

# Bogged down in Bogota

OPSGROUP Team

1 November, 2021



Bogota International has a problem. **Severe delays**. It seems they are as long as the airport's official name - *El Dorado International Airport Luis Carlos Galán Sarmiento*.

And it isn't just the airport with the problem - delays cost money, they frustrate passengers, waste fuel, result in aircraft circling in the air, and make pilots angry.

## **Luckily IATA have a plan.**

A set of recommendations were issued by them on October 7, 2021 suggesting how these severe delays might be severely improved.

For those who don't speak Espa ola, here it is (briefly) in English:

- Elimination of the ground delay program.
- Prioritisation of commercial services during peak hours.
- Restriction of non-commercial services to off-peak hours without exceeding allocated quota.
- Ensure ATC centers and control towers are adequately staffed.

## **Before we get into all that though...**

We thought we would take a look at the airport, procedures and current situation, and ask just how bad the "severe" delays are.

## **How bad are the severe delays?**

The main problem seems to be with the **ground delays**.

Since May 2021 the Ground Delay Program (the one that holds aircraft at their departure airport because

there isn't room for them at the destination) has been invoked some **300 times**. On one day alone it resulted in 130 affected flights, meaning 17,600 passengers.

### **And on average the delays were between 2 and 4 hours.**

To compare, this is more than all the US airports combined (the August stat was 63), and more than JFK/New York, EGLL/London Heathrow or RJTT/Tokyo Haneda which, let's face it, often have delays.

*Interesting fact: It isn't just the airport. It is also the most congested city in the world. Drivers lose on average 133 hours of their life to traffic jams every year.*



Scheduled, commercial flights will be prioritised.

