

Haiti Crisis: Airport Attacked, Aircraft Shot

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Key Points

- **Worsening gang violence in Haiti. A state of emergency is now in place, and the US Embassy has issued a new warning for its citizens to leave immediately.**
- **Aviation has also come under direct threat, with reports of several armed attacks at MTPP/Port-au-Prince in recent days. All flights have been cancelled until further notice and the airport is now effectively closed.**
- **There are no official airspace warning for Haiti. However, conditions on the ground have been likened to an active war zone. For flights, normal services are unlikely to be available, and crew security cannot be guaranteed.**

Airport Attacks

On March 4, several dozen heavily armed gang members attempted to **take control of MTPP/Port-au-Prince airport.**

They breached the airport perimeter and exchanged machine gun fire with police but ultimately failed. Airport staff were forced into hiding. Soldiers have since been stationed there for protection.

Since then, **all flights have been cancelled.**

This followed a separate attack last week where an A321 was damaged by a bullet after landing. Sustained gun fire was reported along the access road to the airport during this time.



A landing A321 at Port-au-Prince was apparently damaged by gunfire after landing on Feb 29.

Don't look to the MTPP Notams for help - you won't find anything. However, the media has reported several closures of the airport in recent days in light of these events.

Gangs are fighting fiercely for resources and revenue. This includes control over key transport routes hindering freedom of movement and further empowering the gangs - which is **why the airport is being actively targeted**. Gangs may also have the additional political motivation to interfere with ops at the airport in an attempt to stop the existing president from being able to re-enter the country.

State of Emergency

The Haitian Government declared a state of emergency on March 3, which will apply until further notice. On the same day, the US Embassy issued its own warning **asking citizens to leave**.

The Embassy itself is periodically closing, and its staff are highly unlikely to be able to help anyone who finds themselves in trouble.



Machine gun fire has been reported near the US Embassy in Port-au-Prince

Impact on Overflights

The FAA does not currently have any active airspace warnings in place for Haiti.

The country operates its own small chunk of airspace - the **MTEG/Port-au-Prince FIR**. Adjacent sectors include Cuban, Dominican Republic and US airspace. Its Notams are also conspicuously quiet.



No restrictions on overflights have been published, with flight tracking still showing sporadic airline traffic overflying- although the bulk appear to be transiting further east over the Dominican Republic.

The Dominican Republic has banned all passenger and cargo flights to and from airports in Haiti (MDCS Notam A0111/24 refers), but this does not restrict overflights.

The gangs however have shown an active intent to target **government infrastructure** - its not clear yet what effect this may have on controllers' ability to perform their duties at short notice.

At the very least, a solid contingency should be in place right now for a **short notice reversion to Class G**.

Special care also needs to be taken for the possibility of **unplanned landings or diversions** - especially to Port-au-Prince. Normal services are unlikely to be available, and **crew security cannot be guaranteed**.

As the situation evolves, keep an eye out for updated information from aviation authorities such as the FAA who may publish background information or additional flight restrictions.

We will report any we see on our conflict zone and risk database, safeairspace.net.

If you have any other information you'd like to share with us, don't hesitate to get in touch via news@ops.group.