

# **SWISS Policy Handling of Long-term Schedule Changes For Travel Agents**

**Re-booking, Re-issue & Refund Procedures**

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# SWISS Schedule Change Policy – for Travel Agents

## MAR2015

### SWISS Policy for Handling of Long-term Schedule Changes by Travel Agents

Re-booking, Re-issue & Refund Procedures

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#### VALIDITY

This policy is valid on/after 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015 and until further notice. SWISS reserves the right to amend and/or to adapt and/or to delete rules described in this document at any time.

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### 1 Introduction

SWISS has established and will implement effective 16<sup>th</sup> March 2015 a Ticketing Handling Policy allowing Travel Agents to reissue their tickets in connection with a SWISS flight Schedule Change when ticketed on an LX/724 document. This policy is in line with IATA Recommended Practice RP1735g for such cases and applies to all IATA Agents on a worldwide basis.

Based on RP1735g IATA carriers may allow Travel Agents to re-issue the airline's documents on an involuntary basis. Previously such re-issues were handled by the airline only. However, each airline defines its own criteria in detail and non-compliance to such rules permits the airline to raise an ADM.

With this policy SWISS grants Travel Agents the possibility to reissue their own tickets in the event of a Schedule Change. This policy applies only in connection with LX/724 tickets, and when the Schedule Change affects an LX flight number operated by LX or on behalf of LX and LX flight numbers operated by WK.

Excluded from this policy are LX flight numbers operated by OAL (codeshare), OAL flight numbers operated by LX and documents issued on OAL ticket stock.

You will find more details in the below chapters of this document.

### 2 Prerequisites and General Rules for Schedule Change Handling by Travel Agent

This policy is in accordance with the IATA SKCHG definition. Details of the IATA definition can be found in chapter 7 in this policy. It applies to Schedule Changes on **LX flight numbers operated by LX and/or by WK when issued on an LX/724 document**.

Following rules apply:

- **Schedule Change occurs to an LX flight segment**
  - LX/724 E-Ticket with a confirmed booking
  - LX flight number and LX operated flights
  - LX/WK (Edelweiss) operated flights

NOTE:  
LX codeshare flights operated by WK (Edelweiss Air) can be handled by Travel Agents only if rebooking is done onto an LX or an LHG carrier. Please refer to scenarios in sections 4.1.1, 4.1.2 and 4.1.4. In all other cases Travel Agents must contact their local LX representation.
- **LX SKCHG definition:** Schedule Change or flight cancellation to an LX flight number operated by LX - including LX/WK operated flights - occurs **outside 48 hours** before departure.  
IMPORTANT:  
The LX **Standard Irregularity Handling** applies to any occurrence **within 48 hours** before departure. Irregularity Handling is out of scope of this policy and is done by SWISS only.
- In case of special incidents (e.g. strike, weather conditions, airport closure etc.) additional rules may be published and separately communicated by SWISS.
- Travel Agencies are authorized to handle Schedule Changes on LX/724 E-Tickets as per the rules described hereby. However, there is no obligation to do so; SWISS may always be contacted in case of doubts or if it is preferred that the case is handled by SWISS.
- Re-protection of the passengers' E-Ticket is permitted in the **same travel compartment** only (see also chapter 4).
- Travel Agents shall always **reissue the entire E-Ticket**; it is not permitted to revalidate tickets for Schedule Change handling by a Travel Agent.

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- The re-issued E-Ticket must contain the correct endorsement box information (see chapter 5).
- The PNR must contain an **OSI item** (see chapter 5).
- **EMD**: for any additional paid service where an EMD was issued which cannot be used on the new flight, a **refund application** for the EMD can be processed. For more details refer to chapter 6 below.
- In case a reissue/refund on involuntary basis is processed, all rules as described in this policy must be observed.
- Non-compliance to the rules of this policy will result in an Agency Debit Memo (ADM).

