



# Taking Care of BID-ness

*Using the CAL Preferential Bidding System*

*January 2007*

## THE BIG PICTURE FOR FEBRUARY 2007

by David Owens

Happy New Year! With the celebrations behind us, it is time to focus on the February schedule. February 2007 has four and 1/2 weekends (9 weekend days) and 31 total days (Feb. 1–Mar. 3). Valentine’s Day falls on Wednesday, Feb. 14.

This month has a quirk in that it includes the first three calendar days of March. If a pilot in a base with domestic flying were to bid and be awarded 21 hours of flying on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of March, the most amount of domestic flying the pilot could receive in the remaining calendar days of March would be 79 hours. This is no problem because the March bid month runs from Mar. 4 through April 2. The catch is that to receive a line greater than 79 hours in the March bid period, the pilot would have to fly on Apr. 1 and/or 2 to get there. (Yes, there are a few, very few, 3-man trips that could get around this!) Just something to keep in mind if you must have a HIGH line value and the first two days of April 2007 off. Mid-level seniority pilots should be aware that the tradeoff for a weekend off line may be significantly less days off than a non-weekend off line, due to senior bidders obtaining weekend off, high day off lines.

The power of PBS is that within seniority, you do have a choice. If you have any questions, please contact a PBS trainer at [prefbid.com](http://prefbid.com).

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## POT LUCK RESERVE!!!

All pilots have the right to bid to reserve. If you are above the G-Line and create a reserve bid group, the system must place you on reserve with the immovable days off requested, or fail the bid group. If you have no other bid groups present, the system will then take you to RESERVE DENIAL MODE. If you cannot be awarded the immovable days off you request, and you do not want reserve without those immovable days off, then you must make your last bid group a LINE Bid Group!

Every month, we see individuals in this dilemma. Don’t get caught—bid accordingly.

## DENIAL MODE AND THE LINEHOLDER

By Mike Hildebrand and David Owens

What is denial mode? Denial mode is what happens when none of the bid groups that a bidder has submitted was able to be fulfilled, but a line must still be built and assigned. In order to do so, the system has only two options. It must add trips to the pool, and it must remove restrictions. PBS is designed to try and retain some bidder preferences while in denial mode, so it takes steps incrementally to build a line while slowly removing restrictions.

First, it adds all available trips to the pool while retaining all of the AVOID and SET parameters input by the bidder. Then, it gradually removes those parameters from primary consideration until a line can be built. In denial mode three, ALL SET statements and limits are removed. In denial mode four, all AVOID statements remain, but are considered only for the NEUTRAL and HIGH weighted trips, as all trips are added to the pool LOW. Denial mode four can be pretty ugly, but the key to this system is to avoid denial mode at all costs by building bid groups that realistically reflect what a bidder can hold under the worst case scenario.

A bidder gets 20 bid groups to construct a line. We recommend that a bidder use all 20 to maximize his/her chances of getting exactly what his/her seniority can hold. If you use only five groups, you should be relaxing requirements the equivalent of 20% in each group. If you use 20 groups, you are relaxing your groups the equivalent of 5% each group. That will allow a bidder to get exactly what he/she can hold.

Here’s what denial mode does to your FINAL bid group in each of the four steps:

### DENIAL MODE 1

AWARD WORK LOW added as the LAST statement in the Bid Group. All SETS and AVOIDS remain and are considered. This statements adds all remaining trips into the trip pool that are not restricted by AVOID statements.

### DENIAL MODE 2

Opens the line credit range to WIDE by removing the SET LINE bid row (if present).

### DENIAL MODE 3

Removes all SET COMMANDS and removes all LIMITS.

### DENIAL MODE 4

Adds AWARD WORK LOW as the FIRST bid row in the Bid Group. Effectively, only the AWARD HIGH and NEUTRAL trips below the AVOIDS are given priority. All other trips are at a LOW priority. Does a bidder have to accept this? Absolutely not! Each bidder gets the opportunity to create his/her own version of denial mode within the 20 bid groups they control.

Let's say a bidder wants weekends off and commutable trips. Consider the following set of bid groups:

<p>BID GROUP 1 Set Workblock Report Time &gt; 1000 Set Workblock Release Time Range 0700-2100 AVOID WORK SA SU AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW</p> <p>BID GROUP 2 Set Workblock Report Time &gt; 0900 Set Workblock Release Time Range 0700-2100 AVOID WORK SA SU AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW</p> <p>BID GROUP 3 Set Workblock Report Time &gt; 0800 Set Workblock Release Time Range 0700-2100 AVOID WORK SA SU AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW</p>
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If commutable trips and weekends off were not available at this bidder's seniority, all three bid groups fail. Let's look at what happens in denial mode.

### BID GROUP DENIAL 1

Set Workblock Report Time > 0800  
Set Workblock Release Time Range 0700-2100  
AVOID WORK SA SU  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW  
\*\*\* AWARD WORK LOW dated all month \*\*\*

This group will fail too since it adds no new trips. (All

available trips are already there. Assume that this is a 737 BES with no trips longer than 4 days in the bid packet.)

