



CANAL DE PANAMÁ

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
Long-Term Slot Allocation (LoTSA) in the Transit
Reservation (Booking) System for Neopanamax
vessels

June 19, 2025

Panama Canal Authority

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Question	Answer																																																	
General																																																		
1. What is the Long-Term Slot Allocation method?	The Long-Term Slot Allocation (LoTSA) is a new method to secure transit slots in the Panama Canal whereby customers can obtain transit slot packages through a Sealed bid process available in the Panama Canal Transit Auction Application.																																																	
2. What is the required information to place a bid?	The Customer Code, the bid amount, number of packages, payment method and guarantor bank will be the only information required to place a bid.																																																	
3. What is the open period for each bid process?	The bidding process for the packages will open not earlier than 0800 hours on day one and the closing time will be at 1200 hours on the next day.																																																	
4. When is the auction opening for the sealed bid processes?	<p>The sealed bid processes for the first calendar year period will be held beginning September 9, 2024, for booking dates from January 5, 2025, to January 3, 2026, as shown in the following table:</p> <table><tr><th>Market Segment</th><th>Number of Packages</th><th>Slots per packages</th><th>Auction Opening Date</th></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">LNG/LPG</td><td>6</td><td>24</td><td>September 9, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>9</td><td>12</td><td>September 11, 2024</td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Full Containers</td><td>7</td><td>104</td><td>October 1, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>7</td><td>52</td><td>October 3, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>All</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>October 7, 2024</td></tr><tr><td>LNG/LPG</td><td>9</td><td>12</td><td>October 9, 2024</td></tr></table>	Market Segment	Number of Packages	Slots per packages	Auction Opening Date	LNG/LPG	6	24	September 9, 2024	9	12	September 11, 2024	Full Containers	7	104	October 1, 2024	7	52	October 3, 2024	All	1	6	October 7, 2024	LNG/LPG	9	12	October 9, 2024																							
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5. What’s the total slots that will be offered across all packages? How many slots per direction?	<p>Depending on the package, the number of slots varies. The following table summarizes the package availability and the slot distribution per package to be allocated the first year through the LoTSA method for booking dates from January 5, 2025, to January 3, 2026:</p> <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Market Segment</th><th rowspan="2">Offering number</th><th rowspan="2">Number of Packages</th><th rowspan="2">Slot per Package</th><th rowspan="2">Transit frequency</th><th colspan="2">Slot per Direction</th></tr><tr><th>N</th><th>S</th></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">Full Containers</td><td>1</td><td>7</td><td>104</td><td>1 per direction each week</td><td>52</td><td>52</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>7</td><td>52</td><td>1 each week</td><td>52</td><td></td></tr><tr><td rowspan="2">LNG/LPG</td><td>3</td><td>6</td><td>24</td><td>2 per month</td><td></td><td>24</td></tr><tr><td>4</td><td>9</td><td>12</td><td>1 per month</td><td></td><td>12</td></tr><tr><td>All</td><td>5</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>1 per month</td><td></td><td>6</td></tr><tr><td>LNG/LPG</td><td>6</td><td>9</td><td>12</td><td>1 per month</td><td colspan="2">*northbound or southbound</td></tr></table> <p>*All 12 slots per package shall be in the same direction.</p>	Market Segment	Offering number	Number of Packages	Slot per Package	Transit frequency	Slot per Direction		N	S	Full Containers	1	7	104	1 per direction each week	52	52	2	7	52	1 each week	52		LNG/LPG	3	6	24	2 per month		24	4	9	12	1 per month		12	All	5	1	6	1 per month		6	LNG/LPG	6	9	12	1 per month	*northbound or southbound	
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6. What is the base price for each slot?	The initial or base price of the sealed bid auction for each slot included in the package will be \$200,000 USD (Two Hundred Thousand US dollars). Although the bid to be registered in the application is per slot, the commitment is for the total number of slots. For example, if the package acquired is for 12 slots (one per month), and the winning bid is \$300,000 USD per slot, the commitment is for \$3.6 million USD.																																																	

