

# New Airspace Warning: The Red Sea

Chris Shieff

8 November, 2023



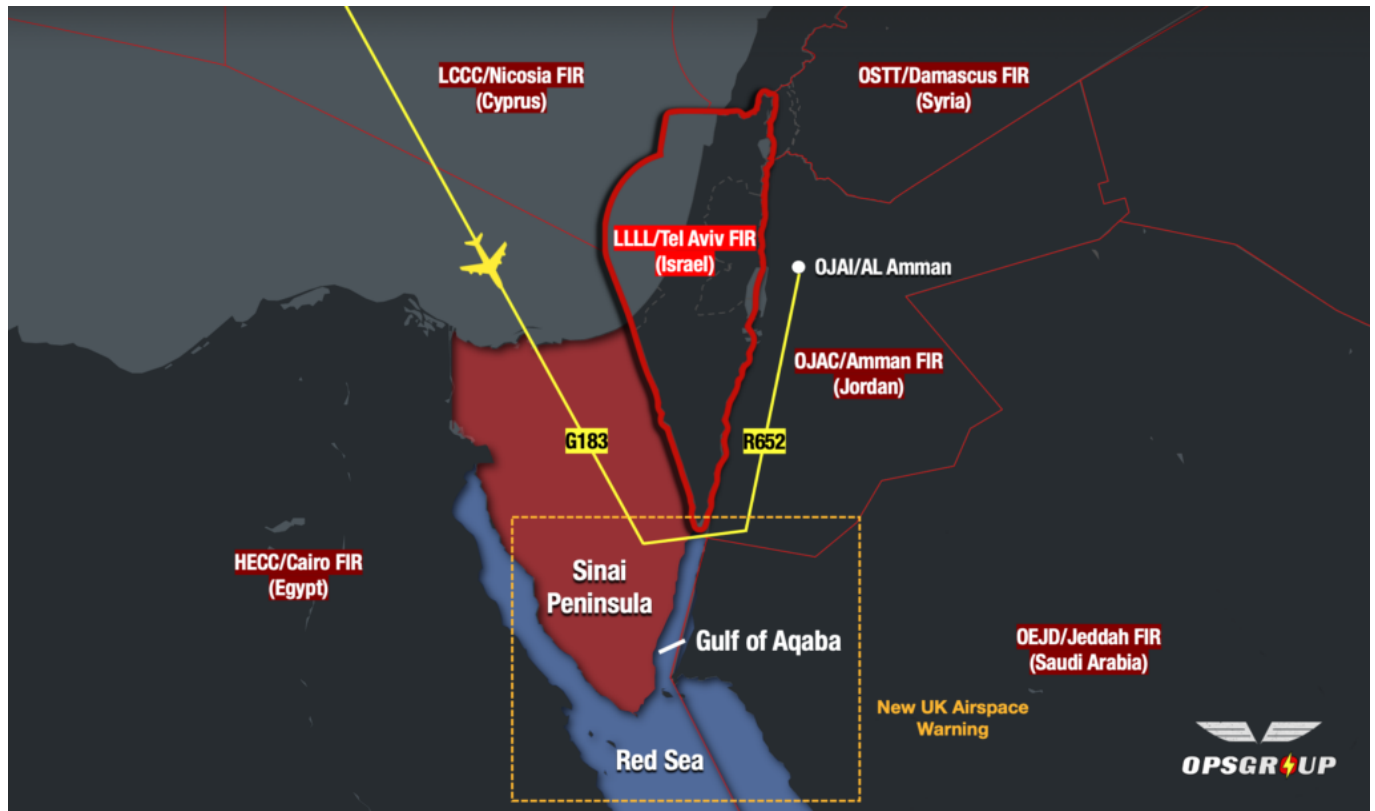
With the Israel-Gaza conflict ongoing, a lot of traffic is re-routing well clear of the LLLL/Tel Aviv FIR via parts of the **Sinai Peninsula**, the **Red Sea** and into Saudi Arabia via the **Gulf of Aqaba**. Especially those flights bound for Amman, Jordan.

