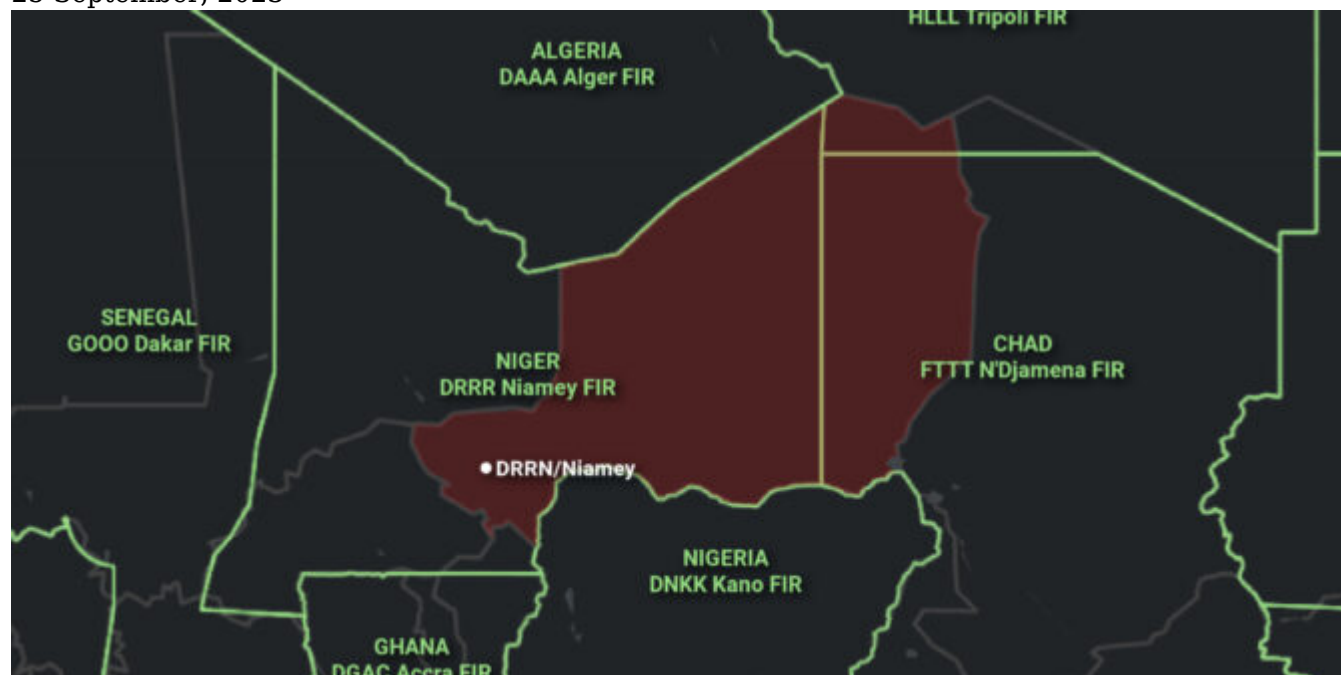


Niger Military Coup: Airspace Reopens

David Mumford

25 September, 2023



Update: 25 Sep 2023

Updated Notam for overflights – the airspace of Niger remains open at all levels for international flights following a coup back in July. However it now **excludes French-registered aircraft, or those chartered by French interests** due to a political dispute. DRRR Notam A1168/23 refers.

Update: 4 Sep 2023

Niger's airspace officially **reopened** for the first time since early August, following a military coup in July. The **Niamey FIR is now available at all levels** – as long as your transponder stays on. Security on the ground is still a problem. The US continues to advise against all travel there.

Major airlines flying between Europe and West Africa have resumed overflying the DRRR/Niamey FIR.



BAW82 DNAA-EGLL: 6 Sep 2023

Timeline of closures:

- 4 Sep: **Airspace reopens**
- 7 Aug - 4 Sep: **Airspace closed.**
- 31 July - 7 Aug: **Airspace reopened.**
- 26 July - 31 July: **Airspace closed.**