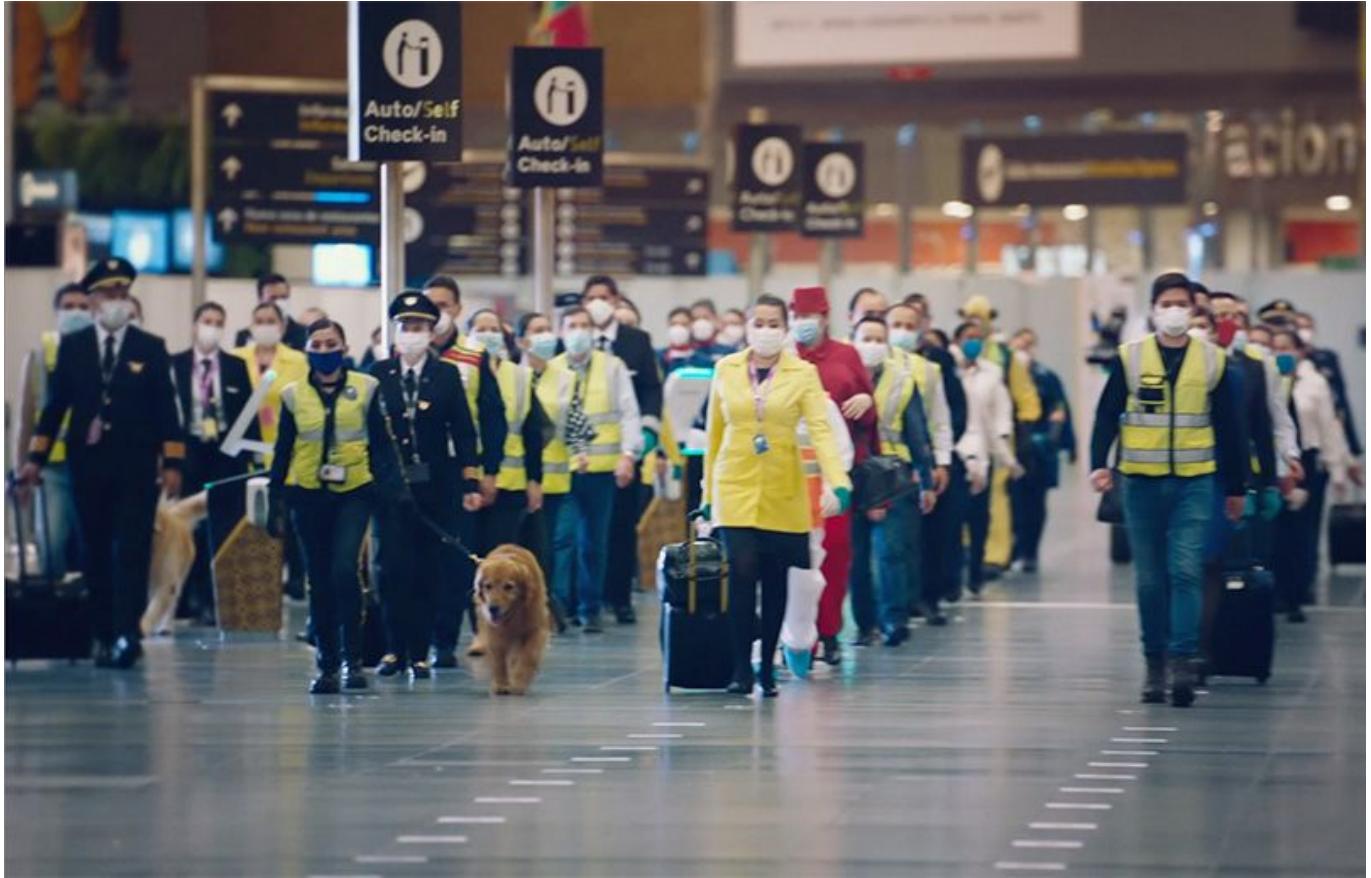
### **Elimination of the GDP**

This is \*normally used at airports that have some sort of bad weather type situation going on, and is designed to **prevent aircraft having to hold in the air** because, you know, fuel issues...

If you want to read more about it, then check out this handy article from the NBAA which is all about just that.

The way it is being applied at SKBO unfortunately is not entirely as intended and while it prevents holding in the air, it is having a **knock on effect** at departure airports with blocked stands, and for operators with aircraft utilisation and schedules.

So eliminating the program will hopefully \*encourage better ATC traffic planning, or will require **better ATC traffic planning in order to eliminate the program**. Either way, that would be beneficial.



SkyTrax recognised staff at El Dorado as some of the best!

## Prioritisation and Restriction

The plan is to **restrict peak hour slots** to scheduled commercial traffic only. The benefit of this is schedules are actually kept. Aircraft routing in will also be **prioritised if they are a scheduled carrier**.

For private or ad-hoc flights this will mean less availability of slots, permits (during peak times) and general flexibility in operation times.

Right now, the permit process for landing is pretty quick. If you are going to spend **less than 48 hours on the ground** at one airport only then you don't need a permit. The CAA is efficient and responsive and you can contact them at **+571 296 2208** / [sobrevuelos@aerocivil.gov.co](mailto:sobrevuelos@aerocivil.gov.co)

## ATC

A lack of qualified ATC staff means **efficiency in their procedures cannot really improve**. One of the issues is poor labour and pension conditions – something ATC have previously gone on strike over, back in 2019.

The current shortage has seen shift times increase from **6 to 12 hours** leading to more sick leave and fatigue, leading to a cycle of longer hours.

**New radio systems** were installed across 36 more airport in Colombia earlier in 2021, adding to the 80 already benefiting from a system which enables a **centralised network area** and **better redundancy** for controllers. In addition, there is a specific plan for ATC at Bogota Airport. It involves installing better navigation communication systems, surveillance and management systems and more automation.

## A new El Dorado

El Dorado II was under construction, due to open **2022**, and the new airport would have substantially improved the capacity for the region. In 2018, the government suggested they would scrap this and **expand the existing airport instead**. The expansion plan includes the moving of military operations to a dedicated military base, and new terminals and infrastructure.

## Anything else?

- GDP are not the only delays you can expect coming to SKBO. Reports of **3 hour waits for fuel trucks**, issues obtaining departure clearance, and hold-ups in Customs (related to passports, not bandits) are relatively common.
- The *"operational concept of TMA BOGOTA is based on defined trajectories and the homogeneity in speeds to be able to maintain an orderly, safe and efficient flow."* In other words, **fly the speeds you're told to fly**, they are pretty strict on it.
- The airport is high altitude which means your TAS will be around 15% higher than IAS. Which means you might find slowing down harder.

