

Crisis in Iran: Elevated Airspace Risk

Chris Shieff

20 January, 2026



Key Points:

- Iran remains highly unstable, with elevated risk to civil aviation.
- Severe internet disruption has been in place since Jan 8, with broader communications affected.
- The OIIX/Tehran FIR was closed at short notice for several hours on Jan 14, with no public explanation.
- EASA recommends avoiding Iranian airspace at all levels due to misidentification risk.

Situation in Iran

Beginning in late December, **large-scale political protests spread across major cities** due to a worsening economic crisis.

These escalated in recent weeks, with many demanding a change of political leadership. **The Government has responded with a violent crack-down.** Large numbers of casualties have been reported amid arbitrary arrests and severe internet disruption since Jan 8, with wider communications also affected.

Several countries (including the US) have **urged their citizens to leave the country immediately.**

Potential for US Military Intervention

In response to humanitarian concerns, **the US Government has implied military intervention remains a possibility** should violence against protesters continues.

If this were to occur, **Iran has repeatedly warned it will retaliate by targeting US military bases** and other assets throughout the region.

Some effects of this threat have already been felt, including the **partial removal of personnel as a precautionary measure at Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar** – the largest US military base in the Middle East. Although the threat level has reportedly been downgraded in the past few days.

Airspace Risk

The current crisis has **further increased risk to aircraft** operating in or near Iranian airspace (the OIIX/Tehran FIR).

On Jan 14, the following Notam was issued unexpectedly **closing the OIIX/Tehran FIR for several hours overnight**, with no public explanation from Iranian authorities:

```
A0225/26 NOTAMN
Q) OIIX/QAFLC/IV/NBO/E/000/999/
A) OIIX B) 2601142215 C) 2601150030 EST
E) TEHRAN FIR CLSD TO ALL FLIGHTS EXCEPT INTERNATIONAL CIVIL ARR/DEP
FLIGHTS TO/FROM TEHRAN FIR WITH PRIOR FLIGHT PERMISSION FROM
IRAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY(CAA).
```

Previous events have shown that these types of closures can occur when security or military activity is taking place including a risk of missile launches or air defence operations.

Then on Jan 16, EASA upgraded its warning for Iranian airspace by publishing a new Conflict Zone Information Bulletin (CZIB) for Iran and neighbouring airspace. It suggests that recent events (including the possibility of foreign intervention) have likely placed air defence systems at a heightened sense of alert. **Civil aircraft are at increased risk of misidentification.**

It's worth noting that **most operators already avoid Iranian airspace**. Several states (including the US, UK, France, Canada and Germany) either actively prohibit or at least strongly advise against entering. At safeairspace.net, we maintain a '**Level 1 - Do Not Fly**' warning.

However, when referencing *adjacent* airspace, things become a little more ambiguous. EASA's CZIB advises **caution when overflying neighbouring countries** where US military assets are present. This notably includes Qatar, Bahrain, Kuwait, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iraq, Syria and Turkey.



Special care should be used on the major air corridor that skirts the western boundary of Iran via Iraqi airspace (airways UL602, UM860 and UM688) where **GPS interference** (including the more insidious spoofing) is prevalent.

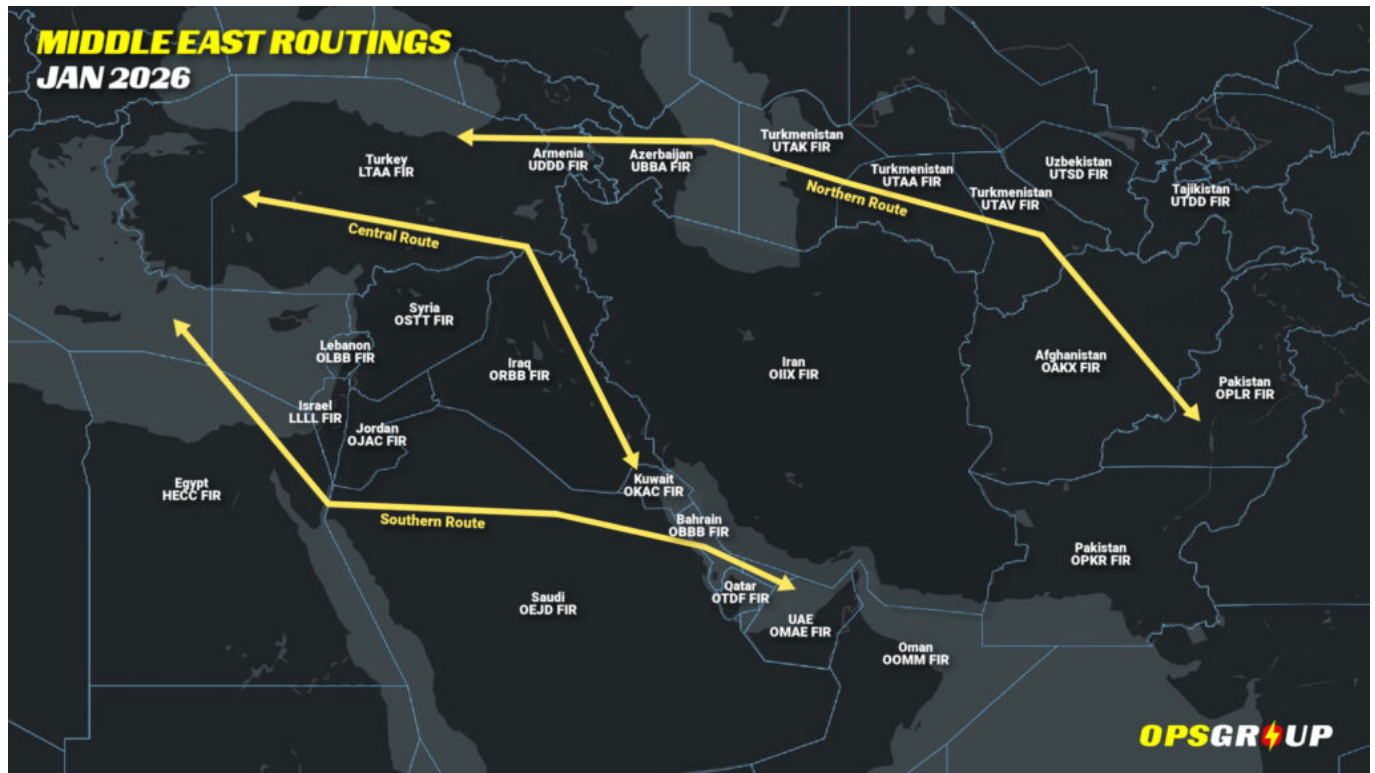
We know of at least one incident in the past where an aircraft almost **inadvertently strayed into Iranian airspace** without a clearance while suffering from navigation error.

From a broader perspective, EASA are also alluding to the possibility of **regional escalation should the situation deteriorate** – especially in the event of retaliatory strikes against military targets.