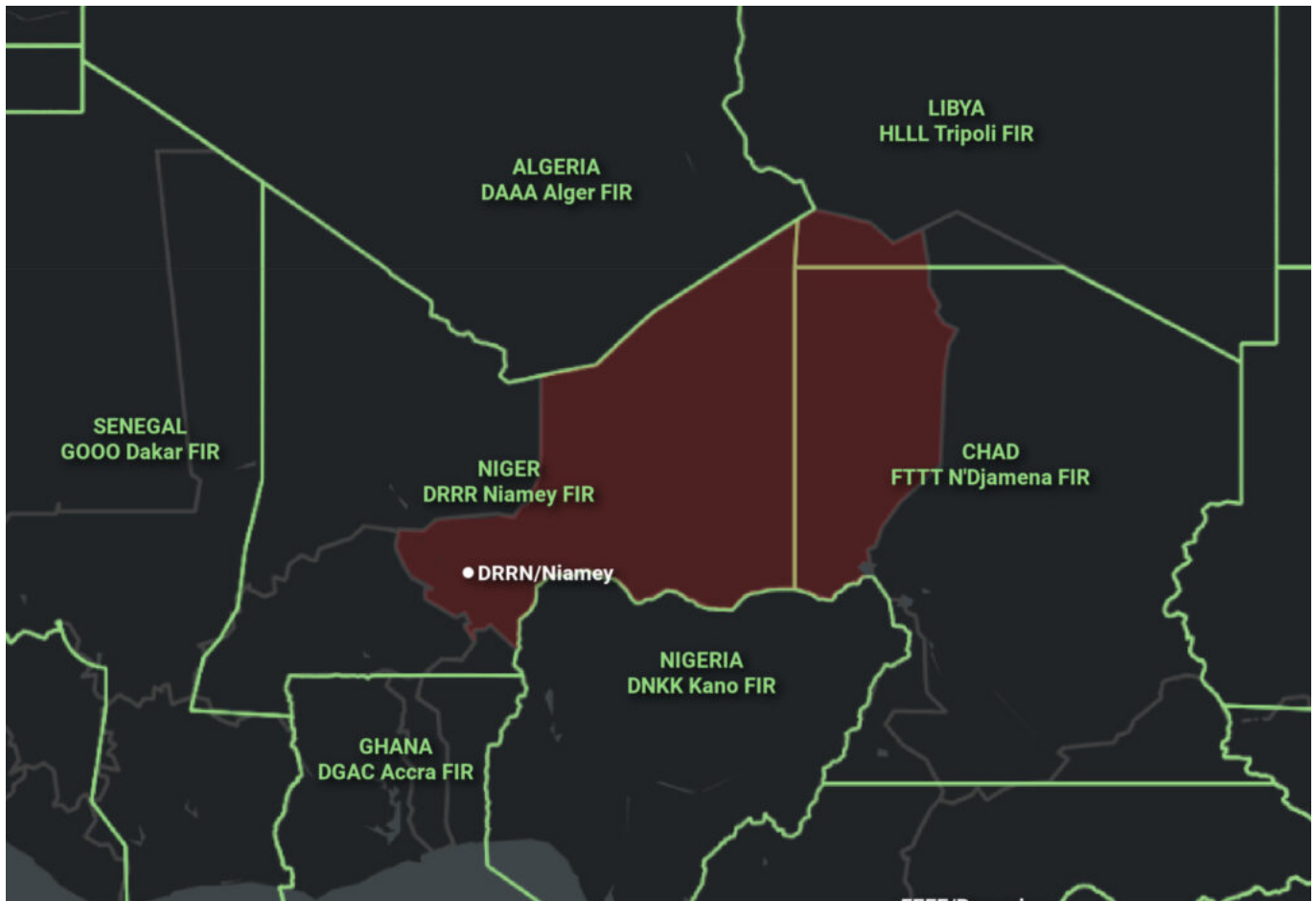
Background

Niger's airspace and airports were closed to all flights on July 26, following a **military coup**.

Troops announced a coup on national TV after **detaining the president**. They said they had dissolved the constitution, suspended all institutions and **closed the nation's land and air borders**. Soon after the announcement, the several Notams appeared advising that the airspace over Niger was closed, along

with all airports in the country.