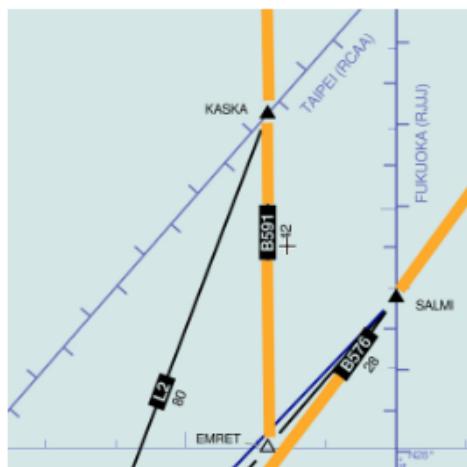
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## Midweek Briefing: Taiwan ADS-B requirement, Costa Rica volcano

Cynthia Claros  
1 November, 2021

**INTERNATIONAL  
BULLETIN**

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**Taiwan ADS-B requirement** 21SEP Yesterday, Taiwan pushed the requirement for ADS-B above FL290 for all aircraft, back to 2020 – as a fast approaching deadline of December this year was looming. Read the article.

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**Costa Rica volcano** 21SEP MROC/San Jose, Costa Rica has reopened after the eruption of the Turrialba volcano on Monday. A risk of further closures continues. Read the article.

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**OPZZ/Pakistan** Some airspace in the north of the country (Kashmir region) has been closed by the Pakistan CAA. Details are unclear but reports indicate Gilgit, Skardu and Chitral Airports are affected by the closure.

**BIKF/Keflavik** Departing KEF eastbound? Icelandic ATC would love you to file the following as a standard route: PIXUM PETUX ORTAV ODPEX, or 63N022W CELLO if you're planning to cross 10W at GOMUP or south of.

**EDDL/Dusseldorf** has closed 05L/23R for a couple of days to remove a WW2 bomb. Some delays at peak times may result.

**HLGT/Ghat, Libya** Three foreign nationals were kidnapped along the road that leads to Ghat Airport on 19SEP, located in the Fezzan province along the southwest border with Algeria. The foreigners were construction workers employed by the Italian-owned Conicos company to service Ghat Airport. There are numerous armed militia and terrorist groups active in the area and the foreigners were said to be operating under discretion due to the security risk.

**EDHL/Lubeck** will closed on Oct 4th for repairs – all day.

**ENGM/Oslo** will introduce new RNP AR approaches in November, available to all runways. Auth from Norwegian CAA is required to use them.

**FKKD/Douala** now requires PPR 72 hours prior arrival, for non-scheduled flights, due to upcoming space restrictions as a result of WIP. You can make requests directly to Airport admin at pce.douala@adcsa.aero.

**GBZZ/Gambia** In a change to procedure, Overflight Permits, and Landing Permits for traffic operating to GBYD/Banjul, are now issued by the Department of Flight Safety Standards at the GCAA.

**HCMM/Mogadishu** has issued a security reminder to operators: "OPERATORS SHOULD EXER EXTREME CTN AND FULLY ASSESS THE POTENTIAL FOR RISKS TO FLT SAFETY AND SECURITY WHEN PLANNING OR CONDUCTING OPS INTO MOGADISHU AIRPORT DUE TO LACK OF INFORMATION ON ARMED CONFLICT AND LACK OF AERONAUTICAL INFORMATION."

**FAZZ/South Africa** The CAA has updated its warnings for operators, with new guidance for two airspace blocks: that affected by the Syrian conflict – namely Baghdad, Damascus, and Tehran FIRs; and that affected by recent concerns over the Northern Sinai – their advice is to overfly at FL260 or higher.

**LMML/Malta** airshow coming up on 24-25 Sept, multiple restrictions, check before operating or filing as alternate.

**FZZZ/DRC Congo** Since September 19 large-scale demonstrations have been resulting in violent clashes between demonstrators and security forces in Kinshasa and elsewhere in the country. The situation is particularly tense in Kinshasa where violence has caused casualties. These demonstrations could continue over the next few days and the situation could further degenerate. The sole road to the Kinshasa airport could be blocked and some flights have been cancelled.

**OJZZ/Jordan** It's White Stork migration season, and Jordan has issued warnings for all of its airports, for crews to be mindful of the high chance of presence of large flocks of them on arrival and departure.

**SKED/Bogota** has some comms issues on north/south bound routes to Peru (Lima FIR); 10 minute

separation is applied between aircraft on these routes until at least Sept 26th.

**KZZZ/USA** For some good reading, the FAA (thanks Andy for passing this on), have updated their Aviation Weather guidance doc. This is the first revision to the document since 1975.

