

# Deteriorating post-election chaos in Bolivia

Chris Shieff  
27 November, 2019



**A single Notam for the country's largest international airport indicates there's no fuel available for a number of days. That's always a surefire sign that something pretty serious is going on.**

The contested presidential elections last month in Bolivia has quickly led to **civil unrest** across the country in the past few weeks. Demonstrations, strikes, and roadblocks have resulted in **armed conflict** between opposing protesters as well as armed forces in which 32 people have died so far in what some are calling an uprising and others a coup. We're going to take a look at the cause of the unrest and how **international operators may be affected**, especially when the trucks carrying your jet-fuel to the airport are attacked.

## The Escalation



Evo Morales, the long-term Bolivian President won a **contested election** in October, but evidence quickly surfaced that the results were manipulated. Protests from Morales' opposers erupted when Morales refused to stand down until eventually resigning when the military "requested" he do so in the interest of stability, but not before the current unrest unfolded. He is now seeking asylum in Mexico. Three other officials who were in line to be the constitutionally defaulted interim presidents all resigned and/or fled the country. The role eventually fell upon the deputy leader of the Senate and opposing party member, Jeanine Añez, who promised to hold new elections soon. Some countries are recognizing Añez as the President, while others are refusing to do so.

Morales supporters began **countrywide protests** as he would not be included in the new elections, a move they claim to be a part of a larger military coup. Protests between the two groups and with the armed forces have led to volatility in the past month. Bolivia's constitution calls for the **new elections to be held within 90 days**.



## Security

The US State Department has issued a [Level 4: Do Not Travel Advisory](#) for the **entire country**. State department non-emergency employees and their families have been **ordered to evacuate**. A Notam for SLLP/La Paz airport has been issued stating there is **no fuel available**. Protesters **attacked a military escorted fuel convoy** headed to the airport from a large nearby fuel plant, and **further protests have been planned to occur near the airport**. The Notam for La Paz has been pushed back three times so far and there's **no estimate of when fuel will again be available**.

"We have not had anyone going into Bolivia for well over a month," said Brian Leek, owner and CEO of FAM International Security, a global corporate security solutions firm. "**If you don't HAVE to go, don't.**

**Simple answer.** Things have been brewing there for months and it finally burst last month."

The demonstrations and barricades have closed roads in La Paz as well countrywide highways and access to airports. **Security cannot be guaranteed.** The intervention by the armed forces has escalated quickly, with tear gas and live ammunition being fired to disperse protests resulting in deaths across many of the larger cities like La Paz and Santa Cruz.

## Is It Safe To Travel Throughout Bolivia?

Due to the instability, the simple answer is: **Not right now**. Leek is advising all operators to defer travel, at least until the beginning of December or whenever the new elections are announced. With the news that elections will be held soon, there is optimism that the violent protests will decrease as Morales opposition leaders are calling for peace. However, many Morales supporters state they will **continue protests** in demand that the former president be given an opportunity to return. One international medical and travel services company received reports of clients' cars being attacked by protesters and one car being hit by an armed forces vehicle responding to a demonstration.

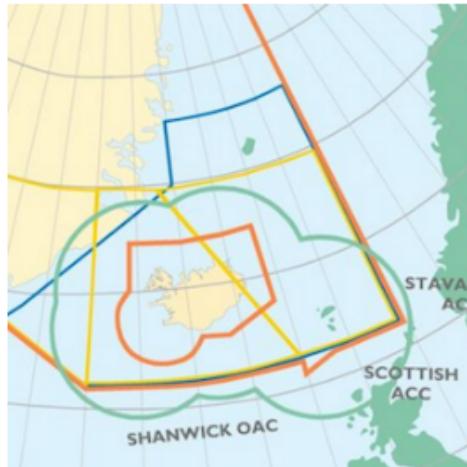


If you do operate into Bolivia, local ground handler, Pike Aviation, is recommending **SLVR/Santa Cruz** where fuel and full services are available and the protests in the city are minimal. **SLCB/Cochabamba** is also operating normally, but conflicts continue in the city. They also do not recommend operating into **SLLP/La Paz**. Leek couldn't agree more. "If you have to go, Santa Cruz is an acceptable substitute. Just know that security around the airport is weak. So have plans in place to protect the aircraft."

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## Midweek Briefing 04MAY: New US CBP Airport, Iceland ATC Strike continues

Cynthia Claros  
27 November, 2019



**New US CBP Airport** 04MAY A new US Customs facility opened in KMTH/Marathon on 20APR, to facilitate increased traffic to Cuba. [Read the article.](#)

**Iceland ATC Strike continues** 04MAY Icelandic controllers are in a pay dispute with Isavia, leading to multiple strike actions at BIKF/Keflavik and BIRK/Reykjavik. Last week BIKF was closed overnight at short notice. [Read the article.](#)

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**EHAM/Amsterdam** and other Dutch airports will observe a two minute silence on ATC frequencies today, 04MAY, from 1800-1803Z. ATC will arrange traffic flow so that no aircraft will land or taxi during this period, meaning likely delays, albeit for a short period.