The problem is that spill-over risks from the conflict are now extending beyond the boundaries of Israeli airspace and into this **busy corridor**. We've reported a number of these instances in the past few weeks.

On Nov 1, the UK CAA published a new airspace warning via Notam:

**AIRSPACE SECURITY WARNING ISSUED BY THE UK DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT. CIVIL AIR OPERATORS ARE ADVISED TO TAKE POTENTIAL RISK INTO ACCOUNT WHEN OPERATING OVER THE WATERS OF THE RED SEA AND THE GULF OF AQABA DUE TO POTENTIAL RISK FROM HEIGHTENED MILITARY ACTIVITY. FOR MORE INFO UK DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT 0207 082 6639 OR 0207 944 3111 OUT OF HOURS. AR 2023-38309/AU4. SFC - UNL, 01 NOV 15:00 2023 UNTIL 30 JAN 23:59 2024 ESTIMATED**

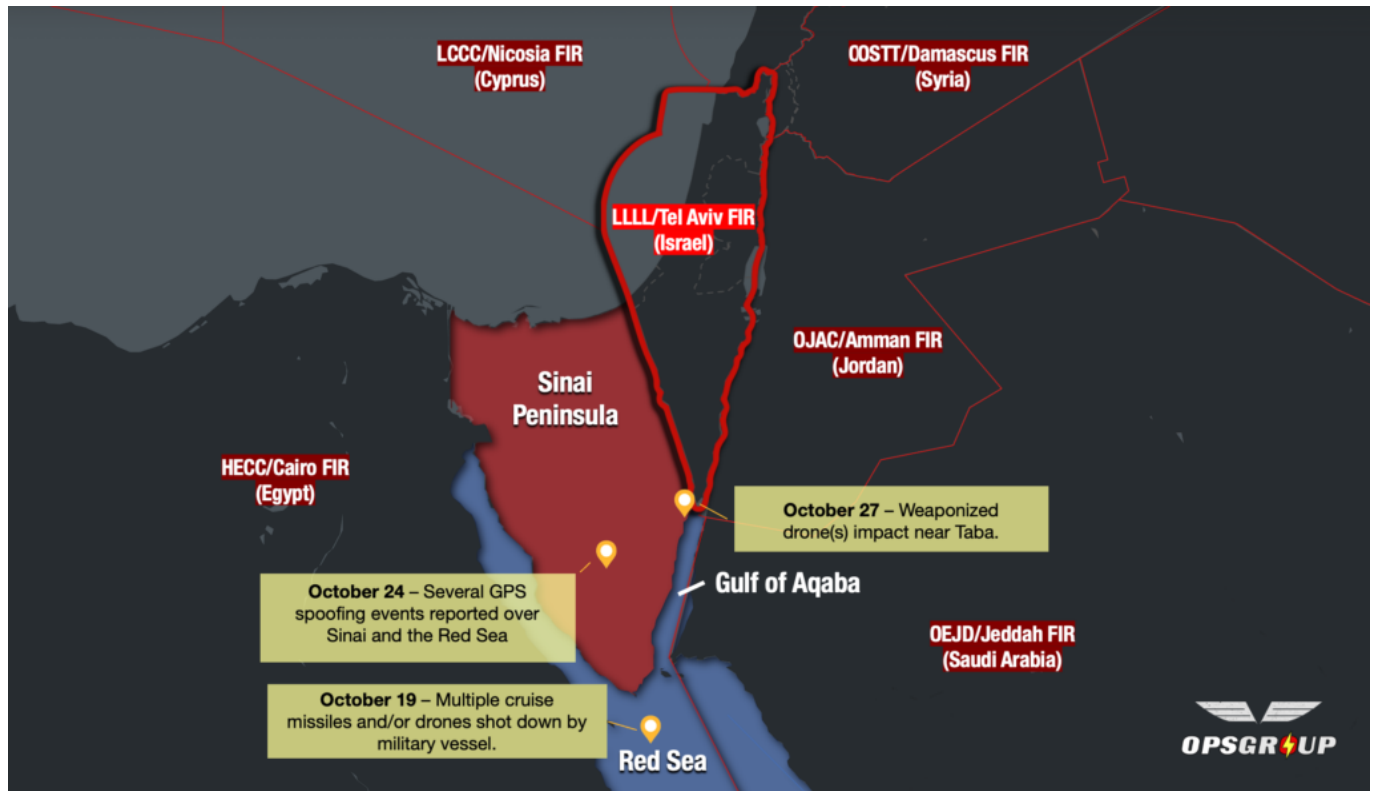
Airspace warnings aren't new for the Sinai Peninsula – but are for the Red Sea and Gulf of Aqaba. So, what has made the UK issue this one now?



