

# Baghdad FIR still reopening - but wait a little

Declan Selleck  
19 October, 2017

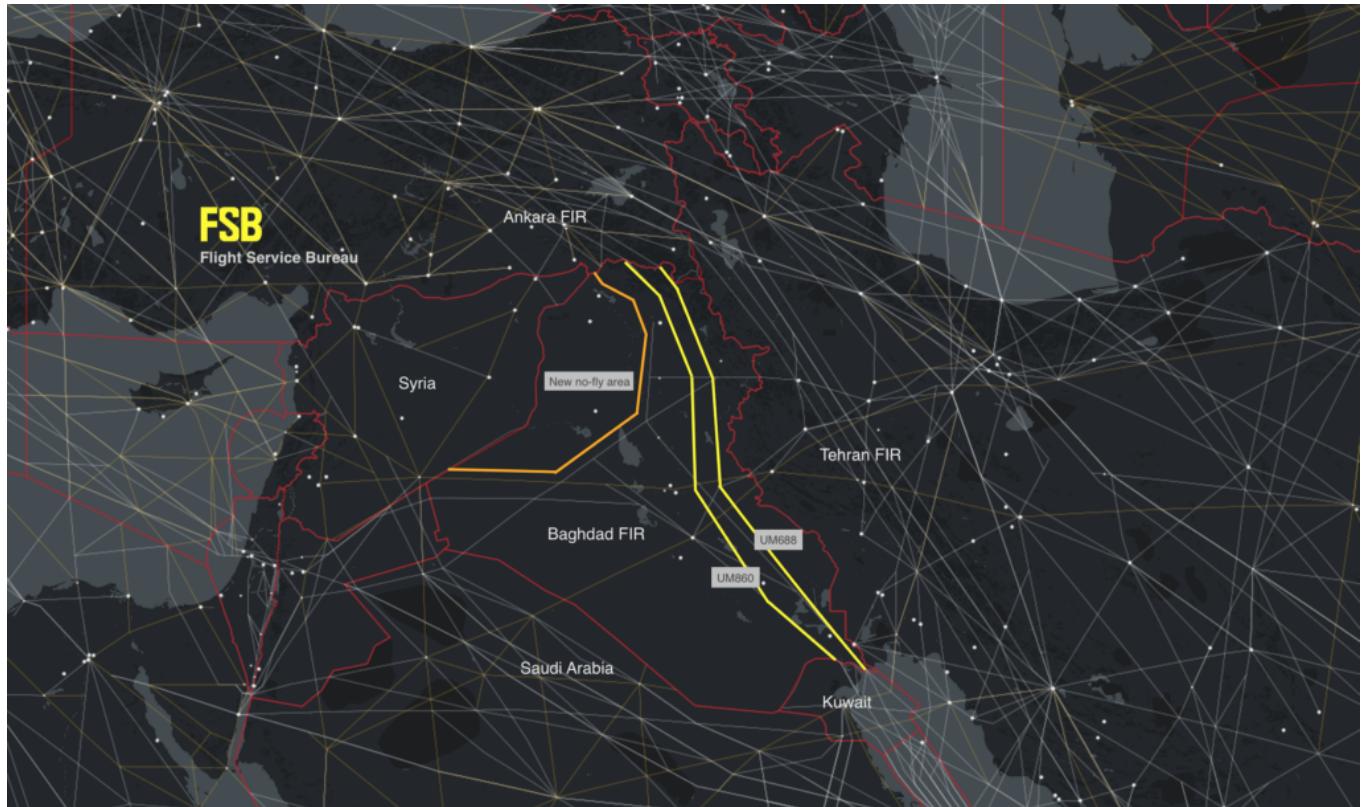


So, last week we told you that **Iraqi Airspace was about to re-open to international overflights**. It still is, though the bit where it was going to happen this week is no longer true.

