South Africa’s Unapproachable Approaches

OPSGROUP Team
29 March, 2023

South Africa is going through some troubled times on the aviation front right now. Fuel issues, power outages, and now, apparently, they are losing a whole load of their instrument approaches nationwide.

The Fuel Thing

Not as serious as their ‘fuel thing’ in 2022 (when floods disrupted the main transport line to FAOR/Johannesburg and they had severe jet fuel shortages for months).

This is **limited to BP**, who are to **stop providing jet fuel** at airports across the country. They’ve already withdrawn from FACT/Cape Town, and will do so at other main airports FAOR/Johannesburg and FALE/Durban from the end of April.

Shortages have also been occurring FABE/Port Elizabeth, FALE/King Shaka, FAEL/East London and FAUT/Mthatha.

So if you’re headed there, double-check with your local agent what alternative fuel suppliers are available, and what actual fuel is available for that matter.

The Power Thing

Load shedding is an ongoing issue. All airports have their own generators, so ops generally aren’t the issue. However, it is causing some concerns (again) for fuel.

Airlines have been **tankering into FACT/Cape Town** due to potential limits after the load shedding caused problems with the primary supplier.

There have been some Notams suggesting **limited tower availability** at some (generally smaller, regional) airports.

The Instrument Approach Thing

Authorities are **suspending instrument approaches** at a whole load of airports across the country. A check of South Africa's Daily Airspace Plan shows issues with **ILS, VOR, RNAV and GNSS approaches** at various airports:

Central Airspace Management Unit — **DAILY AIRSPACE PLAN 30 MARCH 2023**

Telephone Number: 011 928 6433
Email: camuhelpdesk@atns.co.za

Last Update: Thursday, 30 March 2023 06:02 South African local time
Next Telcon: Week days at 0630UTC excl. Public Holidays

ATC Overview – All times in UTC unless stated otherwise

Primary Aerodrome Issues

Location	Details	RWY	Approach Mode	Rate
CAMU				
FAOR	RAPID EXIT TWY INDICATOR LGT FOR RWY 03R/21L AND 03L/21R U/S. AWOS SERVER INTERMITTENT. RWY 03R/21L CLSD 2303300731-2303300801 RWY 03L/21R CLSD. 2303300700- 2303300730	21	VMC	53
FACT	**F0121/22 :** FACT ILS Z RWY 19 (ILS-02): PILOTS ARE PROHIBITED FROM FLYING THE PUBLISHED HOLD OR RACETRACK. REFER TO NOTAM FOR PROCEDURE. 5 PALS CAT II LGT RWY 01 U/S. CLR DELIVERY 122.1 MHZ OPS HR CHG TO: SAT-SUN 0400-1700. PWR LINE ON RWY 16 AND RWY 19 APCH BLW 2 PERCENT NOT CLEARLY VISIBLE DRG POOR WX COND. SID DEP-03 RWY 01 IMSOM 1A DATED 10 MAY 2007 SUSPENDED SID DEP-02 RWY 01 KODES 1A DATED 03 JAN 2019 SUSPENDED	19	VMC	30
FALE	ILS CAT II RWY 24 & 06 DOWNGRADED TO CAT I DUE SINGLE TRANS OPS. RWY 24 SUBSTATION UNINTERRUPTIBLE POWER SUPPLY (UPS) U/S. IN CASE OF PRI PWR FAILURE, THE FLW FAC WILL NOT BE AVBL FOR 10MIN:1. PAPI RWY 24, 2. TWY M AND H STOPBARS, 3. RTZL 24 U/S. DURBAN WX RADAR (294226.07S 0310453.91E) U/S. AFFECTED AREA 200KM RADIUS AROUND FALE. DURBAN S-BAND PSR (295853.39908S 0305757.11099E) OFFLINE. BIRD RADAR U/S.	24	VMC	24
FALA	ILS LOC LAI 110.7 MHZ RWY 07 U/S. ALL ASSOCIATED PROC SUSPENDED. 1830-2200	07	VMC	16
FAGG	IAC VOR-02 VOR RWY 29 DATED 01 MAY 2014 SUSPENDED. IAC VOR-01 VOR RWY 11 DATED 01 MAY 2014 SUSPENDED	29	VMC	15
FAPE	FOURTH ROW PAPI LGT ON THE RIGHT OF RWY 26 U/S. TWY LGT PANEL IN THE TWR U/S. TWY LGT INTST ON MANUAL AND IS ADJUSTED BY THE ELECTRICIAN IAC VOR-02 VOR RWY 26 DATED 07 JAN 2016 SUSPENDED.	26	VMC	17
FAEL	GRASS CUTTING TAKING PLACE ON ALL RWY, TWY EDGES AND RESA.DLY 0730-1930 IAC VOR-01 VOR RWY 11 DATED 03 JUL 2008 SUSPENDED IAC ILS-01 ILS Z RWY 11 DATED 03 JUL 2008 SUSPENDED	29	VMC	17
FABL	ALL STOPBARS & GUARD LGT U/S. IAC VOR-01 VOR RWY 02 DATED 11 DEC 2014 SUSPENDED IAC RNAV-01 RNAV (GNSS) RWY 02 DATED 30 MAR 2017 SUSPENDED SID DEP-01 RNAV (GNSS) RWY 02 DATED 30 MAR 2017 SUSPENDED STAR ARR-01 RNAV (GNSS) RWY 02 DATED 30 MAR 2017 SUSPENDED	20	VMC	12

