

Africa: Hajj 2019 routes in operation

David Mumford

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The Hajj routes for 2019 will take effect from 18 Jul through to 9 Oct.

What are Hajj routes?

Every year, millions of pilgrims travel to Mecca and other sites in Saudi Arabia – and this changes the predominant traffic flow over the African continent. ATC in the FIRs most affected put in place standard routings to help flow that traffic.

Normally, traffic is very much north-south predominant, with Europe-Africa flights being the main flow. When Hajj operations start up, a good amount of traffic starts operating east-west (ie. Africa-Saudi Arabia and vice versa), and this is something to be aware of when cruising along at FL330 with spotty HF comms.

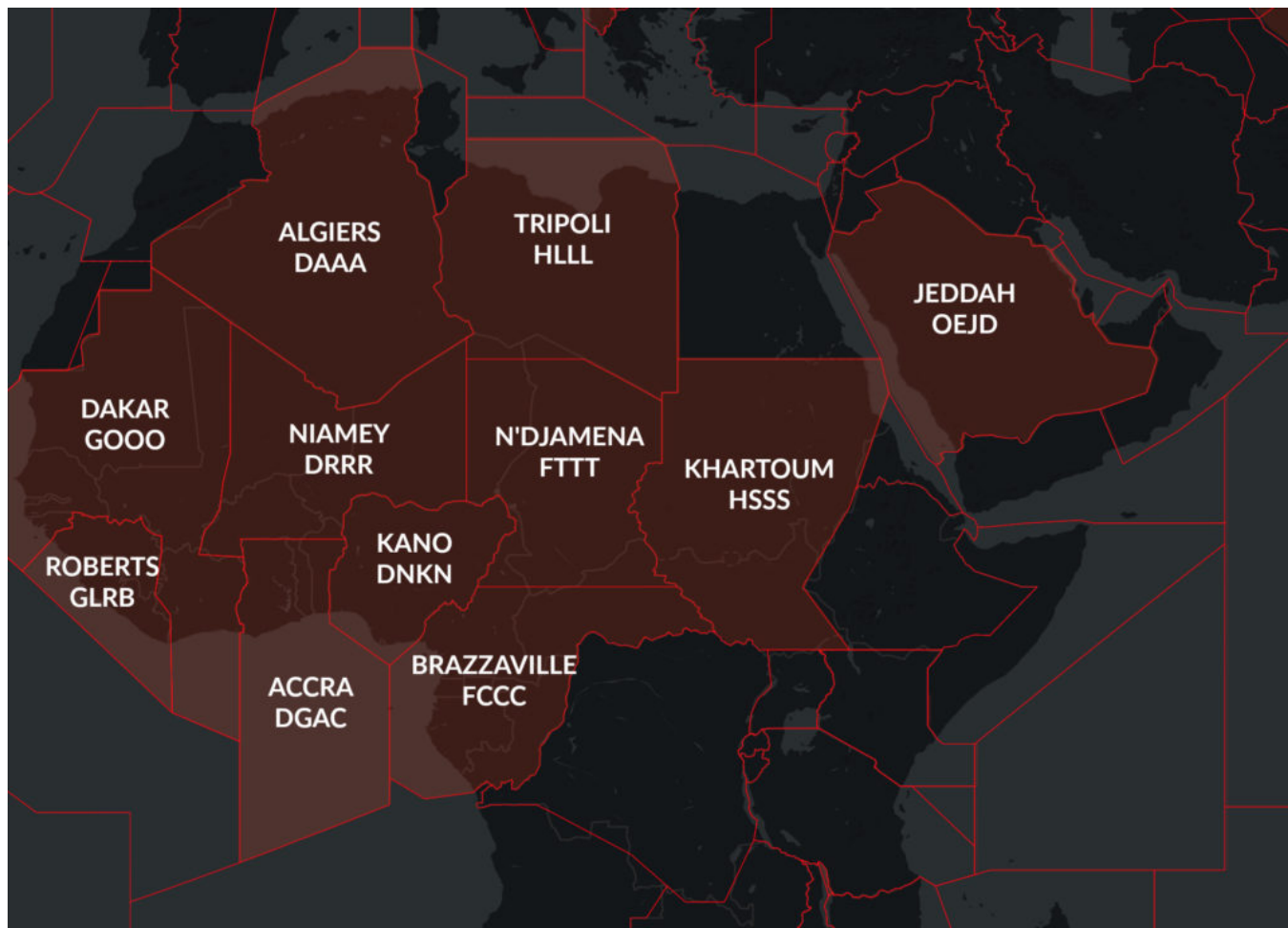
So, in addition to the normal IFBP belt and braces on 126.9, keep an eye out for a much higher amount of crossing traffic during the coming months.

The FIR's affected are: Algiers, Accra, Brazzaville, Dakar, Jeddah, Kano, Khartoum, N'Djamena, Niamey, Roberts, and Tripoli.

Of these, **watch out for Tripoli** – risk remains high across Libyan airspace at all flight levels, and multiple countries have “**do not fly**” warnings in place. There are **daily airstrikes** taking place, severe limitations in ATC services, and massive areas of the FIR are without surveillance and communications capabilities.

Malta FIR is currently managing all east-west routes in this airspace, and operators can contact them for additional information on email: airspace.cell@maltats.com

The Hajj routings are contained in this **ASECNA AIP Supplement**.



Further reading:

- Read IFALPA's information on recommended procedures when operating in the African region [here](#).

Algeria lifts ban on GA/BA flights

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Amid ongoing anti-government protests, authorities published a Notam on Apr 2 banning all GA/BA flights from operating at airports across the country. But following the resignation of Algeria's President Bouteflika, this ban was cancelled on Apr 4, and replaced with the following restriction:

A1058/19 – AIRCRAFT REGISTERED IN ALGERIA AND ABROAD OPERATED FOR PRIVATE PURPOSES ARE SUBJECT TO ISSUANCE OF AN AUTHORIZATION TO OVERFLY AND/OR LANDING THE NATIONAL TERRITORY BY THE ALGERIAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY. 04 APR 19:10 2019 UNTIL 30 APR 12:00 2019 ESTIMATED. CREATED: 04 APR 19:09 2019

So that effectively means the situation has returned to normal: for landings and overflights, you will need a permit.

Algerian media reported the initial decision to ban GA/BA flights was most likely aimed at “stopping certain prominent individuals from fleeing abroad” – after a businessman affiliated with the President was arrested as he tried to cross the border into neighbouring Tunisia.

Although anti-government protests still continue, there is no longer any significant impact to flight operations.