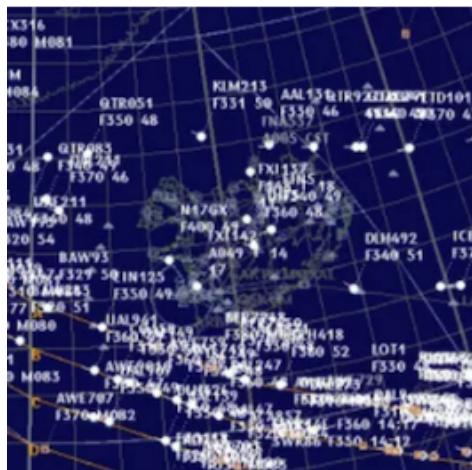
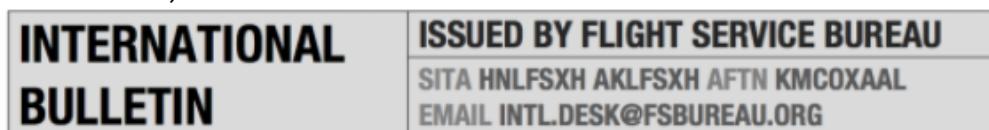
**Input:** ATC, Pilots, Dispatchers: Any topical items that you think should be going out to the community? Let us know, and we'll get your message out there. [tellus@opsgroup.co](mailto:tellus@opsgroup.co).

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## Midweek Briefing 11MAY: Reykjavik Oceanic Closure, Australia to turn off Navaids

Cynthia Claros  
1 November, 2021



is no change to the Oceanic Operation, and Domestic CPDLC will be available at all times from 17MAY.

**KATL/Atlanta** closed one of its three security checkpoints in the domestic terminal for three weeks and will reopen 25MAY. They have added additional security lines to the other 2 checkpoints in hopes of reducing the impact. Plan for extra time if you are heading through ATL in the next few weeks.

**LGZZ/Greece** An update on 09MAY was issued for the slot allocation Rules and Guidelines for all Greek Coordinated Airports. The updated document can be found at GABA report.

**YZZZ/Australia** CASA has issued clarification as to who is responsible for Terrain Clearance when ATC instructs an aircraft to "resume own navigation". Consistent with ICAO standard, while under radar vectors below the MSA, ATC assumes responsibility for Terrain Clearance. The AIC is worthwhile refresher reading as this applies to most International Ops.

**OYRN/Mukalla** has reopened after it was recently re-captured by government and Emirati soldiers. It is currently only accepting humanitarian and aid flights.

**HKIS/Isiolo** is a new airport in Kenya that will be operational in early JUN. The new facility will cater to domestic and international flights and will have annual passenger capacity of 125,000 and a 1400m runway. Isiolo is located near many national reserves, approximately 125 mi/200 km northeast of Nairobi.

**BIRD/Reykjavik Oceanic** Operators planning eastbound flights across the NAT should be aware of a NOTAM issued earlier by Reykjavik Oceanic/Iceland ATC, that essentially asks traffic to avoid the airspace wherever possible, due to further ATC Industrial Action. Eastbound flights in particular will not be accepted into the airspace unless ... [Read Full Article](#).

**LIZZ/Italy** Another ATC Industrial Action in Europe has been announced for 14MAY, this time in Italy and affecting only part of operational personnel. Only some air navigation services may be affected. The following NOTAM has been issued.

**EGLL/London Heathrow** has been identified as the airport most affected in the UK by laser strike incidents with 121 in 2015, followed by EGBB/Birmingham with 94, EGCC/Manchester recording 93 and EGNM/Leeds Bradford with 77.

**SKBO/Bogota** has introduced a significant enhancement to the current ATC infrastructure by adding Secondary Surveillance Radar or SSR. The Columbian CAA issued AIC **A07/16** to cover the upgrade. This will help increase the level of safety for operations in SKBO, especially given the terrain in the vicinity.

**WZZZ/Indonesia** The Visa-Free Program has expanded to Nationals from a total of 169 countries and are now eligible to enter Indonesia without a visa. Although the regulation is silent on the allowable activities under this status, the previous version of the law restricted its use to tourism.

**LFPG/Paris** The first IFR LPV approach was implemented at LFPG for Runway 26L on 03MAY. The new approach mirrors Cat I ILS approach minimums, including a 200-foot decision height, and it is supported by the European Geostationary Navigation Overlay Service (EGNOS).

**WSZZ/Singapore** has introduced a system called **ATLAS** (Air Transportation License and Administration System), for obtaining the application, renewal and administration of licences and permits for scheduled and non-scheduled air services.

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