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Secondary Aerodrome Issues

Location	Details
FAKM	TWY A CLSD AD GRASS CUTTING TAKING PLACE. DLY 0600-1400. TWR/APP OPS HR CHG TO: SUN 0800-1600. IAC VOR-01 VOR/DME RWY 02 DATED 12 DEC 2013 SUSPENDED IAC VOR-02 VOR/DME RWY 20 DATED 12 DEC 2013 SUSPENDED
FAKN	KRUGER MSSR (252300.9S 0310633.94E) U/S.
FAPN	ATZ DOWNGRADED TO CLASS D AIRSPACE. TWR 118.4 MHZ OPS HR CHG TO: MON-FRI 0600-1400, SAT-SUN 90MIN PN CTC OIC 063 938 8670 IAC VOR-01 BREAKCLOUD VOR/DME 05 DATED 08 JUL 2004 SUSPENDED
FAPP	MIMIC PANEL U/S. ATC UNABLE TO CTL AD LGT IAC ILS-01 ILS RWY 05 DATED 12 OCT 2017 SUSPENDED IAC VOR-01 VOR A RWY 05 DATED 15 SEP 2016 SUSPENDED.
FAPM	IAC RNAV-02 RNAV (GNSS) RWY 34 DATED 18 JUL 2019 SUSPENDED IAC RNAV-01 RNAV (GNSS) RWY 16 DATED 20 JUN 2019 SUSPENDED
FARB	IAC VOR-04 BREAKCLOUD VOR 23 DATED 08 JUL 2004 SUSPENDED IAC VOR-03 BREAKCLOUD VOR/DME 23 DATED 08 JUL 2004 SUSPENDED IAC VOR-02 BREAKCLOUD VOR/DME 05 DATED 08 JUL 2004 SUSPENDED IAC VOR-01 BREAKCLOUD VOR/DME 05 DATED 08 JUL 2004 SUSPENDED
FAUT	PRIVATE CLOSE USER GROUP (PCUG) AND TEL LINES U/S. TEMPO CTC TEL NR 0664333871. NIL NGT OPS. MID WINDSOCK RWY 14/32 U/S. AERONAUTICAL AUTOMATED INFORMATION SYSTEM (ANAIS) AND AMHS AGENT TERMINAL INTERFACE SYSTEM (AMATIS) U/S. SAR CANNOT BE NML FOR VFR TFC AND THE APPLICABLE AD CANNOT BE NOMINATED FOR ANY SAR ACTION FOR BOTH VFR AND IFR TFC.
FAWB	ONE THR LGT ON RWY 29 U/S. FOURTH ROW PAPI LGT RWY 29 U/S. TWR CTL PANEL FOR RWY 11/29 LGT U/S.
FAUP	IAC VOR 01 VOR/DME 35 DATED 06 MAR 2014 SUSPENDED IAC RNAV 01 RNAV (GNSS) RWY 35 DATED 08 DEC 2016 SUSPENDED
FAGM	PAPI RWY 17 & RWY 11/29 U/S. ABN OBST LGT U/S.

The reason for these suspensions is not yet clear, but seems to be related to an **ICAO safety audit** that is currently taking place – as most of the suspensions got published by Notam half-way through their visit.

What does this mean for operations?

It means you might want to **see what is available at alternate airports**, because many approaches might not be and that could turn out to be a nasty surprise for pilots.

Beyond that, it is not currently clear why they are being suspended – whether audit findings suggest safety issues, or if some are due to problems with power outages and intermittent signals.

If you have any information, please get in touch at news@ops.group