### 3 Out of Scope – Tickets which may not be handled by Travel Agent

In certain cases SWISS does not permit the Travel Agents to reissue their LX/724 documents in the event of a Schedule Change. Travel Agents are requested to contact their respective LX representation for assistance when the Schedule Change occurs to:

- Flights with an irregularity occurring **within 48hrs** before departure.
- LX/724 E-Ticket with LX marketing flight numbers (=codeshare flights, not operated by LX. Except LX/WK see chapter 2).
- LX/724 E-Tickets with any airline's marketing flight numbers operated by LX (example: LH5775 ZRH-FRA operation by LX).
- LX/724 E-Ticket with an OAL SKCHG (example: SKCHG of UA937 ZRH-IAD or UA6124 IAD-CLT). Travel Agents may contact a LX representative for authorization to do the INVOL reissue.
- Schedule Change of any LX flight number on an OAL ticket stock (including LH, OS and SN ticket stocks). In all such cases the respective validating carrier is responsible for re-protection and re-issue.  
**IMPORTANT:**  
The validating carrier's rules apply and airlines are not authorized to grant exceptions for OAL documents. SWISS will issue an ADM for such cases.
- LX/724 E-Tickets with special upgrade products included in the fare (e.g. mileage upgrade / special upgrade product with flat rates etc.).
- LX/724 E-Tickets with a special fare product (e.g. Companion / 2for1 fares / etc.).
- LX/724 E-Tickets with Agent Discount (AD) / PEP offers.
- Group bookings – always contact your local SWISS Group Desk / SWISS representation.
- In case of any doubt and/or any special case (e.g. EXST/CBBG procedures/SSR etc.) please contact your SWISS representation for correct handling and in order to avoid issuance of an ADM.

### 4 General Rules for Rebooking after a Schedule Change

- If the passenger **has been re-accommodated** by SWISS to an alternate flight which is not convenient to them, the Travel Agent may change one time free of charge to another flight/flight connection acceptable to the passenger (see chapter 4.1 "Alternatives") – any further change is subject to the fare conditions.
- Important note: **the free of charge rebooking needs to be done within 14 days after the Schedule Change has come into effect** (UN or TK sent to booking originator) – any rebooking done or requested later than 14 days after the Schedule Change is subject to approval by SWISS. If handled by the Travel Agent without the airline's approval, such a rebooking shall be considered as a voluntary rebooking according to the conditions of the fare note.
- In some cases an Automatic Schedule Change process is triggered by SWISS in the Travel Agent's PNRs. Based on the same a re-accommodation message is sent to the GDS (UN/TK) and the SWISS segments in the LX/724 E-Ticket are automatically revalidated.  
**IMPORTANT:**  
the SWISS Automatic Schedule Change functionality does not take into consideration the onward connection

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flights on other airlines' segments. In such cases, the Travel Agent must always carefully check the status of potential onward connections and rebook if necessary within the indicated timelines.

- If the passenger **has not been re-accommodated** by SWISS he/she shall be offered a one-time free of charge alternate flight/flight connection acceptable to him/her (see chapter 4.1 "Alternatives"). Any further change is subject to the fare conditions.
- Change of origin/destination is not allowed for standard Schedule Changes. In case of e.g. temporary airport closure etc., specific rules may apply. These cases are to be handled by SWISS unless otherwise communicated.
- As a general rule:  
Re-protection booking shall be done as far as possible with the original ticketed carriers. For an alternate route, the routing table attached to the respective fare shall be checked and preference given to such a routing. The original booked carrier shall be reconsidered whenever possible and to the furthest possible destination/transfer point (*Example: ZRH LX SIN cancelled: new solution can be e.g. ZRH LX SIN on another day, or e.g. ZRH LX BKK TG SIN if routing/carriers are stored in the routing table*).
- Same travel compartment must always be used.  
**IMPORTANT:** Economy Premium is considered as a *different/higher* travel compartment and may never be booked for SWISS Economy Class passengers.
- In any re-protection scenario the passengers' travel documents must be considered (e.g. Transit Visa to organize, etc.)

### 4.1 Alternatives to be offered by the Travel Agent

#### 4.1.1 Alternative 1

Rebooking onto an alternate **LX flight/LX flight connection** (LX flight number and LX operation):

- Rebook in the originally ticketed booking class (same RBD) within ticket validity.
- If the original booking class is not available, the next higher available booking class (RBD) within the **same travel compartment** may be used only if the new flight departure date is **within 7 days before or after the original flight date**.
- No SWISS approval is required – mind correct E-Ticket/PNR handling (see chapter 5).

