


REGIONAL LOGISTICS UPDATES – MIDDLE EAST

Last update: 13 September 2020 at 09:00am GMT+1

United Arab Emirates

AIRFREIGHT



Emirates is set to resume passenger services to Amman, Jordan from 8 September 2020, when the Kingdom lifts its air travel suspension. The resumption of flights to the Jordanian capital takes the number of destinations Emirates serves in the Gulf and Middle East to eight cities, as the airline gradually resumes operations.

Commercial air services in Jordan have been suspended for nearly six months because of coronavirus, representing one of the longest suspensions in the Middle East region.

The Kingdom's Information Minister Amjad al-Adayla said at a press conference last week that there would be rules for incoming passengers, with all travellers tested for Covid-19 on arrival.

Emirates is also resuming passenger services to Lagos (7 September 2020) and Abuja (9 September 2020) in Nigeria.

The resumption of flights to both Nigerian cities takes Emirates' African network to 13 destinations.

Flights to Lagos will operate four times a week on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. Flights to/from Abuja will operate as a daily service.

SEA FREIGHT

The Port of Fujairah has advised that the Immigration Department will accept passports with less than six months' validity for the issuance of 96 hours seaman visa during the COVID-19 pandemic period.

Other Ports are operating as normal and not facing congestion or delays. Ocean freight capacity continues to be constrained, compounded by blank sailings and booking confirmation delays, which are expected to persist over the coming months.

In light of the continuous coordination with the competent authorities and the success of the efforts to contain the pandemic Corona Virus (COVID-19) in UAE, the Federal Transport Authority has decided to adopt and enforce from the date of this circular the Protocol of resuming UAE Maritime activities with safety measures as part of the procedures for the gradual return of maritime activities in UAE.

In recognition of the seafarer's role in the shipping industry and the continuity of global supply chains and cargo flow and based on the outcomes of the Maritime Summit on Crew Changes held on 9 July 2020 with the participation of UAE to facilitate crew changes, the protocol includes the permission to resume of crew changes activities in UAE ports and waters.

Fujairah and Khor Fakkan port Immigration have opened for crew changes. The procedure is as below.

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ON SIGNERS

- Crew to arrive with 96 hours Seaman Visa
- Crew should carry their valid PCR test results and travel to Dubai
- Upon arrival at Dubai Airport, crew will undergo COVID19 test, carried out by airport authorities
- If test not done at airport, agent must arrange COVID19 test at an approved hospital
- Crew should await results at hotel. Upon receipt of results, they may join the vessel by completing seaport immigration formalities. **IMPORTANT NOTE:** Crew must join the vessel within 72 hours of their COVID test report.

OFF SIGNERS:

- Medical team to board vessel to take sample for off signing crew
- Once report received, crew can disembark from vessel (it takes 24-48 hours from the time the lab receives sample to get report).

For sign-on and sign-off for seafarers with and without UAE resident visa in Sharjah ports, the following procedures to be adopted:

CREW CHANGE

1. Agent should notify the Marine Department and Radio Room 48 hours prior to vessel arrival with the requirement to sign on and sign off on a subject vessel.
2. Agent should provide the Marine Department and Radio Room (focal point of contact) a copy of the crew list, travel detail of the crew, a list of crew that will be changed and an Undertaking Letter in the prescribed format.
3. Agent should appoint the Sharjah Ports Approved Medical Service Provider to arrange for COVID 19 PCR test of the crew at the anchorage/port.
4. After completion of the COVID test and if all negative results obtained, the Medical Service Provider should provide a letter stating the negative results (you can stamp and write the statement in the crew list).
5. To complete the crews change agent should provide the following to immigration office:
 - COVID result statement
 - Crew list with list of crew to be signed off/signed on
 - Letter of Undertaking in the prescribed format
 - Copy of Vessel Maritime Declaration of Health

ROAD FREIGHT

Restrictions on domestic road freight have been lifted with the exception of light vehicle to and from Abu Dhabi and Al Ain that have reduced the spike in demand for local distribution.