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7. Who will be awarded the slot if there is a tie in the offered amount?	The Long Term Slots Packages will be awarded to the customers who submit the highest bid during the auction. If two or more customers submit the same amount during the auction, the slot will be awarded to the bid that was received first.
8. Which added values will receive each customer that obtain a Long Term Slot Package?	<p>Customers awarded Long Term slots will enjoy the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unlimited swaps and substitutions requested at least two days prior to the required arrival time. Requests made within 7 days of the required arrival time will not incur a substitution and/or swapping fee. • Flexibility may be granted for transit up to 2 days following the booking date, without incurring in an additional fee and only one change date can be made per LoTSA, provided that the request is made no less than eight days prior to the required arrival for the original booking date, and subject to vessel's mix and ACP's approval. • Customers with higher bids will have priority over customers with lower bids when assigning the individual window to register the slot. • Booking slots acquired via the LoTSA method will be exempt from the High Demand surcharge if the vessel transits on the day of high demand. • Customers awarded LoTSA have the same options as other booking slots such as Just in time, change date, late arrival and transit date advancement. Effective April 27, 2025, the fee for these services will not apply.
9. Is there an additional charge for Long Term Slot Packages cancellation?	In the event of a Long Term slot cancellation request, a fee equivalent to the auctioned bid amount for the booking slot will be applied. Furthermore, cancellations made with less than 2 days prior to the required arrival time will incur an additional fee of 250% of the reservation tariff (Tariff 1050.IBN1) if the vessel does not arrive within the next 7 days of the booked date, in addition to the cancellation fee for LoTSA slot (Tariff 1050.IBC8).
10. Are slots transferable?	Slots are not transferable to other customers unless the customers operate within an alliance and meet the requirements specified in the applicable Notice to Shipping N-7 and the Customer code issuance, consolidation and deactivation procedures.
11. If we obtain a package that has more slots than we need, can we sell them to the other customers?	Transferring your slots to other customers is not permitted unless the customers operate within an alliance and meet the requirements specified in the applicable Notice to Shipping N-7 and the Customer Code Issuance, Consolidation and Deactivation Procedures. Selling of transit slots to other customers is prohibited.
12. When is the deadline to confirm the exact	The specific transit date for a Long Term slot must be confirmed no later than 15 days prior to the beginning of the intended LoTSA week. If the customer fails to submit the desired booking date request for the acquired LoTSA week, the slot will be forfeited,

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transit date for a Long Term slot?	<p>and the customer will be assessed a cancellation fee equal to the auctioned bid amount and the slot will be carried over to period 2.</p> <p>It is recommended to submit the date and name of the vessel within the assigned period for the acquired slot position.</p>
13. Is there any change in toll payment with the new LoTSA method?	We do not anticipate any changes to the tolls' payment process. The current official toll tariffs are available on our website.
14. What happens if the number of packages offered exceeds the number of customers participating in the auction?	In case there are customers interested in more than one package, and the number of packages offered exceeds the number of customers participating in the auction, one package will be allocated to each customer that participated in the auction by their bid amount, in descending order (from highest to lowest) and the remaining packages will be allocated individually using the same bid amount order within the customers that are interested in more than one package.
15. What day would be the start of the week?	Each week spans from Sunday to Saturday.
16. Have you considered offering this scheme every year?	Depending on the results of this pilot program, we may consider this scheme every year. Further information will be announced in a timely manner.
17. What will happen to the current reservation and auction system?	The ordinary Reservation System and Auction will continue to operate as they do currently, albeit with minor modifications, allowing you to use them as usual.
18. What will happen to the slots that are not awarded through the LoTSA initiative?	The slots not allocated through the LoTSA initiative will be carried over to the ordinary Transit Reservation System and the Panama Canal Auction System.
19. Is it possible to roll over the LoTSA slots to the following month?	Yes, a roll over of up to two (2) days is permitted. For instance, if the selected date is the 31st of the current month, the roll over can extend up to the 2nd of the next month.

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20. Have you considered to implement this pilot plan in Panamax locks?	This pilot program only applies to the Neopanamax locks. Depending on the results, this scheme may be considered for the Panamax locks in the future.
21. When is the deadline to submit the payment for my slot obtained through the LoTSA method?	Customers must pay in cash or post a bank guarantee, in the legal currency of the Republic of Panama, not later than 96 hours prior to the transit date.
22. Which vessels are not allowed to participate in LoTSA?	Full-daylight restricted vessels, tug-and-barge units and non-self-propelled vessels are not allowed to participate to book their transit through the LoTSA initiative.
23. Is it possible to perform swaps and substitutions between LPG and LNG vessels (or vice versa)?	Customers with LoTSA packages may be eligible for unlimited Swaps and Substitutions between LPG and LNG (or vice versa) vessels under any Customer Code within LoTSA customers. Approval is based on Canal capacity and vessel mix. If approved, the vessels will not be guaranteed a specific In Transit Time (ITT).
24. Is it possible to perform swaps and substitutions between full container customers with different HML restrictions?	Full Container Customers with LoTSA packages may be approved unlimited Swaps and Substitutions between vessels with different HML restrictions (excluding vessels with HML=M) under any Customer Code within LoTSA customers. Approval is based on Canal capacity and vessel mix. If approved, the vessels will not be guaranteed a specific In Transit Time (ITT).
25. What are the procedures and consequences if I need to cancel a Long Term slot?	<p>Customers with LoTSA packages that require to cancel a slot due to the unavailability of a vessel for the registered transit slot shall notify the ACP at least four days prior to the required arrival time. In such cases the ACP will coordinate a Substitution with other LoTSA customers not participating in the same alliance or VSA as the customer canceling the LoTSA slot. The customer receiving the slot will be charged the LoTSA Booking Fee based on the bid placed by the original slot holder. If the ACP is unable to allocate the slot three days prior to the required arrival time, the original holder of the slot will retain the slot and will remain responsible for all associated charges. If the Substitution involves full container vessels with different HML restrictions or between LPG and LNG vessels, no maximum ITT will be guaranteed. This benefit will only be allowed once per LoTSA slot.</p> <p>Customers with LoTSA packages that require to cancel a slot because the vessel will not arrive on time for the scheduled transit date, and a change date is not possible, shall notify the ACP at least four days prior to the required arrival time, indicating the new required transit date. In such cases, the ACP will coordinate a Swap with another LoTSA Customer not participating in the same alliance or VSA as the customer canceling</p>

