

Why did my pairings shuffle?

Each month we receive a number of questions as to why PBS shuffled out a trip a flight attendant wanted in an earlier layer for a trip in a later layer. A shuffle can occur when line properties that have been bid restrict the award of trips and these properties are carried throughout the layers. For example: bidding a certain Work Block Size, required days off between Work Blocks or the TCR could be the reason to not allow pairings to be combined to create a completed line.

Hopefully this explanation will help you avoid an unwanted shuffle and receive the desired hours and trips you ultimately are looking for in the highest layer possible. PBS is always trying to achieve the greatest satisfaction according to your bids and relative seniority at your base. One of the most important factors are the pairings you have placed in your pairing pool layer by layer. Remember, these are the trips you have told PBS you are willing to fly. Using the line properties and pairings you have bid; PBS will attempt to construct a legal line within these parameters. If it cannot it will attempt to avoid awarding you trips you did not bid for by using the shuffle feature.

The following is a brief description of how the pairing shuffle works during the award process:

If PBS cannot complete your award by layer 7, pairings will be awarded from any of the pairings within your accumulated pairing pool. Pairings from an earlier layer may not be awarded, and pairings from a later layer could be awarded to prevent a Pairing Pool None (PN) pairing from being awarded. If the shuffle occurs, PBS will award a completed line from the earliest layer possible.

As stated earlier, we see restrictive TCR's as a contributing factor in shuffling trips in and out of your final award.



In the above bid the flight attendant bid a TCR of 105-110 hours in all layers. Depending on your seniority and trips desired this may not be a bad bid but it is often about the math. Depending on the value of the trip PBS will use all the pairings from all your pairing pools, layer by layer, trying to build you a line between 105-110 hours. If it cannot do so it will begin to shuffle pairings in and out to achieve your desired TCR. Remember, these are the desired hours and trips you told PBS you wanted.

If you are looking for high time but would like to avoid having your award shuffled, you can relax your TCR in lower layers. Possibly begin by widening your TCR to 100-110 hours in layer 3 or later and continuing this strategy as you progress down to layer 7.

A good rule of thumb when bidding in PBS is to relax your TCR by increasing the range between your minimum and maximum desired hours and/or by adding pairings in subsequent layers to your pairing pools. This gives PBS greater options to achieve a line you are looking for in your award.