Bahrain

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Very few passenger flights are operating services to Bahrain. Freighter services of TK, CV, EK & QY are still available. Terminals operating normally for cargo. Some flight restrictions to affected countries. Freighters flying as normal but capacity is constrained.

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 **SEA FREIGHT**

The following changes have been made regarding personnel travel, quarantine days & crew changes in Bahrain.

Personnel can now arrive in the country with visa arranged in advance. The on-arrival visa facility is still suspended.

Meanwhile, the compulsory self-quarantine period for all arriving personnel has now been reduced to 10 days.

Crew members may join a vessel with approval from immigration after the completion of 10 days quarantine period and based on a negative COVID-19 test result.

Off-signing is permitted for those holding an advance visa. After disembarkation, crew members must go for COVID-19 test. Their travel therefore will be based on the test result and the quarantine period.

For ships calling at ASRY drydock, crew change is now allowed without waiting for the 10 days quarantine period, but require a negative COVID-19 result, a letter from ASRY and the standard permission from immigration.

 **ROAD FREIGHT**

Empty Saudi Arabia registered trucks are now permitted to enter Bahrain on a case to case basis.

There are currently no local restriction imposed on in-country road freight transportation. Land borders remain open and there are no delays.

Exceptional approvals are being granted by KSA authorities by permitting non-essential cargo on KSA registered trailers from BAH to KSA

PAX movement on the King Fahad Causeway is expected to resume effective 27 July 2020.

Jordan **AIR FREIGHT**

The Jordanian Government has announced re-opening of the country's airports on 8 September.

The following procedures are in place, according to the current category of country:

GREEN COUNTRIES

Until 14 September 2020, Canada, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Poland, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey & Tunisia. Passengers should be in a 'green' country for at least 14 days before travelling to Jordan:

- PCR test – before departing from a 'green' country, at least 72 hours old with proof of results.
- Upon arrival to airport a PCR test will be conducted again. Arriving individuals will have to wait until the result is available. If negative and the passenger has not interacted with any positive cases on the plane, their passport will be stamped and they can enter Jordan. If the result is positive, they will be transferred to one of the approved hospitals in Jordan for

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medication and treatment, at their own expense. All arriving passenger are requested to cover medical expenses with their own insurance.

- Passengers who interacted with the confirmed case may choose to return on the same flight, if possible, or to enter compulsory quarantine for 7 days. A PCR test will be conducted on the 6th day. The quarantine period ends on the 7th day if the test is negative.

YELLOW COUNTRIES

Until 14 September 2020, Algeria, Austria, Germany, Italy, Malta, Netherlands & the UAE.

- PCR test – before departing from a ‘yellow’ country, at least 72 hours old with proof of results.
- Institutional quarantine for 7 days. All arriving passenger will be tested twice on the 1st day of quarantine and on the 7th day of quarantine. They will leave on the 8th day if the result is negative, to be followed another 7 days’ home quarantine.

RED COUNTRIES

Until 14 September 2020, Bahrain, Belgium, Egypt, France, Iran, Israel, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Qatar, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Sudan, Syria, UK, Ukraine, USA & Yemen.

- PCR test – before departing from a ‘red’ country, at least 72 hours old with proof of results.
- Institutional quarantine for 7 days. Arriving passengers will be tested twice on the 1st day of quarantine and on the 7th day of quarantine. They will leave on the 8th day if the results is negative, to be followed another 7 days’ home stay quarantine with Electronic Tracking Bracelet.
- If unable to present a PCR test, the institutional quarantine will be applied for 14 days.

An announcement is expected next week about changes to countries’ classification.

SEA FREIGHT

To date, Jordan’s Maritime Commission is still not permitting any crew disembarkation in Aqaba under any circumstances.

ROAD FREIGHT

The Jaber border with Lebanon is operating normally using back-to-back loading procedures for all cargo shipments. Amman and Aqaba customs are operating in split shifts and providing priority to food and healthcare products which is causing delays.

For all shipments via the Omari borders, arriving from GCC countries are delayed due to additional Covid-19 test result certificates (drivers unable to present the test result will be quarantined for 14 days before moving to their final destination in Jordan). Restrictions are in place for in-country road freight, with priority given to food and pharma goods and permits required for all drivers. It is advised to use ocean freight as an alternative to cross-border road freight shipments.

