

Trial of new long haul inventory buckets

On 11th December British Airways will begin a trial of new inventory buckets on the Boston and Dubai routes:

- In First Class – BA is increasing the number of inventory buckets from five to six on BOS, which are available through all booking channels
- In Club World – for those booking through BA’s Direct Channels or an NDC enabled connection, BA is increasing the number of inventory buckets from 5 to 9. The five current inventory buckets remain available for booking through all channels
- In World Traveller Plus – the number of inventory buckets remains the same, but with smaller trade up steps on DXB, which remain available through all booking channels
- In World Traveller - for those booking through BA’s direct channels or an NDC enabled connection, BA is increasing the number of inventory buckets from eleven to twenty-five. Nine of these inventory buckets remain available for booking through all channels.

The new fares are available on itineraries from POS UK, US and UAE on point to point journeys only. The fares are only available on BA marketed, BA operated services on the two routes.

The new First and World Traveller Plus fares are available in all existing booking channels, representing a significant expansion in choice for customers. The new fares in Club World and World Traveller are available through our New Distribution Capability APIs, which is consistent with our strategy of releasing innovative fare content through NDC and our direct channels.

To facilitate the trial, A, S and Q class will be removed on these routes, requiring any bookings held in these classes to be rebooked into alternative classes [A to F class; S to V class; Q to O class]. British Airways will undertake this process on 10th December. All itineraries using these classes, including connecting journeys, will need to be ticketed by trade partners before 2359 GMT on 9th December 2018 to preserve the existing fare levels.

How long is the trial for?

The trial is designed to test a variety of commercial and technical attributes and no fixed end date has been set.

Will these fares be extended to other routes?

BA believes these fares improve customer choice and enables the airline to maintain its competitiveness. Depending on the results of the trial, a decision will then be taken on whether to deploy on other routes. We will inform agency partners of any future plans once we have evaluated the trial.

How can I access these new fares?

The full set of fares are available through BA’s direct channels (ba.com, mobile app and call centres) and through trade partners connected to BA’s New Distribution Capability APIs.

The fares being deployed in the First and World Traveller Plus Cabins are available through all channels including trade partners who use a GDS.

Why are you removing A, S and Q class?

Removing these classes enables us to repurpose them internally to greatly increase the total number of inventory buckets. This widens choice and accessibility across all cabins on the aircraft.

Does moving to one inventory class in First mean only flexible fares are available in the GDS?

No. We will be maintaining semi-flex fares which will maintain the A-class fare basis code but will now be bookable in F (the only remaining RBD in First). The availability of these fares will depend on the availability in the Club World cabin, as will some of the new Fully Flexible fares which will have an F- Fare Basis Code. You will be able to continue to use existing Branded Fares entries to differentiate between these two products. Please contact your pricing system provider for details of the required Branded Fares pricing entries.

Why Boston and Dubai routes?

These routes are high volume routes with a wide variety of traveller types, enabling us to test reaction with a broad range of customers.

How does a Travel Agent connect to NDC to access the Club World and Traveller fares?

There are a variety of ways to connect to NDC – either through a direct connection, through a technology service provider or through the IAG NDC Portal. Further information can be found at developer.ba.com, or by contacting your BA account manager.

Who will do the rebooking into the new class

British Airways will manage the rebooking process on 10th December 2018.

What happens if existing bookings in A, S and Q class are not reticketed?

These bookings will be rebooked into an alternative class [A to F; S to V; Q to O], where only fare products associated with that class may be used to ticket the fare. To preserve the A, S or Q class fare, it is necessary to ticket before 2359 on 9th December 2018.

Are ticket changes possible?

Yes, the new fares are a mix of flexible and semi-flexible. Changes to one sector may require re-pricing of all sectors. This is similar to our existing dual inventory fares available in the GDS and ba.com.

Are connecting journeys affected?

The new fares are not available on connecting journeys during the trial. Any unticketed bookings in these classes need to be ticketed by 2359 on 9 December. Separate arrangements apply to Fare at time of booking products – see below. The removal of A, S and Q mean there may be new fare ladders on the most popular O&Ds effective 11th December to ensure appropriately spaced fares.

Will the fares be available on codeshare?

The fares will not be available through our codeshare partners. It is therefore necessary to book BA code on BA metal to obtain the new fares.

What happens to existing codeshare bookings?

The marketing carrier will make arrangements to rebook.

What happens if I have a 'Fare at time of Booking' product booked into A, S or Q and the booking is not due for ticketing?

If the booking was made on or before 9th December, we will honour the stored TST in the fare, even though it will be booked in a different inventory. This only applies to 'Fare at Time of Booking' fares booked on or before 9th December. The fare guarantee ceases to apply if any changes are made to the booking.

What happens to seating and meal requests in rebooked bookings?

Its possible these may fall out of rebooked bookings, so agents should take a note of any such request and re-enter them from Tuesday 11 December.

Are there any actions for trade partners resulting from the rebooking process?

During the implementation process, BA will be re-accomodating passengers from A, S and Q classes, to F, V and O (respectively). This will update the booked segment to "UN" status in the PNR. It will add a new segment for the same flight with the new RBD with "TK" status. For these bookings, the "UN" segment will need to be removed and the "TK" segment will need to be confirmed, i.e. updated to "HK" status. We understand that some systems used by trade partners will action this automatically, however there may be cases where this is requires a manual interaction. BA will attempt to perform this "tidy-up" of PNRs however, to minimise disruption or confusion to customers, we recommend checking that your customers have the correct confirmed segments.