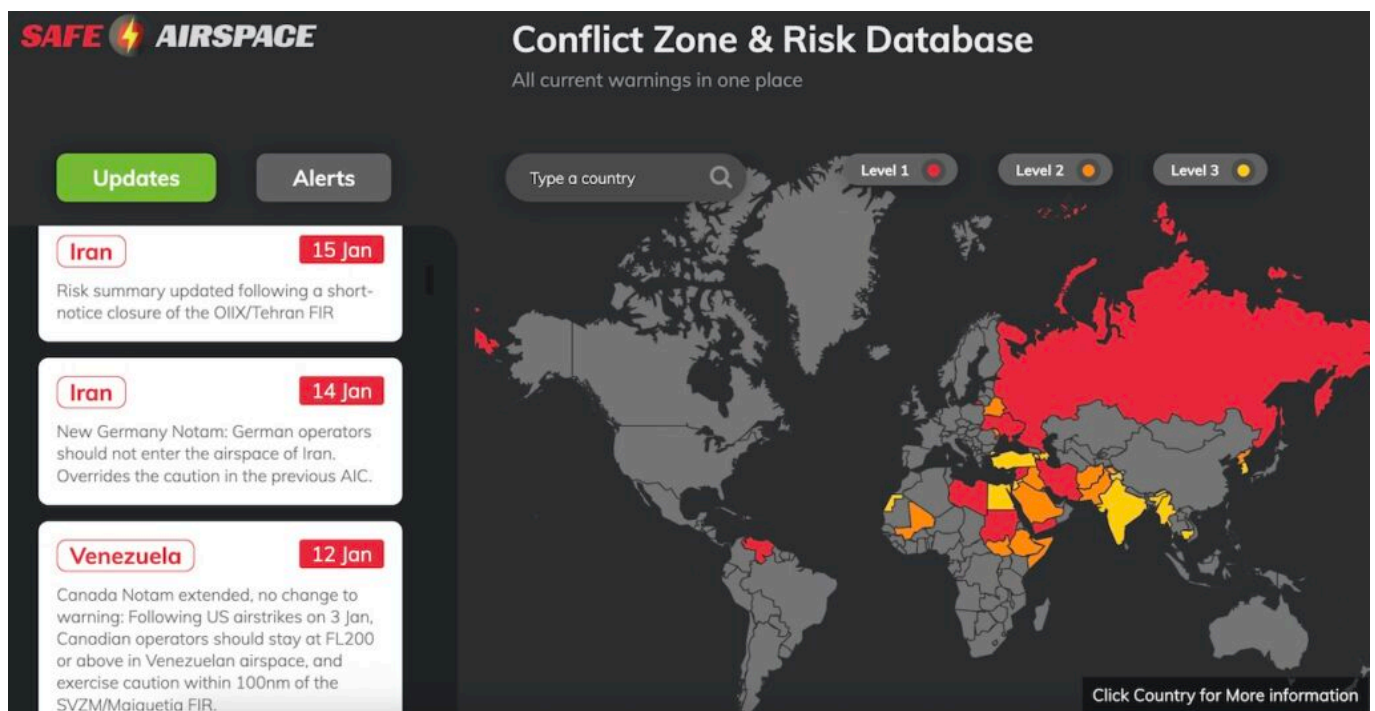
Continue to monitor the situation

Iran sits alongside the main Europe-Middle East transit corridor via Iraq/Kuwait/Bahrain, and the June 2025 Israel-Iran missile exchange showed how quickly events inside Iran can trigger **widespread airspace closures and warnings across the region**.

If further military activity involving Iran escalates, expect little warning – for Europe-Middle East flights, **the longer routing via Egypt/Saudi has been the more stable option** and keeps you further clear of Iranian airspace.



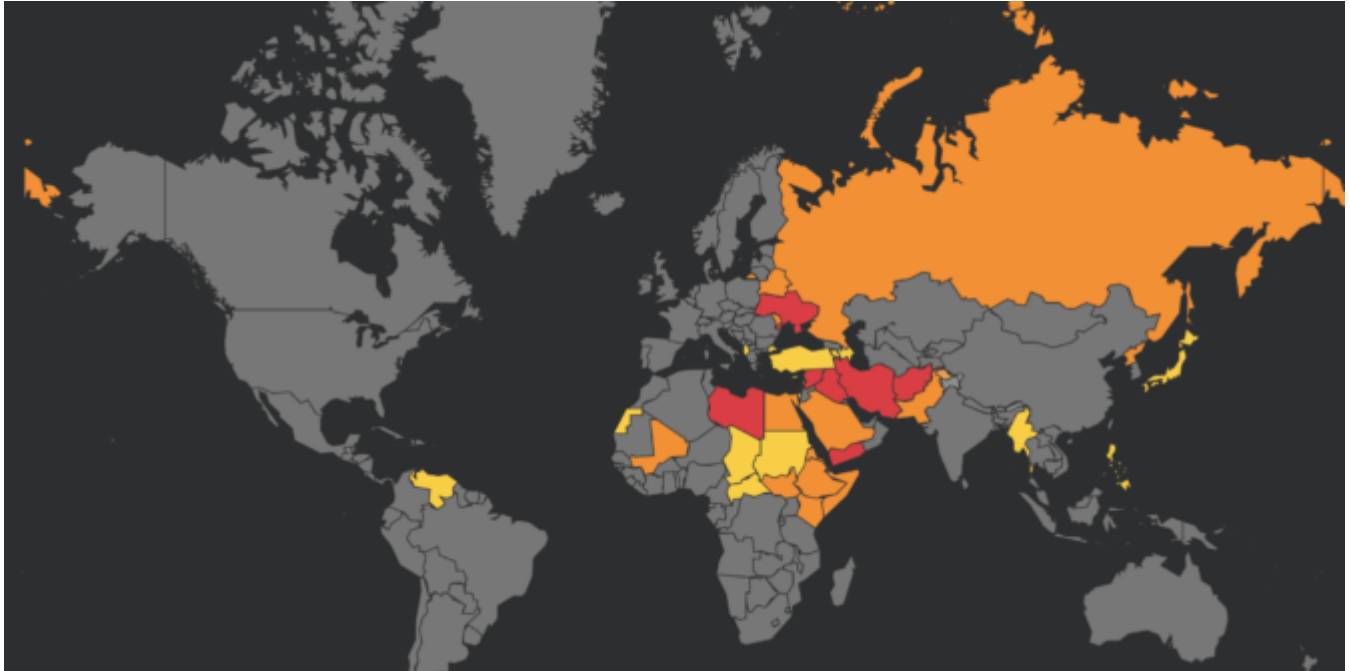
We'll continue to issue any updates via Opsgroup and Safeairspace.net. You can also reach us at blog@ops.group if you have any info to share.



Airspace Risk: Conflict Zones and Security in

2023

OPSGROUP Team
20 January, 2026



Over the past twelve months we have reported changes to a number of conflict zones which have the potential to affect airspace risk, along with other security concerns.

With the arrival of 2023, here's another look at these regions which have had the biggest impact on civil aviation safety.

Active conflict zones

We cover all the current conflict zones, with information on the context and details of current notams and warnings, on safeairspace.net

There are a number of conflict zones which remain active, but which have seen little change to the situation or risk rating. The following mentions refer to those which have seen **substantial change over the last year only**.

Ukraine/Russia

The war has continued since February last year with significant impact on airspace in Europe. **Ukrainian airspace remains closed at all levels** due to ongoing and intensive military activity. Russia has also persisted with **flight disruptions at ten airports** in Southwestern Russia, and another in Russian-annexed Crimea.

They include:

- URKA/Anapa
- UUOB/Belgorod
- UUBP/Bryansk
- URWI/Elista

- URKG/Gelendzhik
- URKK/Krasnodar
- UUOK/Kursk Vostochny
- UUOL/Lipetsk
- URRP/Rostov-on-Don
- UUOO/Voronezh
- UKFF/Simferopol (Crimea)

Ukrainian airspace remains **extremely dangerous** due to military activity. Those risks have also been shown to spill over into open airspace that borders it. Special care needs to be taken when operating anywhere near the conflict zone.

Official Advice

Major authorities continue to recommend avoiding Russian airspace, and prohibit against operations in Ukrainian airspace. They also advise to use caution for operations within 200nm of the Ukrainian border.