Niger straddles two FIRs – DRRR/Niamey (controlled by Niger) and FTTJ/N'Djamena (controlled by Chad).
But it was just the territory of Niger itself that was closed, not the whole DRRR/Niamey FIR:

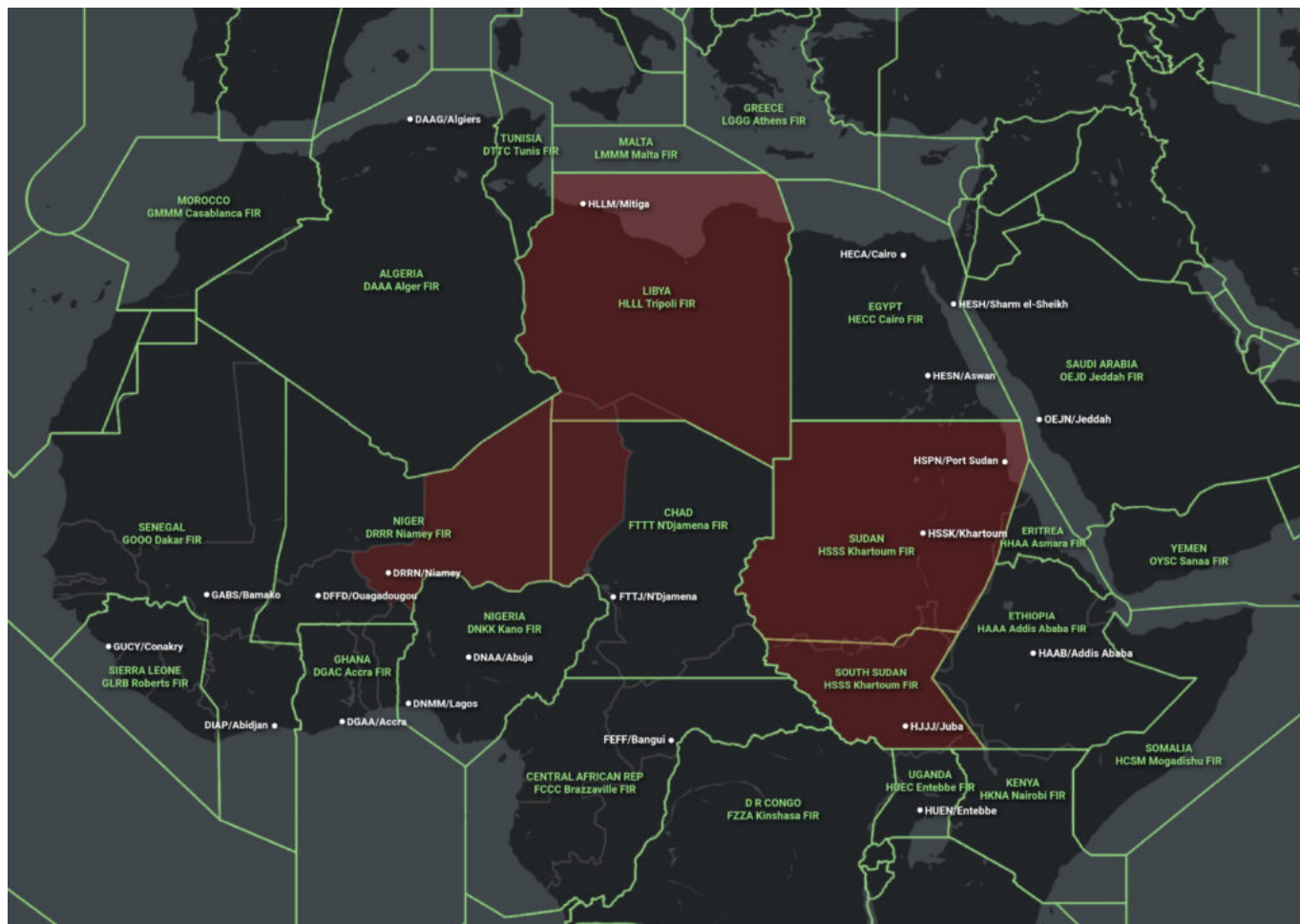


Red shaded area = Niger country boundaries. This is where the airspace was closed, not the whole DRRR FIR.

This closure made African routings quite challenging – a region already plagued with various airspace closures and risk warnings:

- **Sudan:** Airspace remains closed to all civilian flights following a military coup in April 2023. More info.
- **South Sudan:** Air navigation services remain suspended above FL245 following the coup in Sudan. More info.
- **Libya:** Flight ban for US and UK operators (several other countries have warnings in place) due to risks associated with the civil war that has been ongoing since 2014. More info.

