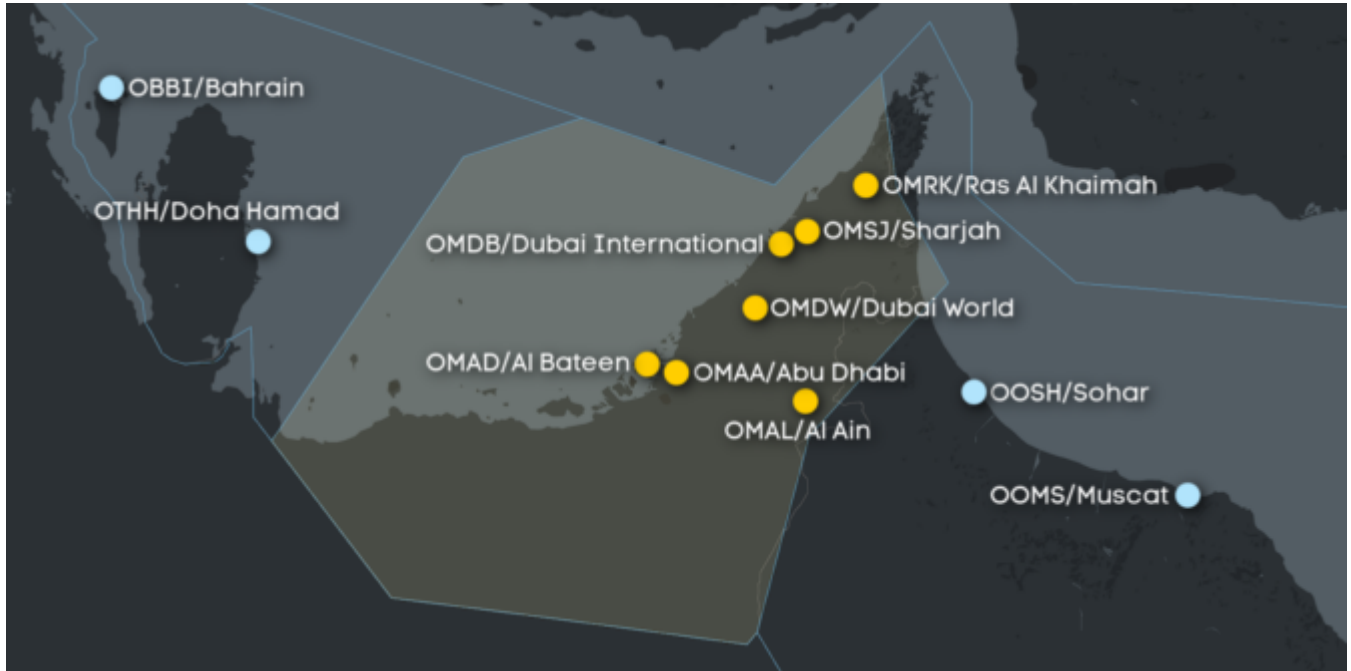


Say Goodbye to a runway for 45 days

OPSGROUP Team

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OMDB/Dubai International airport (the main one in Dubai) is closing a runway again. But that's not all. Another UAE based airport is also closing. And it is Ramadan.

So what will all this mean for operations into there?

The Dubai Runway Closure

This happens every few years. The last one was in 2019 where they shut the Southerly runway for 45 days to fix it up. Not it is the turn of the **Northerly runway again - 12L/30R**.