The FAA were about to hit 'publish' on a Notam this past Monday, which would have enabled US airlines to start overflying Iraq again. The text of this Notam included:

- An amendment to the existing Iraq restriction
- **An authorisation for US airlines and operators to overfly Iraq at or above FL260**

But then, a military operation by Iraqi forces to take control of Kirkuk from the Kurds the same day, created concern as to overflight safety. **Kirkuk sits pretty much underneath the UM860 airway** on the map below.



So for now, do nothing and wait. It seems the situation is de-escalating, and we expect now that the Notam may be issued as early as next week.

Once that happens, we'd expect other countries to follow suit and allow overflights in the same way, meaning that these two airways will become busy again.

Keep an eye out, we'll let you know.

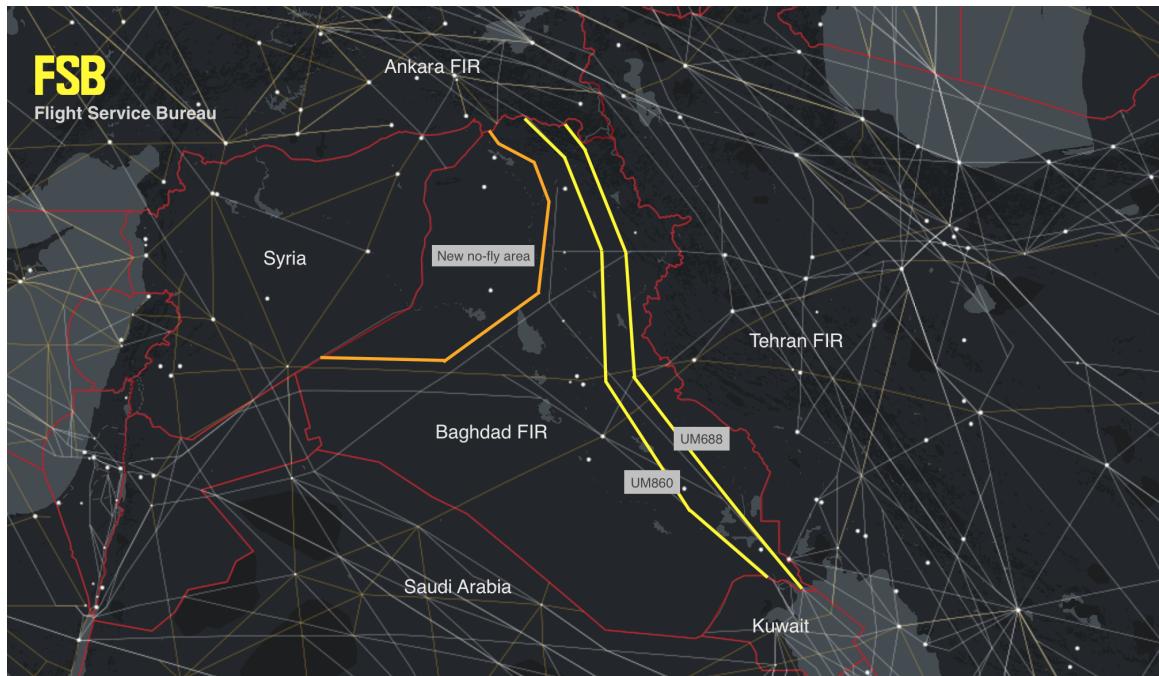
See also:

- 12 October 2017, "Iraq Airspace to re-open for overflights"

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## Iraq Airspace to re-open for overflights