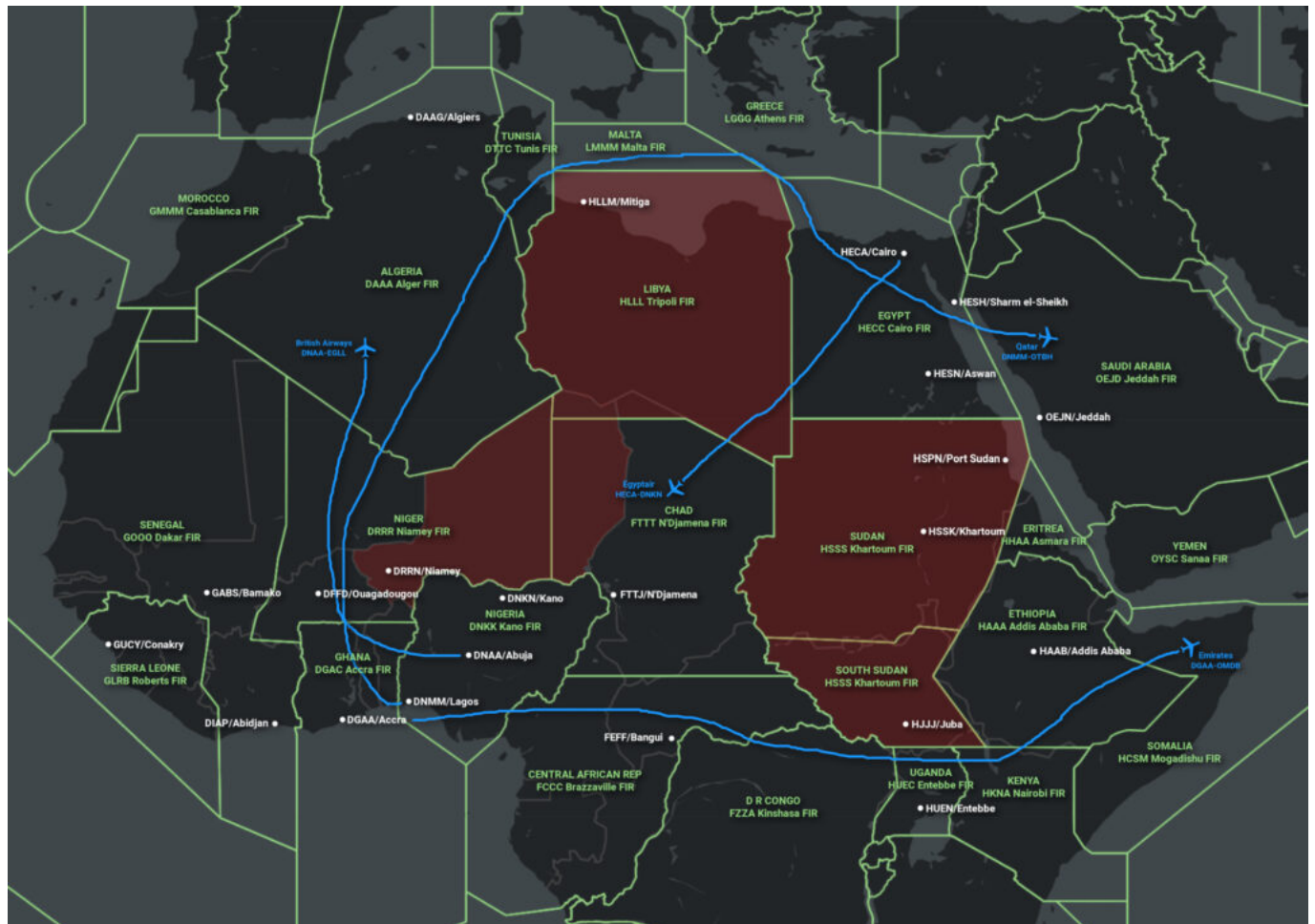
The map below shows the issue:



Flights from Europe to West Africa and beyond had to route around Niger, via Mali and Burkina Faso in the western part of the DRRR/Niamey FIR, or via the GOOO/Dakar FIR (*British Airways DNAA-EGLL in the map below*).

Flights between West Africa and the Middle East also had this extra dogleg around Niger if electing to fly the northerly route across Africa (*Qatar DNMM-OTBH*) or else chose the southerly route avoiding Sudan and Yemen (*Emirates DGAA-OMDB*).

And yep, there were still the likes of Egyptair **overflying Libyan airspace** on some flights!



We will update this article with further info as we get it. If you have anything to share, please let us know.