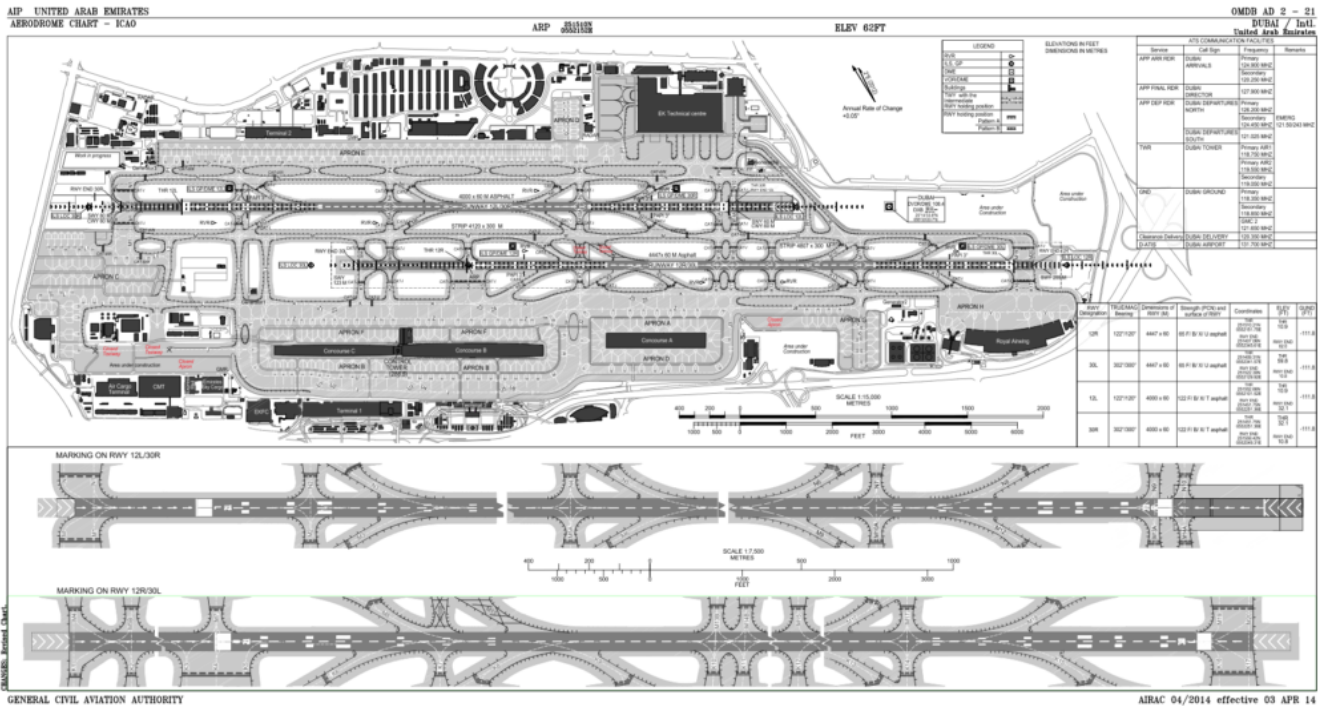
The closure is from **May 9 to June 22**, and it does mean a pretty big reduction in capacity at what is the busiest airport in the world in terms of international passenger numbers.

But...

The Dubai runways are actually too close together for proper simultaneous ops meaning the closure of one does not mean a halving of capacity. On top of that, the biggest operators into the airport are all planning some reduction in their flights during this period, or are sending a portion of their flights over to **OMDW/Dubai Al Maktoum** which is just down the road (20 miles or so).

So...

So if you operate in during peak times (the worst is between **7-11pm UTC**) then take some extra fuel for holding delays. You also **can't file OMDB as an alternate** during peak times (and that's during normal ops, so definitely don't try it during the closure period).



Old Dubai chart.

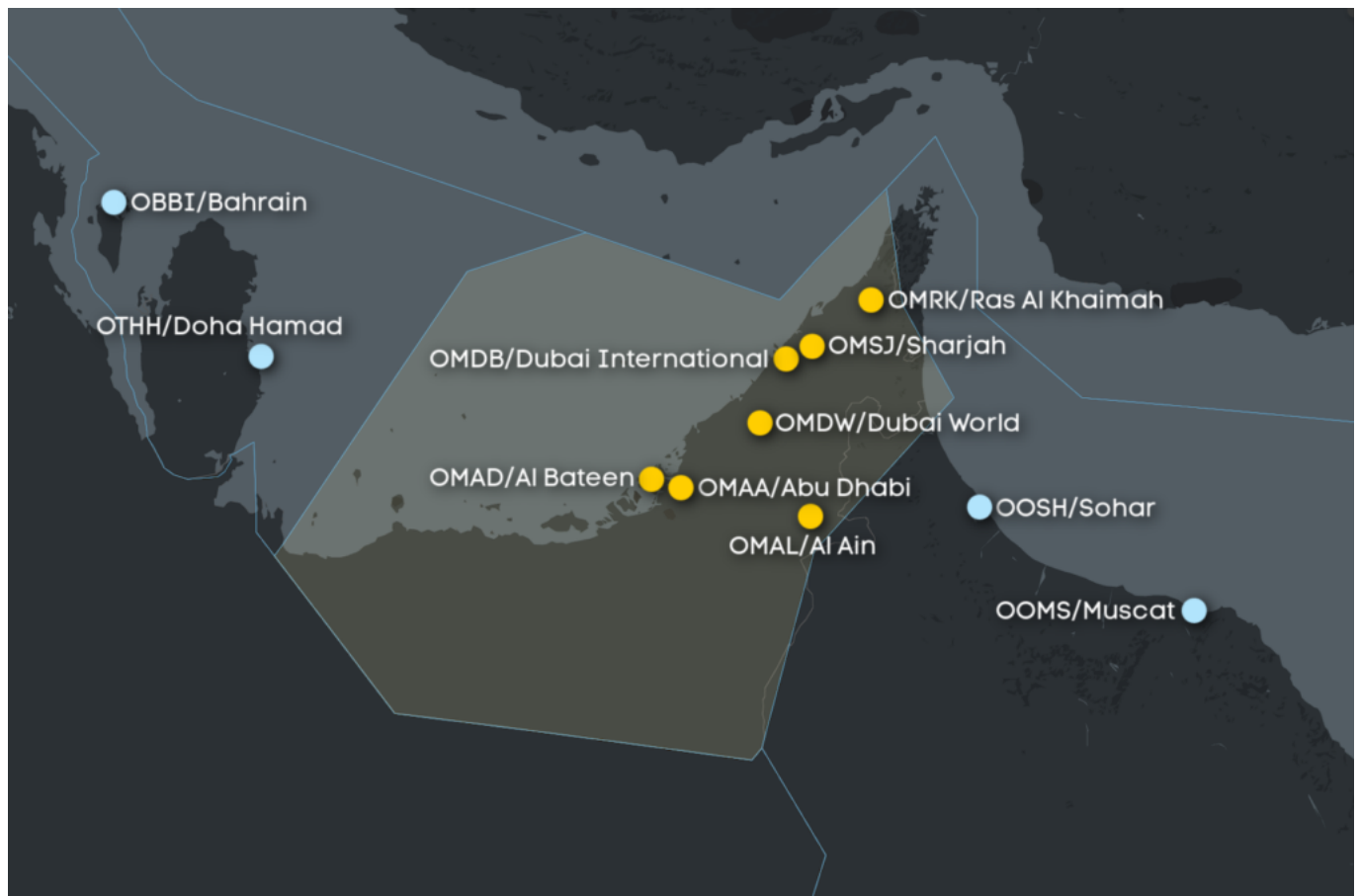
The other airport out in the UAE closure