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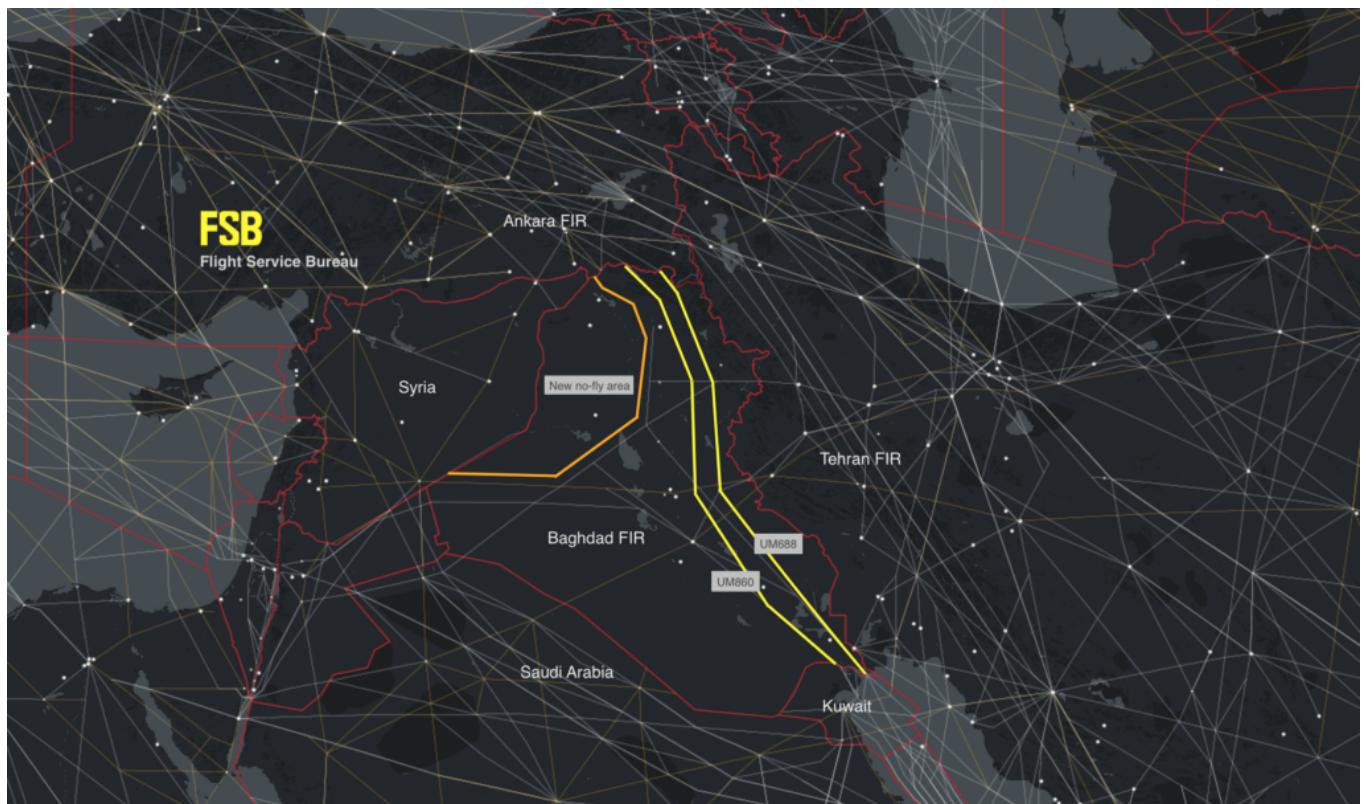


**ORBB/Baghdad FIR** Overflights of Iraq may be permitted to resume as early as next week, allowing international carriers access again to several previously heavily used routes through the eastern side of the Baghdad FIR.

In May of this year, SFAR 77 – banning US operators from operating within Iraqi airspace – lapsed, and was replaced by Notam KICZ 10/2017 – which had much the same wording.

However, on October 3rd, Iraq issued a new Notam (A0477/17) – with a **new restricted area** in the northwest of the FIR, from Surface to FL460. The previous restricted areas 601 and 701 were withdrawn.

This re-shuffling of restricted airspace paves the way for two major international air routes to be reopened, UM860 and UM688 – which were realigned in April for this purpose, allowing operators additional route options through the Middle East to Europe and vv.



**FSB** expects an official announcement shortly, and will update operators further. OpsGroup members will be notified directly.