On Jan 14, debris from a Russian rocket was found in Northeastern Moldova near the Ukrainian border. It is the third such report since October last year. Spill over risks from the war in Ukraine are a known threat to civil aircraft in the **LUUU/Chisinau FIR**, which is mostly off limits. AIP Sup 01/23 allows flights in and out of **LUKK/Chisinau** under certain conditions only.

Iran/Iraq

The end of 2022 saw an **increase in activity** between Iran and Iraq, with multiple rocket attacks reported in the **ORER/Erbil region**. In September, Iran closed a section of airspace in the north of the country along the border with Iraq, and is using the area to launch missile and drone attacks at targets near ORER/Erbil Airport. Iran is warning their own operators against flying in Iraqi airspace.

Ongoing political turmoil, militant activities, and military operations in Iraq poses an elevated risk to aviation and airspace safety. In recent months, militants have fired rockets in Baghdad's Green Zone, causing flight disruptions at nearby ORBI/Baghdad airport; Iran continues to target northern Iraq with missile and drone attacks; and Turkey has been launching attacks along Iraq's northern border.

Official Advice

The airways in the vicinity of the border should be operated on with caution.

Towards the end of 2022, the US FAA extended their restrictions on Iran and Iraq by two years – US operators are prohibited from the ORBB/Baghdad FIR below FL320, and completely prohibited from OIIX/Tehran FIR. Other major authorities caution against operations below certain flight levels.

Potential Risk & Conflict Zones

North Korea

North Korea test fired an unprecedented number of missiles in 2022, all without prior notice. Things escalated late last year to **coincide with South Korean military exercises**. A large number of the missiles landed in the Sea of Japan, with one splashing down just 30nm off the coast of South Korea. Another **overflew Japanese territory**.

From December 26, there were further disruptions. Several **North Korean drones flew across the demilitarised zone** and entered the RKRR Incheon FIR, resulting in military jets being scrambled. **Ops at RKSI/Seoul and RKSS/Gimpo** were briefly suspended. We wrote about that [here](#).

The South Korean president has gone public announcing that any further incidents could threaten a military pact between the two countries, which has **potential to greatly increase overflight risk**.

Official Advice

The US prohibits flights across all North Korean airspace, including the oceanic part of the ZKKP/Pyongyang FIR over the Sea of Japan. Several other countries have airspace warnings in place which advise caution due to the risk posed by unannounced rocket launches.

The **primary risk** remains from debris from missile re-entries striking aircraft overflying the oceanic part of the ZKKP/Pyongyang FIR over the Sea of Japan. However, the escalation in tensions between North and South Korea, and the incursions on the Japanese EEZ raise the caution level within both Japanese and South Korean airspace.

China/Taiwan

In mid-2022, the US reported an increase in what they consider '*unsafe, unprofessional or non-standard intercepts*' by Chinese military aircraft in the South China Sea region. The China Sea Dispute is a growing concern.

China has also **increased political pressure on Taiwan**. Various military exercises by the Chinese took place throughout 2022. In August, China designated six areas of airspace as danger zones for a "military exercise," effectively barricading the country's airspace.

Official Advice

There are no reports of intercepts impacting civilian aircraft, but extra caution is advised because of a growing amount of military traffic active in the area.

Aircraft operating in Taiwan's ADIZ need to pay close attention to proper procedures – effectively squawk a discrete code and remain in contact with ATC at all times.

Turkey

Turkey has seen an increase in spillover effects from **Syrian and Iranian conflicts**. Reports say shelling and rocket strikes have occurred near a town in southern Turkey, near the border with Syria. Turkey has been carrying out airstrikes on Syria and Kurdish regions of Iraq since an earlier attack on Istanbul. The escalation in airstrikes, and risk in southern Turkish airspace from Syrian insurgents poses an **ongoing threat to civil aircraft**.

Official Advice

More caution should be taken if operating in southern regions of Turkey, along the border with Syria. **GPS jamming** within border areas can be expected.

Civil Unrest and Crime

Economic pressures around the world over the past twelve months seem to have escalated instances of widespread civil unrest that have directly impacted aviation.

Peru is the latest. It has been experiencing political turmoil since late last year which led to protests and riots. Demonstrators blocked access to several airports. The situation is still developing.

We also reported on similar issues in **Sri Lanka when a state of emergency was declared** back in July, 2022. Fortunately, in this case the situation was resolved.

Mexico has seen a **rise in civil unrest** since the start of January 2023, in response to the arrest of a primary member of a cartel. The unrest has been limited to the Sinoloa region, but has seen three airports impacted significantly.

Bouts of civil unrest can occur without warning and have potential to close down airports, and put crew on the ground at risk. The US Department of State is our best source of travel advisories and warnings. For operations to less developed countries in particular, it is important to monitor the political and security situation before visiting unfamiliar spots (*and if you have, please share with us at team@ops.group or via Airport Spy*).

2022 also saw a notable number of less common security issues, including bomb threats, the use of fake airline IDs and even imprisonment of crew without charge. A keyword search on your Member's Dashboard will help you find more information on all these things.