**SECU/Cuenca, Ecuador** remains closed after an E190 slid off the main runway on 29APR, latest estimate is no reopening before 06MAY.

**CZZZ/Canada** Visa-exempt foreign nationals can enter and exit Canada by air without an Electronic Travel Authorization until 29SEP2016. After that date, these travelers will need to obtain online authorization to visit.

**BIZZ/Iceland** Multiple ATC Strike actions for BIRK and BIKF are ongoing, check NOTAMS and with handler for latest. [Read article.](#)

**TFFR/Guadeloupe** has ongoing main runway closures due to WIP, current shown are 04MAY 0200-1015Z, 17MAY 1000Z- 18MAY 1600Z. Only helicopters will be allowed to operate during these periods.

**UIBB/Bratsk** has a fuel shortage until 31MAY, non-scheduled movements are by PPR only.

**NWWW/Tontouta** has an ATC staff shortage and requires slots for arrival until 31MAY, Tel +687 352437. Work on 11/29 is also ongoing, check NOTAMS for any current outages, which will close the airport.

**EGGX/Shanwick** is trialling transferring westbound flights direct to a HF frequency rather than via an initial VHF frequency, using CPDLC. The default frequencies will be HF 5649 H24, 2872 0000-0900 and 1800-2400, and 8879 0900-2100.

**PAZA/Anchorage** has published new procedures Eff 28APR for User Preferred Routes within the PAZA FIR,

refer A0075/16.

**SVZZ/Venezuela** changed timezones on 01MAY to UTC-4. In addition, all public offices, including public ministries, will only operate on Mondays and Tuesdays until further notice.

**TTZP/Piarco FIR** is trialing ADS-C and CPDLC with ident TTZP until 31MAY. Flights entering the FIR east of 57W should log on 15 minutes prior to the boundary with TTZP.

**UHSS/Yuzhno** has advised that B777 aircraft are limited to 310T during the summer period.

**UIAA/Chita** is only available as alternate for one specific airline (Aurora) between 0930-2100Z. Outside these times ops normal.

**WSZZ/Singapore** has introduced a fingerprint clearance system to verify the thumbprints of arriving and departing travelers ages six and above at select immigration checkpoints. The system will be progressively implemented starting at the manned immigration counters of sea and land checkpoints, followed by air checkpoints until full implementation is completed in the months ahead. Travelers should be prepared for slightly longer immigration clearance times at manned checkpoints, especially during the initial implementation stage of the project.

**YZZZ/Australia** Border Force employees have been banned from taking industrial action at airports for three months; the threat of ongoing strike action caused much concern for operations in March.

**RJTT/Haneda** the airport authority has changed the number of slots available for general aviation aircraft. Effective 25APR, slots for GA during the daytime (0600-2259 local) will be increased to 16 total for arrival and departure (from eight in the past). Note that there are no slots restrictions for night time operations (2300-0559 local).

**CYVR/Vancouver** will have one of its main runways 08R/26L closed nightly between the hours of 05-13Z 08MAY-02SEPT for construction. During the day (13-05Z) the runway will have the ILS on 08R/26L out of service, along with no approach lighting on runway 26L.

**SLZZ/Bolivia** Certain medications prescribed for personal use are treated as narcotics in Bolivia, with severe penalties for import or export without a valid prescription from a doctor; make sure you carry a letter from a doctor describing the medical condition and any prescribed drugs and that they are in their original containers and clearly labelled.

**EBBR/Brussels** has partially reopened the departure hall, which has remained closed since 22MAR. 110 Check-in counters will be open in the airport departure hall along with an additional 36 counters that are housed in temporary buildings. The EBBR airport authority expects this will bring the airport up to 80% of capacity.

**EZZZ/Europe** Bulgaria, Turkey and Romania will begin a project to interface their ATC systems so they can handle a significant build-up of airspace traffic in the Black Sea area. New routes are expected by mid 2016.

**LEZZ/Spain** The Spanish F1 Grand Prix is being held from 13MAY-15MAY and will bring heavier than normal traffic to LEBL/Barcelona and LEGE/Girona.

**HEZZ/Egypt** Individual travellers will in the future require a visa before entering Egypt. The exact date of the implementation of this rule is not yet determined. The visa must be applied for from the Egyptian embassy and the consulates generals before departure.

**GVZZ/Cape Verde** Aviation officials issued a statement announcing that national airports are open and operational. The statement was released following reports that flight operations had been suspended at the country's airports.

**ORZZ/Iraq** Iran canceled all flights to Baghdad following a breach of the International Area by protesters on 30APR. The demonstrations have caused problems for pilgrimage flights to Baghdad, and those flights will operate instead to ORNI/Najaf.

**VIDP/Delhi** has opened a new ATC tower (which is the country's tallest at 60 metres). VIDP will also be starting construction on a 4th runway this year and is expected to be completed by 2018 which will increase the airport arrival rate to 105 landings an hour, and will mitigate the common airborne holding.

View the full International Bulletin for 04MAY 2016