#### 4.1.2 Alternative 2

Rebooking onto a **combined routing LX flight** (LX flight number and LX operation) / **LHG flight connection** (LHG flight number/LHG operation):

- Rebook in the originally ticketed booking class (same RBD) within ticket validity.
- If the original booking class is not available, next higher available booking class (RBD) within the **same travel compartment** may be used only if the new flight departure date is **within 3 days before or after the original flight date**.
- No SWISS approval is required – mind correct E-Ticket/PNR handling (see chapter 5).

#### 4.1.3 Alternative 3

Rebooking onto an alternate **LX marketing flight number** (codeshare flight; non-LX operated):

- Rebook in the originally ticketed booking class (same RBD) within ticket validity – rebooking to other booking classes (RBDs) is not permitted and will result in an ADM.
- No SWISS approval is required – mind correct E-Ticket/PNR handling (see chapter 5).

#### 4.1.4 Alternative 4

Rebooking onto an alternate **flight/flight connection onto LH group** (LH/OS/SN/WK/4U flight number operated by LH/OS/SN/WK/4U) **and AC or UA** (AC/UA flight number operated by AC/UA):

- Rebook in the originally ticketed booking class (same RBD) within ticket validity.

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- If the original booking class (RBD) is not available, the next higher available booking class (RBD) within **the same compartment** may be used only if the new flight departure date is **within 3 days before or after the original flight date**.
- No SWISS approval is required – mind correct E-Ticket/PNR handling (see chapter 5).

### 4.1.5 Alternative 5

Rebooking onto an **LX flight number** (LX or LHG operation) / **OAL connecting flight**:

- Rebooking to such a new routing is allowed without prior SWISS approval as long as the new routing is part of the filed routing table of the respective fare.
- Rebook in the originally ticketed booking class (same RBD) within ticket validity.
- If the original booking class (RBD) is not available, next higher available booking class (RBD) on the LX/LHG flight within **the same compartment** may be used only if the new flight departure date is **within 3 days before or after the original flight date**.
- **The OAL flight must always be booked in the applicable booking class (RBD) of the fare**, except for UA/AC (see alternative 4.1.4).
- No SWISS approval is required – mind correct E-Ticket/PNR handling (see chapter 5).

### 4.1.6 Alternative 1-5 not feasible

If none of the alternatives 4.1.1 to 4.1.5 is available or accepted by the passenger, please contact your SWISS representation.

There might be other alternatives, e.g. on Star Alliance Partner Airlines. However these are only to be authorized and handled by SWISS.

In case none of the listed alternatives is accepted by the passenger, the ticket can be refunded. See chapter 6.

## 4.2 Sectors in LX/724 E-Tickets not affected by SKCHG

Any segment of the ETKT which is not directly affected by the SKCHG must remain unchanged and transferred as such to the new ticket.

### EXCEPTION:

If a feeder flight to an LX flight needs to be rebooked due to an LX flight Schedule Change, no authorization by SWISS is needed for the re-issue handling, provided the original airline (operating and/or marketing number), booking class (RBD) and origin & destination remain unchanged.

Any subsequent change to a flight will be considered as a voluntary change according to the original fare paid. Upon further re-issuance of the ticket the endorsement box text regarding the "INVOL SKCHG" shall not be carried forward to the new ticket anymore.

## 5 E-Ticket Re-issue: Important Information

- LX/724 E-Tickets can be re-issued without prior approval by SWISS, provided all prerequisites in chapter 2 are met and alternative rebookings are proposed as mentioned in chapter 4. In all other cases an approval must be obtained from your SWISS representation.
- The electronic ticket must always be re-issued – **no revalidation is allowed for involuntary ticket handling by the Travel Agent**.
- It is mandatory to enter the reason of the involuntary re-issue in the Endorsement Box of the new e-ticket. IATA Standard must be applied to this purpose. This means that the first five characters of the endorsement box must show 'INVOL', followed by the abbreviation 'SKCHG' and the details of the flight which triggered the Schedule Change.

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Example of the E-Ticket endorsement box: **INVOL SKCHG LX123/01DEC** [*LX Flight Number/ Original date of departure*].

- In addition **it is mandatory** to enter the same information in the **OSI** field of the booking file (enter the OSI element as per your GDS instructions).

Example for LX PNR: **OSI LX INVOL SKCHG LX123/01DEC**.

Failure to enter the correct endorsement box information (as stated above) into the E-Ticket and/or missing PNR OSI information will result in an ADM.