Iraq **AIR FREIGHT**

Iraq curfew timings during Week days (Sunday to Thursday) 19:00-07:00 hrs every day except Week ends (Fri/Saturday) where 24 Hours curfew imposed.

Basra and Bagdad airport operations, for both cargo and passengers, will be on hold until further notice. Najaf airport is closed.

 **ROAD FREIGHT**

Borders with Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Jordan remain closed. Turkish trucks are not permitted to enter Iraq and so have to transfer cargo to Iraqi trucks. Within Basra, Baghdad, Kurdistan freight is permitted with government approval. No night movement between 1900hrs and 0600hrs.

Kuwait **AIR FREIGHT**

Kuwait has reopened to international travel, but flights from 31 countries deemed to be high risk will not be resumed.

The country started receiving commercial flights on Saturday after a five-month suspension because of the coronavirus pandemic.

But Kuwait's Directorate General of Civil Aviation extended the ban on commercial flights from "high-alert countries", such as those with many active Covid-19 cases.

The list includes: Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, India, Egypt, Bangladesh, Philippines, China, Nepal, Brazil, Colombia, Armenia, Syria, Spain, Singapore, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Indonesia, Chile, Hong Kong, Italy, North Macedonia, Moldova, Panama, Peru, Serbia, Montenegro, the Dominican Republic and Kosovo.

Restrictions on travelling to Kuwait

The country has also put strict regulations in place for airlines and travellers.

Flights into the country can operate at a maximum capacity of 30 per cent, and no more than 10,000 travellers can arrive in Kuwait each day.

The number of flights is capped at 100 per day.

Travellers must stay in quarantine for two weeks on arrival and have travel health insurance that covers treatment for Covid-19, said Yousef Al Fawza, the aviation authority's director general.

The restrictions are expected to stay in place until February 1, next year, when a second phase will begin. Then, services will be able to operate at 60 per cent capacity, with daily passenger and flight numbers capped at 20,000 and 200 respectively.

Looking forward, the aviation body has announced a third and final phase, which will start on August 1, next year. Flights will be able to land in Kuwait at 100 per cent capacity, with a maximum of 30,000 passengers per day and 300 daily flights.

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Airfreight cargo continues to be impacted by capacity constraints due to the suspension of passenger flights. However, cargo terminals and ports are operating as normal.

SEA FREIGHT

Any sea shipment arriving or arrived will be pending for clearance, which may lead to demurrage detention charges as per information from carriers.

All marine agencies are required to provide a copy of their logbook for the past 30 working days. Shipping lines basically feeder vessels continue to operate to Kuwait as normal except Iranian barges which do not have permission.

There is a limited capacity and shipment must be completed before 03:30pm. Limited passes have been issued and allowed only to use in emergency cases. The port and Custom Authorities are working curtailed hours.

ROAD FREIGHT

Kuwait has announced revised curfew hours from 9pm – 3am. During this period all government and private offices will be operating with 50% staff. Furthermore, the complete lockdown has been removed on all areas within Kuwait.

Saudi Arabia is only allowing essential cargo to transit through its land border, restricting cross-border road freight services from Kuwait to the UAE, Bahrain, Jordan and Oman. Domestic road freight has been impacted by capacity and time constraints, as all nonessential road freight must be delivered before the 6pm curfew.

Oman

AIR FREIGHT

After a gap of over six months, international flights in Oman will resume from 1 October 2020.

All international & domestic commercial flights to/from the country's airports were suspended from 29 March 2020. The Supreme Committee on COVID-19 has now announced that international flights can resume from the beginning of next month, provided they are scheduled according to the health data of destinations and the place of origin of airlines coming into Oman.

SEA FREIGHT

Crew changes and embarkation/disembarkation of security advisors, technical personnel, superintendents etc. at all ports in Oman remain suspended until further notice. All incoming vessels must adhere to Ministry of Health/Ministry of Transport/port authority guidelines.

ROAD FREIGHT


Customs clearance operations are continuing without any restrictions at all four road borders – Wajajah, Wadi Al Jizi, Khatmat Milaha and Hafeet in Oman.

