

# FC5315/FC5326

*Posted on 15.04.2024 by Steve Forward*

**Category:** [Flight Crew \(Commercial\)](#)

**Report Title** Airport remote car parking

## Initial Report

**FC5315 Report Text:** After another 4 hours of my supposed rest periods this week spent on or waiting for buses to and from the staff car park at [Airport] the following points concern me:

- [Airline 1] crew now routinely report to the car park 30mins before official report time, some earlier because 30mins usually means crew room 0-5 mins before report. On yesterday morning it was a 45min wait.
- On average we get to the car park 30mins after we come off duty so a 12hr rest period is now 11hrs, minus the commute.
- We operate rosters close to and too often beyond max FDP (using Commander's Discretion) and frequently are on legal minimum rest between duties.
- Less than half our flights are on time and so we routinely do several hours a week beyond what is rostered.
- When the early morning buses arrive they frequently have to turn people away at the bus stops because they are so full they cannot physically fit any more people on. If you do get on, every seat is full and there are 20-30 people standing all through the aisle.
- The buses navigate busy roads and multiple 90 degree corners. If there was an accident the chances of getting out any time soon are questionable.
- There's loads of bugs going round and sometimes the bus is like a doctors waiting room with 50 odd people coughing and sneezing away.

**FC5326 Report text:** [Airline 2] have experienced significant delays from the [Airport] base over the last 2 summers. Many delays are caused by lack of handling resilience, including on first wave departures. This has a knock on effect as these issues magnify with further similar delays on late departures with long duties already scheduled back well into the WOCL. 1-2 hour delays are common on long late duties, due to handling issues, airport deficiencies and slots. Rather than deal with the root cause of the delays, many duties are now rostered as extended FDPs. There is also far greater use of discretion to return to base. Even when discretion is used, significant delays of 40mins or more after arriving on stand and prior to disembarking passengers are encountered due to airfield supplied bus driver shortages. [Airport] have 3 airport bus drivers on duty for around 60 overnight arrivals, with half, and possibly more, of those flights either arriving on remote stands or

onto the 'wrong' terminal thus requiring bussing. These post flight delays are not accounted for in FTLs, yet we are still legally responsible for passengers. Even longer delays are required waiting for a company-supplied crew bus. Many crew are arriving up to 40mins early due to car parking and security issues. This is on top of similar delays departing after the previous duty. Thus their actual rest period is below that achieved on paper. These issues have been raised for years with the company and [Airport] and yet nothing has changed.

## Comment

Staff parking at [Airport] changed from its previous location next to the [Terminal] as a result of recent upgrade work and so this was the cause of the problem. Although they are aware, the problem is often largely invisible to the airlines on a day-to-day basis because the onus is on the crews to achieve their report time and so the associated burdens of coping with delays often fall onto them alone. As ever, things often only change when sufficient data is amassed and so crews should report as being unable to meet their report times as a result of the extra delays getting to the terminal rather than simply accepting the extra burden on themselves. It's also not just airline crews who would be suffering from the increased delays in getting to the airport; engineers, controllers and other trades would also be facing increased commute times as a result. Amongst other issues, an ongoing CAA FTL/FDP review is looking at assumptions for commutes and passages to and through airports in general to the report points. *CHIRP* thinks that more AMC/GM is required in this respect so that the burden does not fall solely on the crews as yet another stressor in their day but is included as part of FDP calculations for each airport situation.

Ultimately, we're encouraged that the airlines are engaging with [Airport] in this case in order to ensure that there are sufficient resources to transport the crews, but the airlines must also take steps to mitigate the reality of what is actually happening as a result of insufficient transport assets and factor that into their rostering calculations until matters improve. For their part, the airport management team should have thoroughly reviewed the situation as part of their project's change management process in the context of considering the impact on all stakeholders (their staff, the airline staff, their commercial customers) and not just the revenue-generating passengers.