Western Sahara Airspace Update

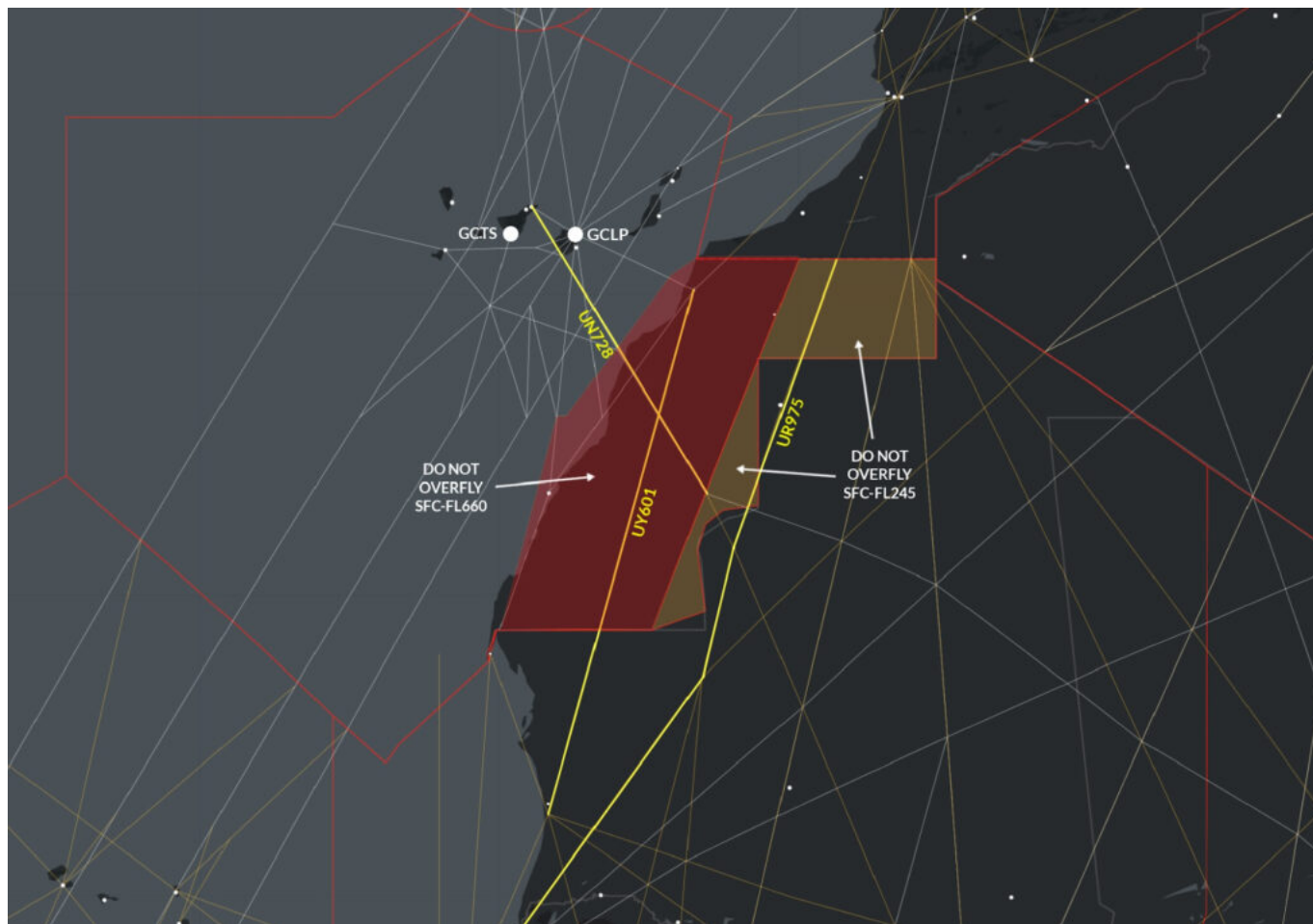
Chris Shieff

20 January, 2026

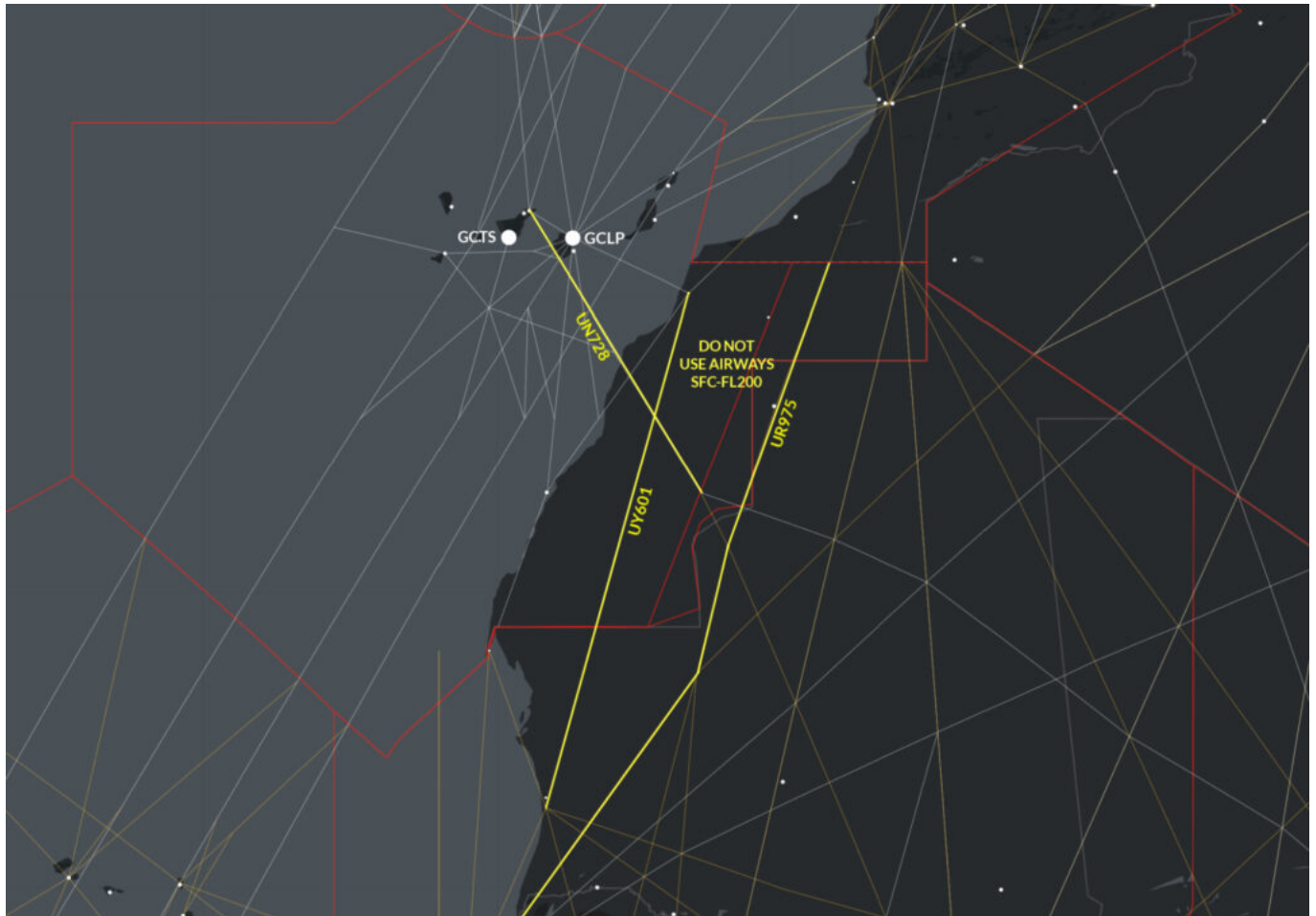


On May 4, the GCCC/Canarias FIR **updated their airspace warning** for Western Sahara, due to the ongoing conflict there.

Previously, they said that aircraft overflights should be completely avoided in the eastern part of the country (i.e. airways UY601 and UN728), and should not be below FL245 in the western part. Here's how that looked:



However, the **updated warning** issued on May 4 simply advises operators to **avoid using the airways over Western Sahara below FL200**:



Here's the Notam:

GCCC B3323/21 - OPERATORS ARE REQUESTED TO EXERCISE PARTICULAR CAUTION DURING FLIGHT OPERATIONS IN WESTERN SAHARA AS PART OF FIR CANARIAS. IT IS RECOMMENDED TO AVOID OVERFLIGHT AT FLIGHT LEVELS BELOW FL200 ON THE FOLLOWING ROUTES: UY601, UN728 AND UT975.
04 MAY 08:53 2021 UNTIL 04 JUN 23:59 2021 ESTIMATED.
CREATED: 04 MAY 08:54 2021

Still, not much of a warning. What's really important is exactly what is missing: why.

The answer: **Because the airways are over an active conflict zone, with a known threat of anti-aircraft fire.**

Western Sahara is effectively divided straight down the middle, literally by a wall. Morocco controls one side, while the region's independence movement (the Polisario) controls the other. In Nov 2020, the Polisario declared war on Morocco.



Western Sahara: Travel Advice



Please note Briefing Maps are not taken as necessarily representing the views of the UK government on boundaries or political status. This map has been designed for briefing purposes only and should not be used for determining the precise location of places or features, or considered an authority on the delimitation of international boundaries or on the spelling of place and feature names.

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FCDO (TA) 046 Edition 1 (September 2020)

Why do they want to fight?

The two have never gotten along. **The Polisario want independence** and were at war with the Moroccan Government for a very long time, until a fragile ceasefire agreement in 1991. Since then there has always been tension.

In early Nov 2020, a Polisario protest blocked a whole bunch of Moroccan truck drivers at the border with Mauritania, shutting down an essential route that connects Morocco to the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa. Morocco weren't happy, and **breached the ceasefire agreement** by sending forces into the demilitarized zone to remove them.

The Polisario immediately declared war on Morocco, and clashes began straight away.

Why does it matter?

The FAA were onto it when they immediately carried out a risk assessment and published a notice. The big deal is that the Polisario are likely to have access to **anti-aircraft weaponry** left over from the previous war. This includes man-portable air defence systems (MANPADS) and surface-to-air missiles. The FAA think these weapons pose **a risk to aircraft as high as 12,000 feet**.