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Road shipments to Oman has resumed. There are no restrictions on cross-border trucks entering Oman. But Oman registered trucks are currently not allowed to exit Oman for any GCC countries including UAE

Saudi Arabia


AIR FREIGHT



Saudi Arabia is currently in phase 3 of lockdown measures, enabling movement without restriction (except the Makkah region). Saudi customs now working at 100% and there is no longer a requirement of 2 x brokers per location. International flights are still suspended. Heavy congestion is experienced at Riyadh airport, due to large inbound volumes. This situation is significantly impacting clearance timelines. It is recommended to route air freight through both Dammam and Jeddah airports, whilst Riyadh airport congestions persists.

Airports free time had been reduced back to 5 days from the 10 days announced during the lock down.

SEA FREIGHT



Sea ports free time had been reduced back to 5 days from the 10 days announced during the lock down.


The government are advising the traders to ship cargo via sea and air where possible. There is still a delay in import and export customs clearance has been noticed at Riyadh port/airport due to reduced manpower

Jeddah port is still congested, which affects vessel operations at this transshipment point. Delays are expected in transit time for cargo aboard vessels calling on Jeddah port.

Dammam port is congested due to reduced turnaround of staff. (Personnel from Qatif city are under quarantine, where most of the customs clearance/port-related employees live.)

Saudi port authorities are asking shipping lines to provide certificates that crews are free of COVID-19 and are not calling on certain countries.


ROAD FREIGHT



Road freight transit operations to other countries are still suspended except for the food, medical supplies and military cargo. Foreign drivers are also still suspended to entry into KSA except for the food, medical supplies and military cargo. Foreign drivers still suspended to get into KSA except for the food stuff, medical supplies and military cargo.

Turkey

AIR FREIGHT



Restricted operations are impacting cargo flights. There are no incoming/outgoing passenger flights allowed. Freighters are flying as normal, but capacity is constrained.

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 **SEA FREIGHT**

Turkey is facing impacts on imports and exports. Vessel sailings, equipment availability and carrier operations are affected.

 **ROAD FREIGHT**

Turkish drivers who show Covid-19 symptoms will be placed under a 14-day quarantine. If foreign drivers exhibit Covid-19 symptoms, they will not be allowed to enter Turkey. Foreign drivers who do not show Covid-19 symptoms and who will leave Turkey within 72 hours of entering, will not be subjected to 14-day quarantine.

Land borders between Turkey and CIS countries are subject to additional checks, but currently open without restrictions. Imports entering Turkey from the EU and CIS countries and Export existing Turkey to the EU and CIS countries are currently facing lengthy delays and significant capacity constraints. Borders with Iraq are only allowing the movement of essential products, such as medicines and foods

There are currently no restrictions to in-country road freight. Customs authorities are operating with minimum staff and reduced working hours. All truck drivers will be put in quarantine for 14 days at border gate before entering Turkey.

Qatar **AIR FREIGHT**

Qatar Airways Cargo's 1 million kilos project is just the start of a far reaching outreach project that the airline hopes will help reinforce the UN's Sustainable Development Goals*.

The carrier announced its ambitious 1 Million kilos campaign, which was prompted by the Covid-19 outbreak, in mid-July. It will enable charities to use the carrier's services to transport medical supplies and humanitarian aid from July to December this year for free.

The cargo carrier expects that most of the humanitarian aid will be passive pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, given the Covid-19 outbreak, but can also include food items or other essentials.

In accordance with the latest circular from the Supreme Committee for Crisis Management, companies can increase staff numbers in the workplace to 40% effective 1 July 2020.

Qatar Airways Cargo has enhanced its belly hold operations with the resumption of passenger services to numerous destinations, as the aviation sector takes steps towards recovering from disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

Over the last week, the carrier has resumed services to Budapest, Dar es Salaam, Dhaka, Istanbul and New York.

In addition, in response to demand, Qatar Airways has increased its flight frequencies to Athens, Dublin, Dallas-Fort Worth, Islamabad, Jakarta, Karachi, Lahore, Milan, Rome and Singapore.