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	the LoTSA slot. If approved, each customer will retain their original slot price based on the bid placed. If the ACP is unable to identify a Swap candidate at least three days prior to the required arrival time, the original slot holder retains the slot and remains responsible for all associated charges. If the Swap involves vessels with different HML restrictions or between LPG and LNG, no maximum ITT will be guaranteed. This benefit will only be allowed once per LoTSA slot.
26. What process does the ACP follow after receiving a request for a Swap or Substitution of a LoTSA slot?	<p>Whenever a request for swap or substitution is received, other LoTSA customers will be notified via email with the details of the available slot and the duration of the competition period to request it. Once the competition period is closed, the swap or substitution between different customers not participating in the same alliance or VSA will be allocated to other Customer using the following order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer with the highest bid, in descending order, from the same LoTSA Offering as the customer requesting the swap or substitution. • Customer with the highest bid, in descending order, from a LoTSA Offering within the same market segment as the customer requesting the swap or substitution, and in order of the LoTSA Offering's published date.
27. Following up on the previous question, what happens if no requests are received during the competition period?	If no requests are received during the competition period and the deadline of three days prior to the required arrival time has not been reached, the slot will be made available to a LoTSA customer on a first-come first-serve basis until the deadline is reached.
28. Are swaps or substitutions allowed between vessels transiting in the same direction?	Swap or substitution requests must involve vessels transiting in the same direction.
29. How do I submit a swap or substitution request?	Customers shall notify their intention to swap or substitute a slot by sending an email to LoTSA@pancanal.com . Additionally, the ACP must request cancellation through the booking system, where the request will remain pending until the swap or substitution transaction is either approved or rejected.

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Table of changes		
Revision	Date	Revision Description
3	13-June-25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Includes table of changes. - Unlimited swaps and substitutions requested at least two days prior to the required arrival time, effective April 27, 2025. - Flexibility may be granted for transit for up to 2 days following the original booking date, without incurring in an additional fee and only one change date can be made per LoTSA, and subject to vessel's mix and ACP's approval. - Customers with higher bids will have priority over customers with lower bids when assigning the individual window to register the slot. - Customers awarded Long-Term Slots (LoTSA) have the same options as other booking slots such as Just-in-time, change date, late arrival, and transit date advancement. Effective April 27, 2025, these services will not be charged. - Replace "Notice to Shipping N-7-2024" with "the applicable Notice to Shipping N-7". - The specific transit date for a Long-Term slot must be confirmed no later than 15 days prior to the beginning of the intended LoTSA week. If the customer fails to submit the desired booking date request for the acquired LoTSA week, the slot will be forfeited, and the customer will be assessed a cancellation fee equal to the auctioned bid amount and the slot will be carried over to period 2. - Added 8 new questions (Questions 23 to 30).
2	24-Sep-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Table #1 and #2 were modified to reduce the number of LNG/LPG packages from 18 to 9. A new offer (Offering #6) was included for LNG/LPG, consisting of 9 packages with 12 slots per package, including details on auction opening date, transit frequency, and slots per direction. Additionally, Question 10 was clarified to explain the additional reservation tariff fee (Tariff 1050.IBN1) for cancellations made less than 2 days in advance, and the fee that applies if the vessel does not arrive within 7 days of the booked date, in addition to the LoTSA slot cancellation fee (Tariff 1050.IBC8).
1	26-Aug-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Table #1 was modified to update the auction opening dates for full containers from September 2 and 4 to October 1 and 3, and for the "All" market segment from September 16 to October 7, 2024. Additionally, a new Question #22 was included regarding the deadline to submit the payment.
Original	14-Aug-24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original version (published in Panama Canal's official web by August 19, 2024)