To make matters worse, they are suspicious that Morocco are flying drones over their territory – something that has been denied by Morocco. It wouldn't be the first time an aircraft has been shot down there either – **the Polisario downed two DC-7 airliners** with missiles back in 1988.

What about airspace?

The sky over Western Sahara airspace is split between two FIRs – **GCCC/Canarias** and **G000/Dakar**. If the

conflict escalates further, this is likely to complicate things.

So far there has been only one warning from the Canarias side – the NOTAM above. **Nothing from Dakar yet.**

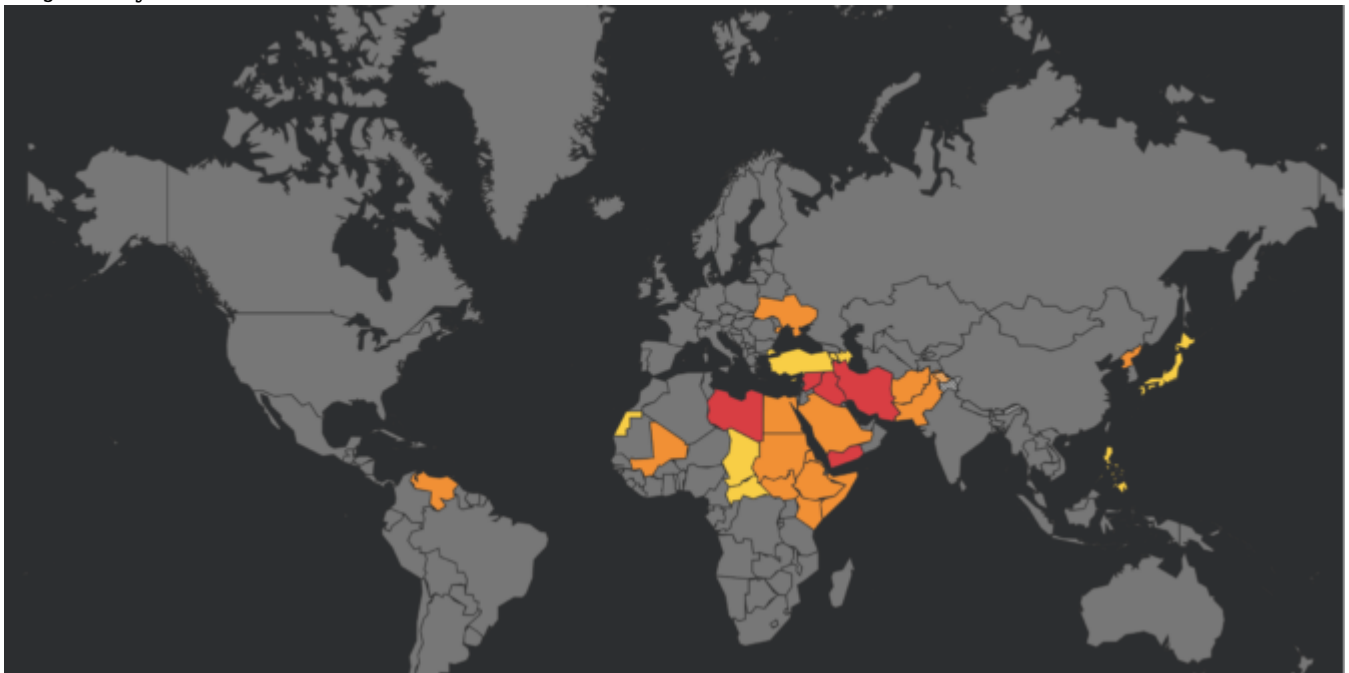
There are currently **three major airways** affected. Two of them (UY601 and UT975) run the length of the region in a south westerly direction – likely to be used by aircraft transiting some routes between **Europe and South America**. The other airway, UN728 is a direct track from the coast to **GCTS/Tenerife** which may be used by smaller aircraft or those doing tech stops in the **Canary Islands**.

So if you're planning flights to the Canaries, or overflying central Africa, pay close attention to the risks involved. Continue to monitor Safeairspace.net as the situation develops.

SafeAirspace: 2021 Update

Chris Shieff

20 January, 2026



2020 was a heck of a ride. But therein lies the risk – **what else might you have missed amongst all the Covid-related noise?** Sadly, conflicts and their risks to civil aviation have not taken a break during the pandemic.

As it's a new year, we thought **a summary of Airspace Risk** was called for. Here's what's making headlines at the moment:

Saudi Arabia & Yemen

Houthi rebels in Yemen are regularly firing **explosive drones and rockets** across the border into Saudi Arabia, and these usually target airports in the south such as **OEAH/Abha** and **OEGN/Jizan**. Their latest attack was on **OYAA/Aden** airport in late December which resulted in mass casualties.

Saudi Arabia continues to retaliate with airstrikes. The latest was in the capital **Sanaa** just weeks ago,

where multiple munitions landed near the airport.

The risk to aviation is that **overflying aircraft may get caught in the crossfire** or might be **misidentified by Saudi air defences**. Active terrorist groups in Yemen may also use anti-aircraft weaponry to target foreign interests.

The FAA prohibit all US operators from entering most of the OYSC/Sanaa FIR at any level. Only two airways are allowed, and they are well off the coast – **UT702** and **M999**.

There are no restrictions on Saudi Arabia but **use caution in the southern regions**. France and Germany have issued their own warnings.

*SafeAirspace **Yemen** page – [click here](#).*

*SafeAirspace **Saudi Arabia** page – [click here](#).*

Iraq

Rocket attacks on military interests at airports have become a common occurrence. They are generally fired by local militia without warning. **ORBI/Baghdad** is frequently targeted, along with other airports including **ORER/Erbil**. There is a clear risk to aircraft at low levels.

US relations were further strained through 2020 with multiple attacks on the US embassy in Baghdad. The tensions escalated to a point where the US considering closing it.

Foreign aircraft continue to be at risk from **armed militia who have access to portable anti-aircraft weaponry**, while **misidentification by the air defence systems** of multiple foreign forces in the country is also possible.

The FAA has extended its ban on US operators entering the Baghdad FIR **at any level**. Even though the SFAR says you can enter above FL320, the long-running Notam KICZ A0036/30 says otherwise.

*SafeAirspace **Iraq** page – [click here](#).*

Syria

There have been several recent **Israeli airstrikes on targets throughout Syria**. In late December there are reports that Israeli fighters transited Lebanese airspace at low level causing alarm in Beirut before attacking targets in Western Syria. Just weeks ago, several sites around Damascus were targeted by Israeli missiles.

The primary risk is that aircraft may be **misidentified by Syrian air defence systems** which are regularly activated. Civil operators may get **caught in the crossfire** as missiles may erroneously lock on to the wrong aircraft.

The FAA are taking no chances – the ban on US operators entering the OSTT/Damascus FIR at any level has been extended a full three years to 2023.

*SafeAirspace **Syria** page – [click here](#).*

South Sudan

Just this week ICAO issued a concerning warning about the risk to aircraft operating below FL245 in the **HSSX/Khartoum FIR over South Sudan**, or flying in and out of **HSSJ/Juba**. They are 'gravely' concerned about ATC disruptions, a lack of contingencies, inadequate training of controllers, limited info about equipment outages and a lack of co-ordination with other ATS units.

SafeAirspace **South Sudan** page – [click here](#).

Emerging Conflict Zones

2020 saw **three new conflict zones** emerge, here is what is happening with them now.

Ethiopia

A civil conflict erupted in October last year in the **Tigray region of Northern Ethiopia**. The government went to war with the TPLF – a regional force seeking independence.