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Only essential flights out of Doha. Regarding travel to Qatar and valid until further notice, any person arriving in to Qatar will be subject to mandatory 14 days quarantine in a Government allocated hotel or quarantine facility at travellers expense.

Restricted flights to resume starting 1 August 2020.

There are delays with cargo inspection at Hamad International Airport due to additional screening procedures which can extend the normal clearance cycle by 12 to 24 hours.

Qatar Cargo boosted by bellyhold and freighter operations.

Qatar Airways Cargo has continued to head the market in April as volumes hit 900m cargo tonne kilometres (CTK), according to IATA data, accounting for 7.2% of the global cargo market.

This comes as the airline last year became the world's busiest cargo airline – excluding the express operators — as traffic increased by 0.5% year on year to 12.7bn freight tonne kms, while many of its rivals recorded declines as a result of trade tensions.

Qatar Airways chief officer cargo Guillaume Halleux told *Air Cargo News* that overall, the carrier has only recorded a “slight reduction” in cargo traffic this year because its passenger activity didn't stop and therefore belly capacity didn't totally disappear.

“Secondly, we were very fast to deploy passenger freighters [cargo-only passenger aircraft flights] in addition to our 28 full freighters,” he said. “Therefore, with up to 180 freighter flights per day, our capacity remained strong — probably one of the largest in the market.”

To support demand, Qatar Cargo introduced additional cargo capacity to several cities such as Shanghai, Guangzhou, Paris, Amsterdam, Muscat, Kuwait, Delhi, Beijing and Melbourne, among others.

Freight charters are also being operated to multiple countries including China, India, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, Germany, Vietnam, Poland, the UK, the US and Australia.

Halleux added that the airline has postponed the release of “most of our A330Fs” – five were due to be returned this year – and “we are still working out the final swap plan with five brand new Boeing 777 freighters” that are due to be delivered.

He added: “During this crisis, our industry was the lifeline of the world. We delivered essential and critical medical goods to the frontline people who fought the virus in extremely hard conditions.

“Our industry brought protection for them and it also brought medication and equipment to save lives of thousands of patients. I am proud to be a part of the industry and I think we all, as an industry, should be proud of our contribution.”

SEA FREIGHT

Vessels arriving from other countries with the passengers to be signed as crew members on OSVs need to be quarantined at the anchorage for seven days. Once this period is completed, the respective vessel's crew members and passengers shall be SWAB tested. If all the crew members and passengers test negative, port team will sign and stamp the report.

Immigration authorities will process the entry formalities and permit crew changes once they receive the certified SWAB test results.




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The current protocols as promulgated by Qatar's Ministry of Public Health must be complied with in case any of the crew or passengers will be tested either positive or reactive. Persons with inconclusive SWAB test results shall undergo retesting.

Egypt


AIR FREIGHT



Egypt is the latest country in the Middle East and North Africa region to announce that it is reopening airports to resume regular commercial flights, which will increase air freight capacity across the market.

Passenger flights out of Egypt were suspended in March as governments around the world introduced travel restrictions to prevent the spread of Covid-19. Egypt's civil aviation minister, Mohamed Manar Anba, told a media conference that flights would begin to operate gradually from 1 July 2020. The suspension of all commercial flights have affected airfreight capacities, however terminals are operating as normal for cargo.


SEA FREIGHT



According to the instructions issued by the Prime Minister's Office on (7 August), all passengers/crew arriving in the Arab Republic of Egypt by air (airport), sea (sea ports) or land will not be allowed to enter the country unless they hold a Negative COVID-19 PCR Test certificate issued no more than 72 hours before arrival.

Port operating normally but facing a shortage of reefer containers due to heavy demand and non-availability of equipment. As a result of a large amount of cargo shifting from road to ocean freight, this has resulted in additional pressure and challenges to source equipment.

ROAD FREIGHT



Nationwide curfew has lifted starting on Saturday 27 June, 2020. Domestic deliveries within Egypt are significantly delayed and are taking as long as 2 days. Egyptian drivers/ trucks are restricted from entering Saudi Arabia for cross-border shipments to Jordan, all services are currently suspended

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