### BID GROUP DENIAL 2

\*\*\* there is no set line to be removed \*\*\*  
Set Workblock Report Time > 0800  
Set Workblock Release Time Range 0700-2100  
AVOID WORK SA SU  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW  
\*\*\* AWARD WORK LOW dated all month \*\*\*

If this bid group fails, then:

### BID GROUP DENIAL 3

\*\*\* ALL SETS REMOVED \*\*\*  
AVOID WORK SA SU  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW  
\*\*\* AWARD WORK LOW dated all month \*\*\*  
\*\*\* There are no limits to be removed \*\*\*

This line may succeed if the SETs were the culprit. However, since all sets are removed, all effects of all sets are lost!

### BID GROUP DENIAL 4

\*\*\* AWARD WORK LOW dated all month \*\*\*  
\*\*\* ALL SETS REMOVED \*\*\*  
AVOID WORK SA SU  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW  
\*\*\* AWARD WORK LOW dated all month \*\*\*

Since the additional AWARD WORK LOW statement is before the AVOID statements, trips not subject to the bidder's AVOID statements are introduced. Consequently, the remainder of assignable trips are added to the LOW trip pool. THIS BID GROUP NOW CONTAINS EVERY ASSIGNABLE TRIP IN THE BID PACKET.

So, when a bidder goes to denial mode 3, the protections of sets and limits are lost. In denial mode 4, all bets are off and a bidder often gets a line that doesn't resemble anything that he/she bid for.

Many times, a bidder can add a bid group to control the degradation process.

An example that our bidder above could add include a bid group 4 and 5 such as the following.

#### BID GROUP 4

Set Workblock Report Time > 0800  
AVOID WORK SA SU  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW

By releasing the SET WORKBLOCK RELEASE time, the bidder now considers the case of getting the report times desired.

#### BID GROUP 5

Set Workblock Release Time Range 0700-2100  
AVOID WORK SA SU  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 LOW

In group 5, the bidder releases the report time requirements and attempts to capture the release times. If this group fails, then bid group 6 considers partial weekends with desired reports and releases.

#### BID GROUP 6

Set Workblock Report Time > 0800  
Set Workblock Release Time Range 0700-2100  
AWARD WORK LENGTH 4 LOW  
AWARD WORK LENGTH 3 LOW  
AVOID WORK SA  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 4 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 3 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 2 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH 1 NEUTRAL

The main point of this article is to impress upon the bidder there is absolutely no reason to end up in denial mode 4. A bidder should always start out with his/her dreams, but the last bid group should include a prioritization of all available trips with minimal restrictions.

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*“...there is absolutely no reason to end up in denial mode 4.”*

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Does a bidder have to do this? Absolutely not! Denial mode is ready, willing and able to make the tough choices for you. But by building your own denial mode and relaxing restrictions based on YOUR priorities, you have much more control over your eventual award.

A word of caution—one technique that bidders often use and trainers sometimes recommend is to copy your first bid group to your last so that if you DO enter denial mode, you enter with your dream bid. We’ve found that this technique isn’t always the best course of action and

will usually result in a denial mode 4 award. The choice is yours, but if you’ve relaxed your statements adequately, then entering denial mode with your last bid group will likely give you a better award than doing so with your first bid group. You’ve already done all of the work by relaxing incrementally rather than allowing denial mode to do so in four macro steps.

Do you have questions about the denial mode issues and suggestions raised in this article? For more information about this topic or others related to PBS, visit [prebid.com](http://prebid.com) and ask a trainer.

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### BIDDING SCHEDULE

Event	Dates
CQP awarded	Jan. 5 15:00 CT
Last day to turn in absences	Jan. 6
Monthly bid window opens	Jan. 9 10:00 CT
Trip trade freeze for last 7 days begins	Jan. 14
Monthly bid window closes	Jan. 15 10:00 CT
Monthly bid awarded	Jan. 20 10:00 CT
Trip trade freeze for last 7 days ends	Jan. 20 w/posting in CCS
Reserve redesignation window opens	Jan. 20 10:00 CT
Lineholder trip trade window opens	Jan. 21 10:00 LDT
GUM trip trade window opens	Jan. 22 10:00 LDT
Reserve redesignation window closes	Jan. 28 10:00 CT
Reserve trade window opens	Jan. 18 18:00 CT
CQP bidding window opens (for Mar)	Feb. 22 10:00 CT

## SILLY BIDDER OF THE MONTH



...an actual bid

AWARD PAIRING LENGTH  $\geq$  4 HIGH  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH  $\geq$  3 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH  $\geq$  2 NEUTRAL  
AWARD PAIRING LENGTH  $\geq$  1 LOW LIMIT (1)

The moral of this story is, know your limits! One pairing will rarely build a line.

## CHAT AT PREFBID.COM

Remember, to 'chat' with someone, go to the Forum page on [prefbid.com](http://prefbid.com), and find the icon at the bottom left hand side of the page. Click on the icon to chat with a trainer, or to leave an email message if a trainer is not available. The word "Available" will be shown in the icon box if a trainer is currently available to chat.



If the icon looks like this, a trainer is available to chat.

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## Where to Find PBS Information

### PBS Page on CAL MEC Website

- *ABCs of PBS handbook*
- *CAL Pilot Book of Bids*
- *Pilot Bid Worksheet*

### Flight Ops Website

- *ABCs of PBS handbook*
- *CAL Pilot Book of Bids*
- *Pilot Bid Worksheet*

Visit the CAL Preferential Bidding Forum at [prefbid.com](http://prefbid.com).