The region's airports were closed and TPLF showed an intent to internationalise the conflict by attacking aviation interests. They fired rockets into Eritrea targeting **HHAS/Asmara**, and also attacked multiple airports to the South of the Tigray region.

Two airways were closed (T124, and M308) with **no explanation of the risk**. Other airways remained open but uncomfortably close to the fight – especially UG300, UN321 and UL432. **No airspace warnings** were issued despite the dangers.

What's the latest?

In late November Ethiopian forces captured the region's capital **Mekelle** and regained control. Remaining TPLF forces have retreated leaving behind a humanitarian disaster and a vow to continue the fight. Since then, the **airway closures have been removed** and things have gone quiet, **but an airspace risk remains** – armed militia continue to be active in Northern regions and may be looking to make a statement. **Be wary of operating in the area.**

Western Sahara

Late last year the region's independence movement (the Polisario) declared war on Morocco for breaching a ceasefire agreement. The FAA published a warning that the Polisario **might have access to anti-aircraft weaponry** left over from previous conflicts.

What's the latest?

It is still an **active conflict zone**. The fight has reached the international stage after the US declared their support for Morocco. The Polisario have indicated they are willing to at least talk, but so far have not put down their weapons. So, it is a wait-and-see type deal.

The risk to overflying aircraft remains. The GCCC/Canarias FIR keep extending a Notam advising operators to **not fly below FL200** on the following airways: **UY601, UN728 and UT975**. However, the reason is still missing: because of the **risk of anti-aircraft fire**. The GOOO/Dakar FIR haven't issued any warnings despite the threat. Take care if operating in the area.

Armenia-Azerbaijan

In September last year, an ethnic conflict erupted over a disputed territory in Western Azerbaijan – **Nagorno-Karabakh**. The fight was between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

As a major air corridor for en-route traffic, there were **significant flight disruptions**. Azerbaijan swiftly closed all but one west/eastbound airway and routed traffic via Georgia. Armenia asked aircraft to take extra fuel and expect re-routes. The conflict was short but intense, with heavy artillery fire from both sides. The conflict eventually spread beyond the contested regions with longer range weapons. The entire border region posed a **risk for civil aircraft**.

What's the latest?

For once the news is good. In November a ceasefire agreement was signed with the help of Russia. Armenia effectively lost and withdrew from the region and **the conflict was officially over**. Armenia removed its airspace warning, while Azerbaijan re-opened the affected airways and a large section of airspace near the border.

With the conflict now over, and no new reports of significant fighting since the peace agreement in November, direct crossing traffic between the two countries is now technically possible again. However, **most East-West flights are currently still electing to go further north** instead, connecting between Azerbaijan and Georgia's airspace, avoiding Armenia.

What about Safeairspace.net?

Our conflict zone and risk database is **updated constantly**. We assess risk with official sources and build a simple picture for you of those need-to know-places.

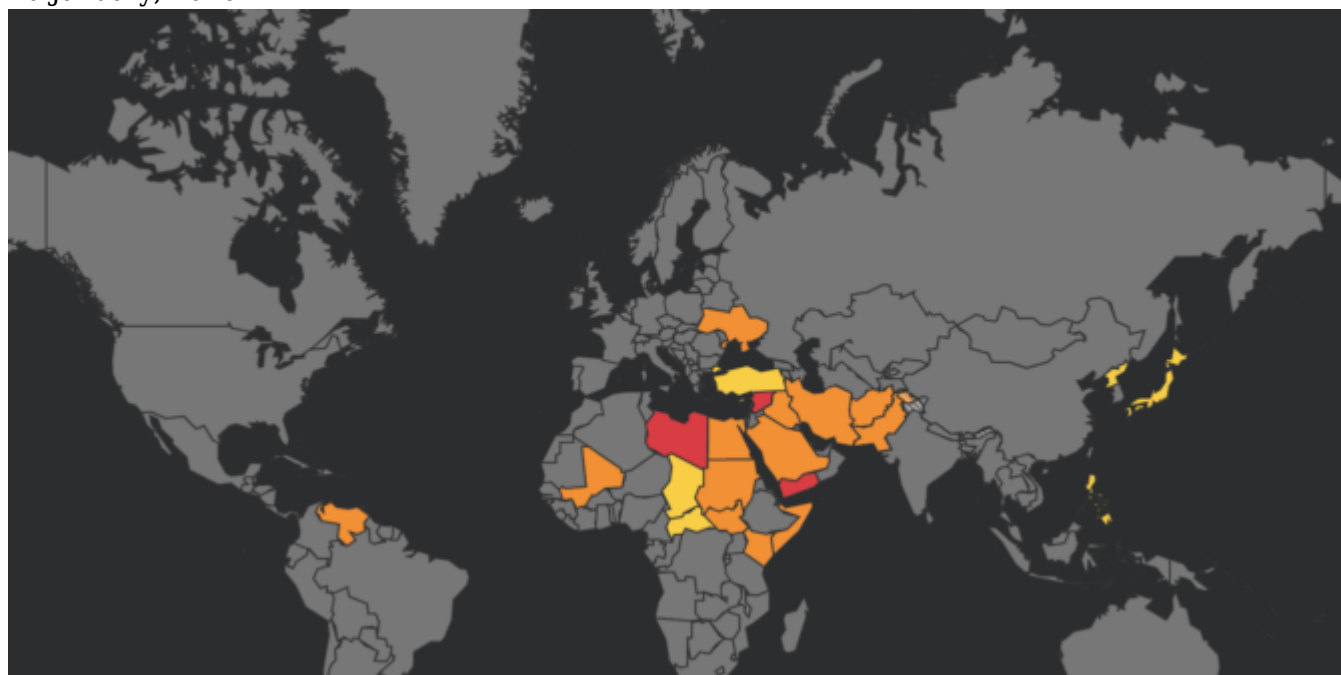
There are currently 5 regions which are assessed as a **Level 1 Risk - No Fly**. These are: **Iraq, Iran, Yemen, Libya, and Syria**.

Head over to SafeAirspace.net and take a look. With a single click you can download a **risk briefing** of the entire world in just a few pages of nice simple English.

The mission of SafeAirspace is this: to provide a single, independent, and eternally free resource for all airspace risk warnings, so that airlines and aircraft operators can easily see the current risk picture for unfamiliar airspace. If you know of a risk not listed on the site, or you have anything else to add, please get in touch with us at news@ops.group

New features - Conflict Zone & Risk Database

David Mumford
20 January, 2026



To make it even easier to get a current risk picture for International Flight Ops, we've added a bunch of

new features to the **Conflict Zone & Risk Database** at SafeAirspace.net.

Thank you to all OPSGROUP members – all our airlines, aircraft operators, pilots, dispatchers, and industry colleagues who've made this possible. Now we have a simple, single source of information for all risk warnings, analysis, that includes our Risk Radar project (so **for the first time** we can see what other operators are doing), all state warnings, and the ability to auto-generate a live Summary PDF of the current situation.

Start at SafeAirspace.net, where you have the current risk map, and feed of Updates and Alerts:



On each country page, you will now see Risk Radar information like this:



For each country, you'll see the current list of warnings, both from the country concerned and other states:

| Current warnings list : | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Source | Reference | Issued | Valid to |
| Germany | Notam B0261/19 | 05 Apr 2019 | 04 Jul 2019 |
| France | AIC 03/19 | 24 Jan 2019 | Ongoing |
| USA | Notam KICZ A0025/18 | 10 Dec 2018 | 30 Dec 2020 |
| UK | UK AIP ENR 1.1 [1.4.5] | 22 Oct 2018 | Ongoing |
| USA | Notam KICZ A0009/18 | 14 Apr 2018 | Ongoing |
| UK | UK AIP ENR 1.1 [1.4.5] | 12 Jun 2015 | Ongoing |

Scrolling down, you'll get the current Notam/AIC/AIP reference and a copy of the text:

Source: USA

Reference: [US FAA Background Notice](#)

Issued: 16-May-19, valid until: 16-May-20

Plain English: Exercise caution in the overwater airspace above the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman region.

