

December Airport bid assistance schedule Mezzanine level

Dec 17 9:30-3:30
Dec 18 9:30-3:30
Dec 21 9:30-3:30
Dec 22 9:30-3:30

Unstacking for January

With the holiday season in December, many of our colleague's are flying very heavily during the last 14 days of December. Due to this, some members will be required to have January 1st (and possibly even January 1-4) off due to the 6/1 and 4/14 rules which apply from one month to another. Others will be crew resting on January 1st due to operating on Dec 31st. If you find yourself unstacked on January 1st for example, and a junior colleague is off on January 1st for the above mentioned reason/s of legality, this would not be contestable as these are the blocking rules that are programmed into PBS. Basically, some members will not be unstacked in the early part of January due to crew rest, 6/1 and/or 4/14. This is legal.

If you examine the bid package for overlaps and vacation into January, you will be able to determine how many people are unavailable on the overlap. In addition, if you view the **ALL Awards** from December on the portal this will give you a general idea of who/how many members are working in the later part of December and therefore, unavailable to cover the flying in early January. Unstacking for Dec 31st began at approximately 22 years of seniority so judge accordingly.

4/14 and 6/1 Calculations

Every month when you are contemplating your flying, you should examine the last 14 days of duty (training included) in the month **prior** and plot it out on a calendar. Then when you are considering your bids for the new month, you must ensure that you bid in a way that allows you to have at least one day off after **any** 6 days of duty and also 4 days off in **any** 14 day period. This period is always calculated from: the last 14 days of the previous month, overlapping into the month, and continuing to the end of the new block month. You must have the required placement of these days off unless you waive the blocking rules of 6/1 and/or 4/14. The current calculation period is from Dec 18-January 30.

Blocks have always factored in 6/1 and 4/14 however, you may not have been aware of this before. Last Spring the "waiving" feature was implemented which allowed for blockholders to voluntarily forgo the required placement of these days off. Some are using this feature to attempt to "squeeze" their flying back to back, however, this **does not prevent you from being unstacked.** In some cases, it can work against you. If you waive either one or both of these blocking rules, you may now find yourself unstacked consecutive days in a row. Some bidders who elected to waive the 4/14 and 6/1 in December were blocked the last 14 days with only crew rest between pairings. This is why it is generally not advisable to waive these rules unless you absolutely believe you are senior enough to "control" your flying placement.

More Words on Unstacking

A few members have asked why unstacked pairings are awarded into your block first before other pairings you may have bid on different dates. Using an extreme example, if we have 1180 active members in our base and the majority request time off on a certain date (Dec25th), there will be a shortage of bodies to cover the operation on the 25th. When PBS is awarding, it will assess the pairings that are left in the pool while simultaneously assessing whether it has the bodies to cover the operation. At such time when the system realizes that there is insufficient coverage, it will begin forcing flying (unstacking) on the critical date in order to ensure the flying is covered at the base.

In this unstacking example, PBS must default to awarding pairings that cover Dec 25th first before it can examine alternate pairing choices as it knows that December 25th is the first critical date that needs to be covered. **Unstacked pairings are awarded into your block first.** Pairings bid on different dates can only be considered afterward as the system knows which stacks are the highest and in need of awarding. Eventually there can be multiple unstacking dates throughout the month. In any month, but particularly in December, unstacking can be triggered as a result of how much time off was requested and honored senior to you.

When the system is unstacking, it is in fact reading your bidsheet to determine if there is a pairing match for the critical date/s which requires the coverage. Therefore, after you have bid your time off, you should be bidding for pairings that you are willing to work in the event that you are not senior enough to hold that time off. Many factors will determine which pairing you are awarded on an unstacking date. Also if you have insufficient bids, the system will draw from the pool called "AWARDS PAIRINGS" to assign you a pairing on a critical date.

Unstacking is not a random process rather it is triggered at very specific times depending on many factors. Absences such as vacation, WIP, WCB, MAT, LOAS, RBPS, Special Assignments, etc. will reduce the availability of members to operate which, in turn, places a higher demand on the rest of the base to fly. These common occurrences combined with "high" time off requests (such as in December) can trigger the unstacking line. Lastly, language unstacking is largely dependant on how many language hours are assigned to the base versus how many language speakers are available to cover the flying. In addition, if language speakers "bid away" from the language pairings, this may create language unstacking at the more junior levels. These are a just a few reasons for unstacking.

Reserve Unstacking

Reserves should be examining the last 14 days of your December pattern to determine where you are on call in an attempt to calculate the 6/1 and 4/14 for your January pattern. For example, if you were on call from Dec 26–31st, you should have January 1st off on reserve due to the 6/1 rule. You would want to factor this in when you consider your reserve bid for January.

Furthermore, if you examine the reserve awards for December, you will note that many Reserves have patterns that will require them to be awarded up to 4 days off at the beginning of January. This is due to the 4/14 rule from one reserve month rolling into another. It is therefore predictable that some Reserves that held time off at the end of December will now be on call on certain dates within the first week of January because others can not be blocked due to 6/1 and/or 4/14. Unstacking for Reserves, may begin very senior for the first week of January in particular.

For contesting purposes, if you bid for Jan 1st off and a junior Reserve colleague held it off because of the 6/1 or 4/14 rule, this would **not** be a legal contest as these are the programmed blocking rules.

For those Reserves that “think” they may be unstacked in early January, they may want to take this into account when deciding where to request your time off throughout the rest of the month. Also, please keep in mind that a single day off could possibly be awarded at the start of January however a single day off could not be awarded on January 2, 3, or 4 for example. (Please review reserve bidding guide on portal for time off requests.)

Every month, you should be strategizing the 6/1 and 4/14 rules to your advantage in an attempt to “set up” your next month’s reserve pattern. If you require help in this area, please see the Blocking Committee for assistance.

Pattern Bidding on Reserve: A pattern bid is a very general type of bid and should not be used if your focus is to achieve very specific days off. It is far better to simply request your time off.

Forget and Redo: We caution using forget and redos for time off. All time off should be placed in priority order at the top of your bids if this is your main goal. Most often the use of this feature confuses the bidder and not the system.

The awards are scheduled to be posted on Dec 27th at 19:00 YVR time. Contests are researched for the following 72 hours and no changes can be made during this time period. Your contest answer can be found on the portal and will be posted on Dec 31st at 19:00 YVR time. If a contest were to be legal, it is a Company Planner who would contact you to go over your revised block or reserve pattern on the 31st.

There may be revisions to the pairings in January so it is important that you use the pairing search function when bidding and that you check for pairing revisions near the end of bidding. As a general rule, it is a good idea to bid using routes with criteria as well as specific pairing numbers in the event that pairings are cancelled/revised. This way, if the pairing is renumbered, you could still be awarded the destination.

If you have further questions, contact us at blocking@local4094.ca or at 604 279-9905 ext 310

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