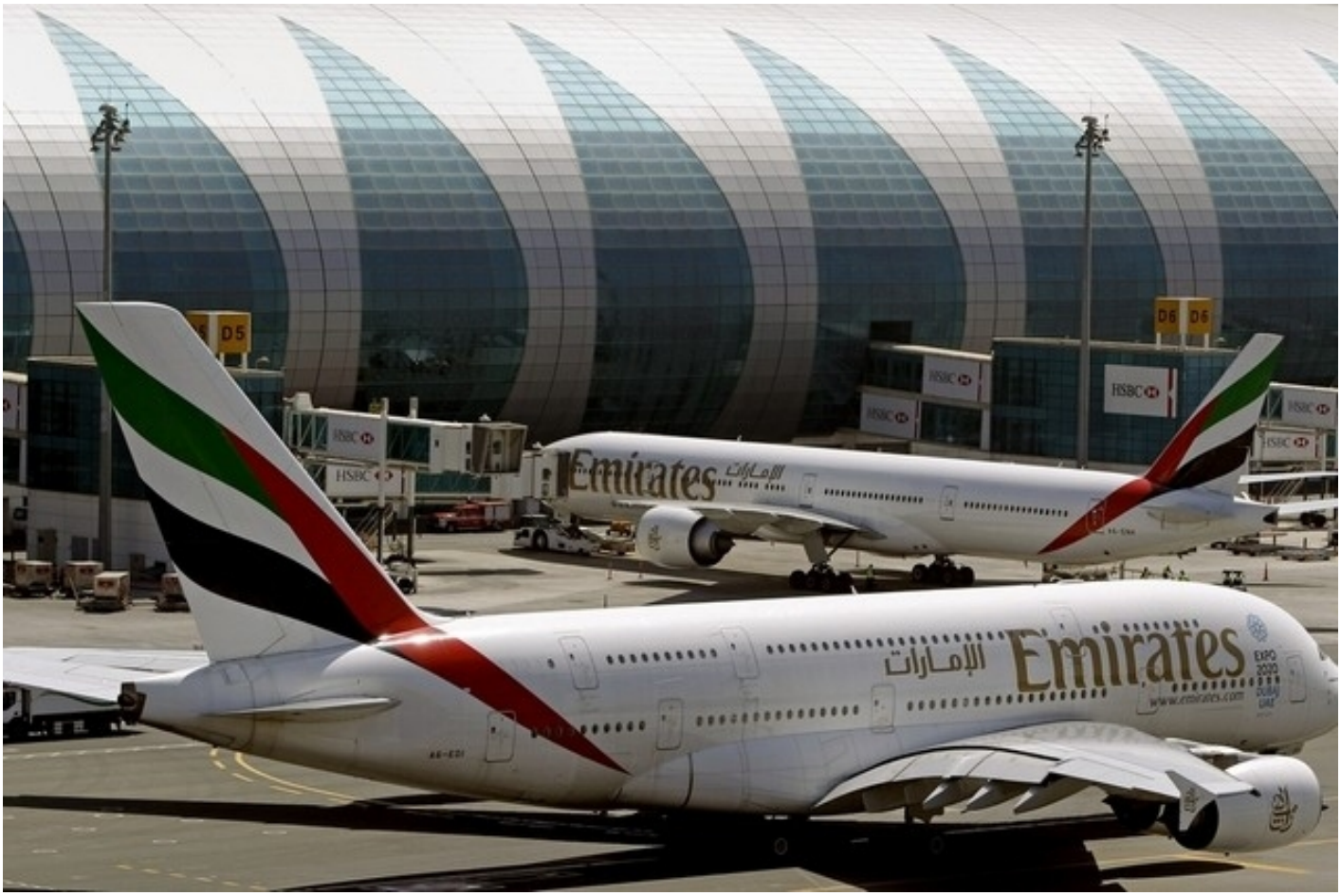
DUBAI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CUTS AIRCRAFT LANDING DELAYS

News / Airports / Routes



Passengers flying in to Dubai can expect more timely arrivals now that a new procedure is in place at the airport.

With the new air traffic management system and optimum use of the two runways at the airport, air-traffic controllers can now accommodate more aircraft landing after larger jets such as the Airbus A380, cutting peak arrival delays by up to 40 per cent. Smaller, less heavy aircraft need to maintain a certain distance behind the big jets before they can land because of the air turbulence created in the wake of these larger craft.

Dubai International Airport recently implemented the approach peak offload (APO) procedure, which has been on trial since March 1.

Dubai Air Navigation Services (dans) declined to say when it was implemented.

The procedure is based on scheduling a lighter aircraft, such as an Airbus A320 or Boeing 737, to one of the two runways, 30R, during peak arrival hours behind a larger aircraft. This permits the

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lighter aircraft to maintain a smaller distance than had previously been possible behind larger aircraft while landing. This makes for faster runway clearance and taxi to the terminal, and in turn allows flights in the queue to land quicker.

Air-traffic controllers can now accommodate 34.8 arrivals on average in an hour during peak periods, up from 33.2. Dubai International has three peak periods throughout the day, whose hours change according to the season.

As jets now need to spend less time waiting to land, carbon dioxide emissions have been reduced by up to 447 tonnes a month, according to dans.

The implementation of APO has not affected any A380 slots or led to rescheduling of flights, dans said.

"As peak arrival throughput is increased, Dubai Airports and the airlines decide whether extra flights can be added to the daily schedule," a dans spokeswoman told The National.

Delays in landing due to congestion in the skies has been one of the sore points for passengers arriving in Dubai.

"It is benefiting airlines who can now better schedule flights to arrive closer to their published times, despite the fact that the airport is handling more passengers and flights than ever before," said Saj Ahmad, an analyst at StrategicAero Research in London.

Dubai International recorded 7.7 million passengers in August, an increase of 6.1 per cent over the same period last year.

"The use of [runway] 30R for landings by non-A380 jets will allow the steady stream of A380s to come in at a consistent rate, thereby preventing backups in the sky when usually we would see smaller airplanes queuing further behind awaiting their turn for landing," Mr Ahmad said.

Emirates airline has the world’s largest fleet of A380s, 84, and expects to to have 117 by December 2018.

Emirates declined to comment.

The APO procedure was designed and developed by the operations team at dans in Dubai.

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