Due to increased political tensions and heightened military activities in the region, there is an increasing inadvertent risk to U.S. civil aviation operating in overwater airspace above the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman. As a result, on 16 May 2019, the FAA issued Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) EICL A0015/19, advising U.S. civil flight operations to exercise caution when operating in the above area.

For each country, there is a Summary and Analysis, so you get some background on why these warnings exist:

Iran


Risk Level: **Two - Danger exists**

[\[about risk levels \]](#)


Developments in Iran should be closely monitored, especially for US operators. In June 2018, tension between the US and Iran has continued to rise, with the US sending 1,000 additional troops to the region, while Iran announced the deployment of an indigenous air defense missile system, capable of tracking and shooting down six targets at the same time. On 16 May 2019, the US issued a new Notam and Background Notice advising operators to exercise caution in the overwater airspace above the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman region. The US has deployed warships and aircraft to the Gulf, and several attacks on tankers in the Strait of Hormuz have been blamed on Iran.

Consider carefully overflights of the Tehran FIR (OIR), as landings in Iran for US operators especially could be an issue. A Norwegian 737 was stuck in Iran for two months, due to sanctions around spare parts. The US says that Iran has publicly made threats to US military operations, and are concerned about "a possible risk of miscalculation or misidentification, especially during periods of heightened political tension and rhetoric". They also warn of increased GPS jamming by Iran throughout this region.

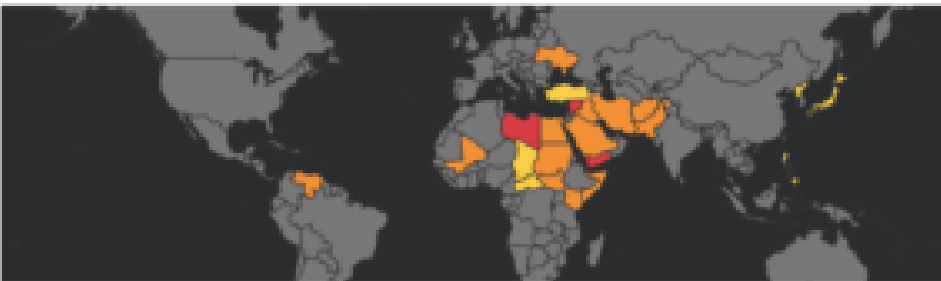
A new feature is the ability to generate a **live summary** into a PDF, so you can print out everything into one document to share with your crew, dispatchers, and security team:

 **Print PDF**

19 JUN 2019
WORLD AIRSPACE RISK SUMMARY



| | |
|---|--|
| RISK SUMMARY 19 JUN 2019 | ISSUED BY OPSGROUP SITA HELLFISH AIRLFSOH AFTN RMCDRAAL EMAIL: REPORT@SAFEAIRSPACE.NET |
|---|--|



World airspace risk map at SafeAirspace.net as at Jun 19th, 2019

LEVEL 2: Danger exists

Criteria: Any of these will trigger Level 2: A prohibition warning is issued by another state, for specific altitudes or areas (usually with a "Do not operate below FLxxx"), but not for the entire airspace, OR more than one caution warning from other states, OR an OPSGROUP quick assessment of risk shows a clear threat to operators, and that risk is at least low.

Iran Level 2

Developments in Iran should be closely monitored, especially for US operators. In June 2019, tension between the US and Iran has continued to rise, with the US sending 1,000 additional troops to the region, while Iran announced the deployment of an indigenous air defense missile system, capable of tracking and shooting down six targets at the same time. On 16 May 2019, the US issued a new Notam and Background Notice advising operators to exercise caution in the overseas airspace above the Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman region. The US has deployed warships and aircraft to the Gulf, and several attacks on tankers in the Strait of Hormuz have been blamed on Iran.

Consider carefully overflights of the Tehran FIR (OIRX), as landings in Iran for US operators especially could be an issue. A Norwegian 737 was stuck in Iran for two months, due to sanctions around spare parts. The US says that Iran has

Kenya Level 2

Kenya is affected by the ongoing Somali Civil War. There is a high threat from terrorism, including kidnapping. The main threat comes from extremists in response to Kenya's military intervention in Somalia. IED attack at HKJK/Nairobi in 2014.

Risk Radar 12% avoiding

26FEB19 USA Notam KCCZ A0002/19 Exercise caution below FL260 in Kenya's airspace east of 40 degrees East longitude (the border region with Somalia) due to extremist and militant activity.

26FEB19 USA US FAA Background Notice Exercise caution below FL260 in Kenya's airspace east of 40 degrees East longitude (the border region with Somalia) due to extremist and militant activity.

13AUG16 UK UK AIP ENR 1.1 (1.4.5) Risk to aircraft overflying Kenya at less than FL250.

You can download an example of the PDF, generated on June 19th, 2019, here:

PDF Summary - World Airspace Risk at SafeAirspace.net



Download PDF, 800kb

You can generate your own live PDF here.

About the Conflict Zone & Risk Database

The Conflict Zone & Risk Database provides a single, independent, and eternally free resource for all airspace risk warnings, so that airlines and aircraft operators can easily see the current risk picture for unfamiliar airspace.

Safe Airspace is an initiative from OPSGROUP, an independent organisation with 5000 members, made up of airlines, corporate flight departments, private operators, charter operators, military, and government.

The Conflict Zone & Risk Database was launched in September 2016 as the lifespan of the ICAO CZIR was

coming to a close, keeping the work ICAO did on the project alive, and providing the autonomous platform needed to make the concept work.

Objective - one single source

A single source for all risk warnings issued about an individual country, independent of any political or commercial motivation, so that a pilot, flight dispatcher, security department, or anyone responsible for flight safety can quickly and easily see the current risk picture.

Oversight and independence

The CZ&RD is managed by OPSGROUP. Because we are outside the chain of government, we are responsible only to our member airlines and aircraft operators, and more importantly, to the people ensuring a safe flight operation, and to the passengers that fly on our aircraft. For this reason, all information pertinent to a country can be assured to be carried here.

Eternally free

To remain completely independent of any bias, and to ensure that everybody has access, the Conflict Zone & Risk Database is completely free of charge. We have no commercial interest in publishing this information, it exists as a public service because our members care deeply about flight safety.

Contacting us

We rely on your input. If you have information to add, please email report@safeairspace.net. You can also use this address to discuss any content here. The collaborative effort is our focus. We're still a team of humans, and we miss stuff. If you see something missing here, please tell us!

All submissions are anonymous, and our only concern is for the safety of all airspace users – the crew and the passengers. We appreciate your help.

“THIS NOTAM IS AN EMERGENCY ORDER” - FAA on Venezuela

Mark Zee
20 January, 2026



At 8.30pm tonight, the FAA issued a new **“Do Not Fly”** instruction to US operators, barring all operations into or over Venezuela, unless operating at or above FL260, and giving a **window of 48 hours** to leave the country.

The order comes on a day of an information battle waged between Maduro and Guaidó, and although the coup status is uncertain, one thing is clear: taking your aircraft to Venezuela is not a good idea.

