

Advisory To Shipping No. A-43-2023

September 29, 2023

TO: All Shipping Agents, Owners, and Operators

SUBJECT: Modifications to the Rules that Govern the Transit Reservation System

Due to the ongoing water crisis currently experienced in the Canal watershed, the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) finds it necessary to implement additional changes to the Transit Reservation System rules, based on the reduction in daily transit capacity.

Therefore, effective November 1, 2023, a new booking condition will be implemented, based on the adjusted capacity of 31 vessels per day. Under this new condition, named Booking Condition 5, a maximum of 30 booking slots will be offered, 8 in the Neopanamax locks and 22 in the Panamax locks.

The following table summarizes the slot distribution per Booking Period of this new Booking Condition:

Table 1

VESSEL CATEGORY	SPECIAL PERIOD* (730 TO 366 DAYS)	PERIOD 1 (90 TO 31 DAYS NEOPANAMAX. 90 TO 15 DAYS PANAMAX LOCKS)	PERIOD 1.A** (30 TO 15 DAYS)	PERIOD 2 (14 TO 8 DAYS)	PERIOD 3**** (7 TO 2 DAYS)	TOTAL
Neopanamax	1	2	2	2***	1	8
Supers	3	6	N/A	5	3	17
Regulars	2	-	N/A	2	1	5
Total	6	8	2	9	5	30

* Passenger vessels only

**Neopanamax only

***Including the conditioned slot

****auction slots only

In addition, the following rules will apply:

1. Panamax plus vessels will not be allowed to transit in the Neopanamax locks while this new condition is in effect. Panamax-size vessels shall comply with the maximum authorized draft for the Panamax locks.

2. Once the new Period 1 is in effect, no reservations will be allowed for dates between 365 and 91 days prior to the booking date. Slots that have already been awarded for these dates will be honored. However, no substitutions, swaps, nor changes in dates will be allowed for dates where the period is unavailable.

3. Slots that are cancelled or released for dates that are unavailable (between 365 and 91 days prior to booking date) will be blocked and will become available once the new Period 1 opens 90 days prior to booking date.

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4. The Special Booking Period (730 to 366 days) will remain available to passenger vessels only.
5. In the Neopanamax locks, Booking Period 1 (90 to 31 days) will only be available to full container vessels.
6. At the opening of Booking Period 3, the slots will be offered through auctions, seven days prior to the booking date. If an auction closes without bidders, the slot will not become available, and subsequent auctions will not be offered.
7. Slots that are carried over from Period 2 to Period 3, will also be offered through auctions at the opening of the period. If there are no bidders, the slots will not become available.
8. Slots that become available during Period 3 due to cancellations, changes in booking date, or other reasons, will be offered through extraordinary auctions, between 7 and 2 days prior to booking date. If there are no bidders, the slots will not become available.

The following table summarizes the slot allocation and priorities per booking period for the Neopanamax locks:

Table 2

	SPECIAL PERIOD (730 TO 366 DAYS)	PERIOD 1 (90 TO 31 DAYS)	PERIOD 1.A (30 TO 15 DAYS)	PERIOD 2 (14 TO 8 DAYS)	PERIOD 3 (7 TO 2 DAYS)
Number of slots	1*	2	2	2	1
Slot allocation priority	Passenger vessels only based on ranking	Full container vessels only based on ranking	Full containers, LNG and LPG: 1 st slot: first priority to full containers, followed by LNG and then LPG. 2 nd slot: first priority to LNG, followed by LPG, then full containers 3 rd slot and any additional slots: based on customer ranking.	1 st slot: first priority to full containers, followed by LNG, then by ranking Conditioned slot: full containers; then by customer ranking. Any additional slots: 1 st priority to full containers, followed by LNG, and then based on customer ranking	All slots are offered through auctions

*Unused slots from the special period will be carried over to booking period 1

9. In the Panamax locks, at the opening of each Booking Period (except Period 3), the slot award process will be determined by customer ranking during competitions. The priority given to full containers during booking period 2 and 3 announced in Advisory to Shipping A-35-2023 will be suspended effective November 1, 2023.

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In addition, to assist vessels that have not been able to secure a booking slot prior to the implementation of these new rules, Condition 3 will be in effect in the Panamax locks from October 4, 2023, to October 31, 2023. Applications while this condition is in effect will begin at 0900 hours, Sunday, October 1, 2023.

Between October 20, 2023, and October 26, 2023, the ACP will allow Neopanamax vessels that have already secured slots in Period 1 for booking dates from January 31, 2024, to August 31, 2024, to request the slot to be voided without charge. This measure is being offered as a relief to vessels affected by the draft reduction that will very likely remain in effect throughout the 2024 dry season. Slots that are released due to this measure will become available once the new Booking Period 1 opens, 90 days prior to booking date.

Additional information regarding the implementation of these rules, particularly the slot distribution by direction and by restriction for the Panamax locks, as well as the Neopanamax locks, will be provided in upcoming advisories.

For any inquiries regarding these modifications, please contact our Customer Service team at the following email address: customerservice@pancanal.com

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Boris Moreno Vásquez
Vice President for Operations