## 6 Refund

Following process applies to all involuntary refund requests:

- For all refunds of LX/724 documents related to Schedule Changes or Cancellations it is absolutely mandatory to contact SWISS for an authorization. Any involuntary refund request can only be authorized if a proof of the Schedule Change is available. Missing prior authorization is considered as voluntary refund and original fare conditions will apply.
- Proof of SKCHG: SWISS will authorize an involuntary refund only after having verified the SKCHG. The Travel Agent might be requested to produce a proof from the OAL or a copy of their GDS PNR history, in case the SWISS representative is unable to ascertain the SKCHG their end.
- In case of a Schedule Change or Cancellation of a LX flight (LX flight number and LX operation) on a LX/724 ticket the passenger is entitled for refund. Provided authorization from SWISS is obtained, proceed to refund on involuntary basis directly in your GDS.
- In case of a Schedule Change or Cancellation of an OAL flight (OAL flight number) or an LX flight (flight number) operated by OAL on an LX/724 ticket your SWISS representative will instruct you about the exact steps to take.
- Any unused ticket may be refunded in full. Partly used tickets may be refunded partly, e.g. on half return basis, or according to single unused coupons after a Schedule Change or Cancellation.
- For refund of EMDs in connection with a SKCHG or a Cancellation a **refund application** must be processed.

### IMPORTANT:

Following information must be attached to the refund application:

- the details of the INVOL event for which the EMD is being refunded. Text format must be in IATA standard (example: INVOL SKCHG LX123/01DEC).

- The original E-Ticket number in combination with which the EMD was originally issued.

- Travel Agents in the USA must send refund applications via email to [refundtravelagtUS@swiss.com](mailto:refundtravelagtUS@swiss.com).

- Travel Agents in China must send refund applications to [refundtravelagtCN@swiss.com](mailto:refundtravelagtCN@swiss.com).

- Travel Agents in China and in the USA must use standard email header line according to the below example:

\*INVOL/SKCHG\* LX123/12MAR - Refund Request EMD 724 0000 000 000

In case of doubts, contact your local SWISS representation for correct handling of the additional services paid by EMD.

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### 7 IATA Definition “Planned Schedule Change” vs “Unplanned Schedule Change”

Below find the IATA definition copied out of RP1735g (paragraph 3.1 / 3.3 – PSCRM 33, JUN13):

#### 3.1 PLANNED SCHEDULE CHANGE

means any modification to the operation of a flight as filed in an airline's schedules which may require passenger notification, and/or rebooking and/or re-ticketing. This may be a change in arrival or departure times, flight number or Reservations Booking Designator (RBD), frequency of operation or airports served. A change of arrival or departure time, as a result of a city's conversion to or from Daylight Time, also constitutes a planned schedule change.

##### 3.1.1 PLANNED SCHEDULE CHANGE FREQUENCY OF OPERATION REDUCTION

means a reduction in the number of flights operating between two points (e.g. a reduction from five flights per

day to three flights per day or a daily service to three times weekly).

#### 3.1.2 PLANNED SCHEDULE CHANGE MISCONNECTION

occurs when a passenger is unable to use reserved accommodation into or out of a connection point due to the planned schedule change.

#### 3.3 UNPLANNED SCHEDULE CHANGE

means any change to a passenger's booked and ticketed itinerary which takes place as a result of an inability to operate a carrier's planned flight schedule due to unforeseen circumstances (irregular operations) for which the provisions of Resolution 735d shall apply.

### 8 Glossary

4U	Germanwings
AC	Air Canada
ADM	Agency Debit Memo
AxsRes	LX own Reservation System
ETKT	Electronic Ticket
EMD	Electronic Miscellaneous Document
GDS	Global Distribution System (Reservation System)
INVOL	Involuntary
LH	Deutsche Lufthansa
LHG	Lufthansa Group (carriers: LH / LX / OS / SN / 4U / WK)
LX	SWISS International Airlines
OAL	Other Airline than LX
OS	Austrian Airlines
OSI Element	Other Supplementary Information Element
PNR	Passenger Name Record – Booking File
SKCHG	IATA definition: Schedule Change
SN	Brussels Airlines
SWISS / LX	SWISS International Air Lines Ltd
Travel Compartment	First Class / Business Class / Economy Class
UA	United Airlines
WK	Edelweiss Air

In case of any doubt, please contact your SWISS representation. Thank you.