The new Notam, KICZ A0013/19, has as postscript: “THIS NOTAM IS AN EMERGENCY ORDER ISSUED UNDER 49 USC 40113(A) AND 46105(C).” **It gives US operators 48 hours to leave Venezuela.**

Over the past year, the situation in Venezuela has steadily declined, and in OPSGROUP we have issued multiple alerts and warnings, most recently today, on the back of several member reports:



FSB News APP 7:38 PM



SVZZ/ Venezuela - Risk SVZZ/Venezuela A coup may be happening right now, but even if it doesn't work, the situation remains dicey. Member report from their flight last night: National Guard inspects all aircraft in and out. Taxiway and runway conditions worsening. Many areas of missing asphalt and uneven surfaces. Hazardous to tires.

The Venezuelan authorities had also published a Notam on 30 APR banning all GA/BA flights from operating to/from airports in the country, but this has since been cancelled.

The new FAA Notam leads with:

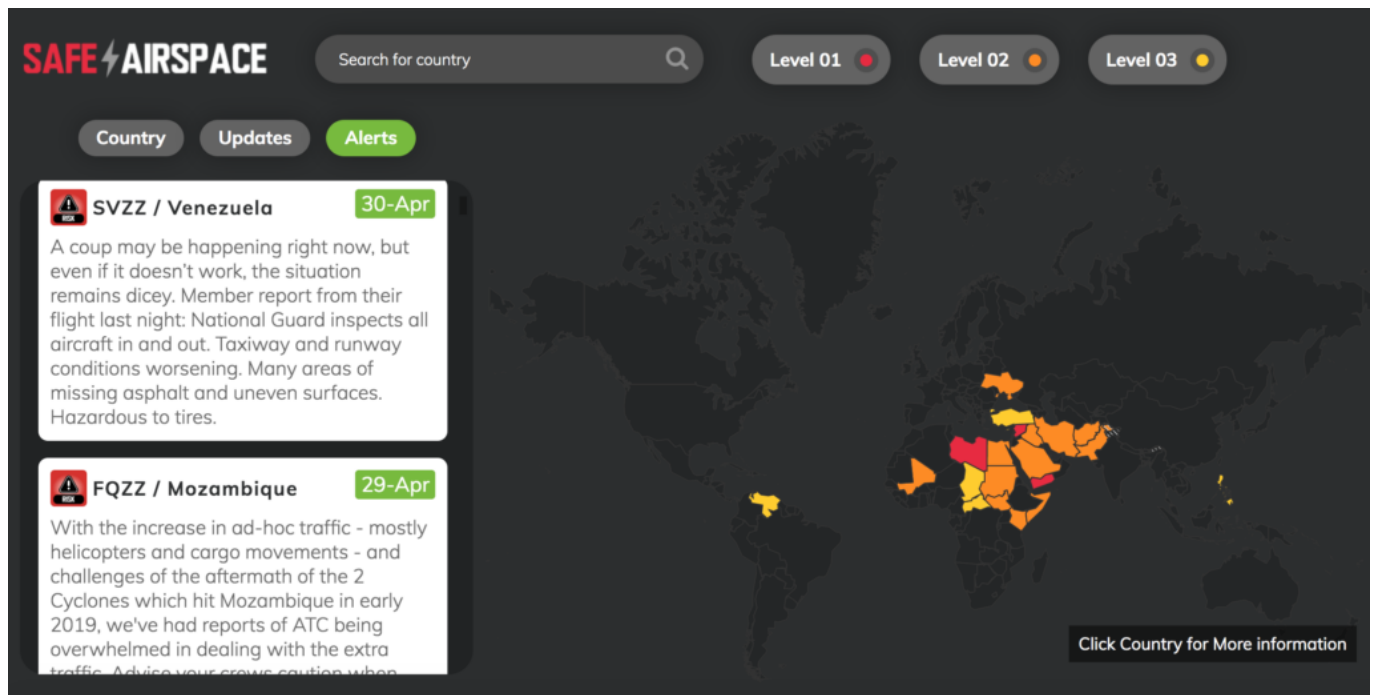
“ALL FLIGHT OPERATIONS IN THE TERRITORY AND AIRSPACE OF VENEZUELA AT ALTITUDES **BELOW FL 260** BY THE PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A BELOW ARE **PROHIBITED UNTIL FURTHER ADVISED** DUE TO INCREASING POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND TENSIONS IN VENEZUELA AND THE ASSOCIATED INADVERTENT RISK TO FLIGHT OPERATIONS.”

and is issued as a Permanent Notam with no expiration date.

Rerouting options for overflights choosing to avoid, would be either west via Colombia, or east via Guyana and Piarco.



The full FAA Notam text is below. SafeAirspace.net is now updated with the new information.



FAA Notam KICZ A0013/19 issued May 1st, 2019, 0025Z.:

KICZ A0013/19 – SECURITY..UNITED STATES OF AMERICA PROHIBITION FOR VENEZUELA

ALL FLIGHT OPERATIONS IN THE TERRITORY AND AIRSPACE OF VENEZUELA AT ALTITUDES BELOW FL 260 BY THE PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A BELOW ARE PROHIBITED UNTIL FURTHER ADVISED DUE TO INCREASING POLITICAL INSTABILITY AND TENSIONS IN VENEZUELA AND THE ASSOCIATED INADVERTENT RISK TO FLIGHT OPERATIONS.

A. APPLICABILITY. THIS NOTAM APPLIES TO: ALL U.S. AIR CARRIERS AND COMMERCIAL OPERATORS; ALL PERSONS EXERCISING THE PRIVILEGES OF AN AIRMAN CERTIFICATE ISSUED BY THE FAA, EXCEPT SUCH PERSONS OPERATING U.S.-REGISTERED AIRCRAFT FOR A FOREIGN AIR CARRIER; AND ALL OPERATORS OF AIRCRAFT REGISTERED IN THE UNITED STATES, EXCEPT WHERE THE OPERATOR OF SUCH AIRCRAFT IS A FOREIGN AIR CARRIER.

B. PERMITTED OPERATIONS. THIS NOTAM DOES NOT PROHIBIT PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A (APPLICABILITY) FROM CONDUCTING FLIGHT OPERATIONS IN THE ABOVE-NAMED AREA WHEN SUCH OPERATIONS ARE AUTHORIZED EITHER BY ANOTHER AGENCY OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE FAA OR BY A DEVIATION, EXEMPTION, OR OTHER AUTHORIZATION ISSUED BY THE FAA ADMINISTRATOR. OPERATORS MUST CALL THE FAA WASHINGTON OPERATIONS CENTER AT 202-267-3333 TO INITIATE COORDINATION FOR FAA AUTHORIZATION TO CONDUCT OPERATIONS.

C. ALLOWANCES. PERSONS DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH A ABOVE WHO ARE IN THE TERRITORY AND

AIRSPACE OF VENEZUELA AT THE TIME THIS NOTAM IS ISSUED MAY DEPART THE TERRITORY AND AIRSPACE OF VENEZUELA BY THE MOST EXPEDITIOUS POSSIBLE ROUTE WITHIN 48 HOURS FROM THE TIME THIS NOTAM IS ISSUED, IF THE PILOT IN COMMAND DETERMINES THAT THE OPERATION CAN BE CONDUCTED SAFELY.

D. EMERGENCY SITUATIONS. IN AN EMERGENCY THAT REQUIRES IMMEDIATE DECISION AND ACTION FOR THE SAFETY OF THE FLIGHT, THE PILOT IN COMMAND OF AN AIRCRAFT MAY DEVIATE FROM THIS NOTAM TO THE EXTENT REQUIRED BY THAT EMERGENCY.

THIS NOTAM IS AN EMERGENCY ORDER ISSUED UNDER 49 USC 40113(A) AND 46105(C).
SFC - FL259; 01 MAY 00:25 2019 UNTIL PERM. CREATED: 01 MAY 00:28 2019