OMAD/AI Bateen is a small but quite busy executive airport near OMAA/Abu Dhabi, which **just caters for private jet ops**. This airport will be completely closing from **May 11 to July 20**.

So what options do you have?

- **OMAA/Abu Dhabi International** is the main airport for the UAE. They generally prefer not to be used as an alternate for Dubai bound flights since they are very busy.
- **OMSJ/Sharjah International** is the next door neighbour to OMDB/Dubai (around 20km north and you fly past it on some Dubai arrivals). **Runway 12/30 is 13,320 ft** long with an ILS either end. Watch out if OMDB is getting foggy though because OMSJ won't be far behind given it is also close to the sea, and it will fill up fast with diversions if it isn't.
- **OMDW/Dubai World** is the **slightly smaller international Dubai airport** just next door. Mainly used for cargo flights, it offers a good alternate to OMDB. There is limited parking and fuel trucks though so if you divert here on a day a lot are diverting then expect long delays. **Runway 12/30 has CAT 3 ILS** both ends and is 14,764 ft long
- **OMRK/Ras Al Khaimah** is a decent airport to **consider as an alternate** with an ILS on 34, an RNAV on 16 and 12,336 ft of tarmac between the two ends. Watch out for terrain here though.
- **OMAL/AI Ain** has a 13,140 ft runway with ILS/RNAV approaches. Another UAE **option for an alternate**.
- **OMFJ/Fujairah** can be a good alternate (especially when the weather gets foggy as it is on the Eastern side of the peninsular and less susceptible).
- **OOMS/Muscat** is slightly further afield in neighbouring **Oman**, but included here because its

often used as an alternate. 08L/26R is currently the only operational runway. It offers an ILS either end and 13,123 ft. Muscat is a decent fuel and tech stop if routing from the Far East.



UAE Airports and closest neighbours.

Some other info on the UAE.

The UAE only became the UAE fairly recently. Before that it was seven separate emirates and a big port in Jebel Ali which the Brits took an interest in. When they got their independence from Britain, the emirates joined up, led by Abu Dhabi. Dubai is the **most westernized of the all emirates**.

During Ramadan, be cautious about eating and drinking in public, but beyond that there is not huge difference for foreign visitors visiting Dubai and Abu Dhabi, just remain respectful of their culture and customs. Sharjah is much stricter.

Conditions across the UAE (like all the Middle East) can be challenging:

- Extreme summer temperatures leading to brake temperature issues, hot fuel etc.
- Dubai can see some nasty lingering fog during the more humid months
- Cloud seeding is common and often leads to large storms building up. When it rains everywhere (including airport aprons) tend to flood.

Other challenges?

- Holding for Dubai can bring you close to the Iranian border
- Departures can enter Iran quickly so ensure you call the ADIZ early if routing that way.
- Watch out for the Burj Khalifa - World's tallest building. It is near the airport.
- Conflict is common across the whole Middle East region. Monitor Safeairspace for the full lowdown on risk in the region.

For more operational info on Dubai, the UAE, and the Middle East in general - check out our earlier post [here](#).