The UK's new airspace warning lies within or close to busy routes being flown by major carriers.

## Recent Events

- **Oct 27** - a weaponised drone struck a town near Egypt's border with Israel near Taba. This was likely launched by Yemen's Houthi group from Yemen, or the Red Sea itself.
- **Oct 24** - Several OPSGROUP members reported GPS spoofing events resulting in the aircraft showing its position over Tel Aviv, Israel. Several hotspots were identified, including over the Sinai Peninsula and Red Sea. You can read more about those [here](#).
- **Oct 19** - At least one cruise missile or drone was shot down by a US Naval vessel over the Red Sea, reportedly launched from militants in Yemen and targeting Israel.



While militant activity on the Sinai Peninsula and adjacent regions is a **known threat**, the conflict in Israel has **changed the risk picture**. These groups have suddenly become more active and their attacks more sporadic. This may not be evident in existing airspace warnings issued by Germany and the US FAA – the latter having been around for years.

### Is it safe enough to overfly?

There is no definitive answer to this question – as the UK Notam above alludes to, potential risks need to be taken into account and the appetite for those will vary from operator-to-operator.

Here's what we do know though:

**It is better to fly higher.** All existing warnings for the Sinai Peninsula (and now adjacent regions including the Red Sea) advise operators to **stay above FL250/260**. This is likely due to the risk of militant groups with access to anti-aircraft weaponry such as man portable air defence systems (MANPADS).

**The chance of misidentification by the military is low, but not zero.** Military vessels active in the Red Sea are equipped with sophisticated and long-range air defence systems capable of reaching all levels. It is extremely unlikely that a civil aircraft would be misidentified – but history has shown that accidents can happen.

**Know what to do if you are spoofed.** As opposed to GPS jamming, spoofing is insidious and potentially confusing. Your aircraft may not even alert you that something has gone wrong. **We have a Briefing, Guide and Map on GPS spoofing which you can access here.** In the worst cases, the impact has been severe: complete loss of on-board nav requiring ATC vectors, IRS failure, and unnoticed off-track navigation towards danger areas and hostile airspace.

**Think about diversions.** If you need to land in a hurry (especially in Sinai), you are exposing yourself to increased risk of anti-aircraft fire, small arms fire and mortar attacks by groups with a known intent to attack civilian interests, possibly motivated by current events.

## Alternative Routes?

Flight tracking shows major airlines are still overflying Southern Sinai and the Red Sea. The only option to avoid the region completely involves a long diversion south.

Unfortunately for those bound for **Jordan** and perhaps **Kuwait**, this means extended flight times. If you do decide to overfly the Sinai and Red Sea region, know that just because airways are open (and well used) doesn't mean they are completely safe.

## Updates

For more info and updates, check [Safeairspace.net](https://safeairspace.net) – our Conflict Zone & Risk Database.



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# Sharm El Sheikh reopens to international traffic, conflicting views on that ...

Declan Selleck  
8 November, 2023



**HESH/Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt** has reopened to international traffic, with a large number of airlines starting services again on 01NOV.

Before the bombing of Metrojet 9268 one year ago, Sharm was the 3rd busiest airport in Egypt.

However, there are conflicting views on security at the airport, depending on your state of registry. Operators from Germany, Poland, Russia have now started operations, but UK government policy keeps HESH on the ban list.

Our overflight advice for the Sinai Peninsula remains in place, on the basis of FAA Notam KICZ 6/16, and EASA SIB 2014-30R2 (UK and Germany) . View [safeairspace.net](http://safeairspace.net) for the current map.

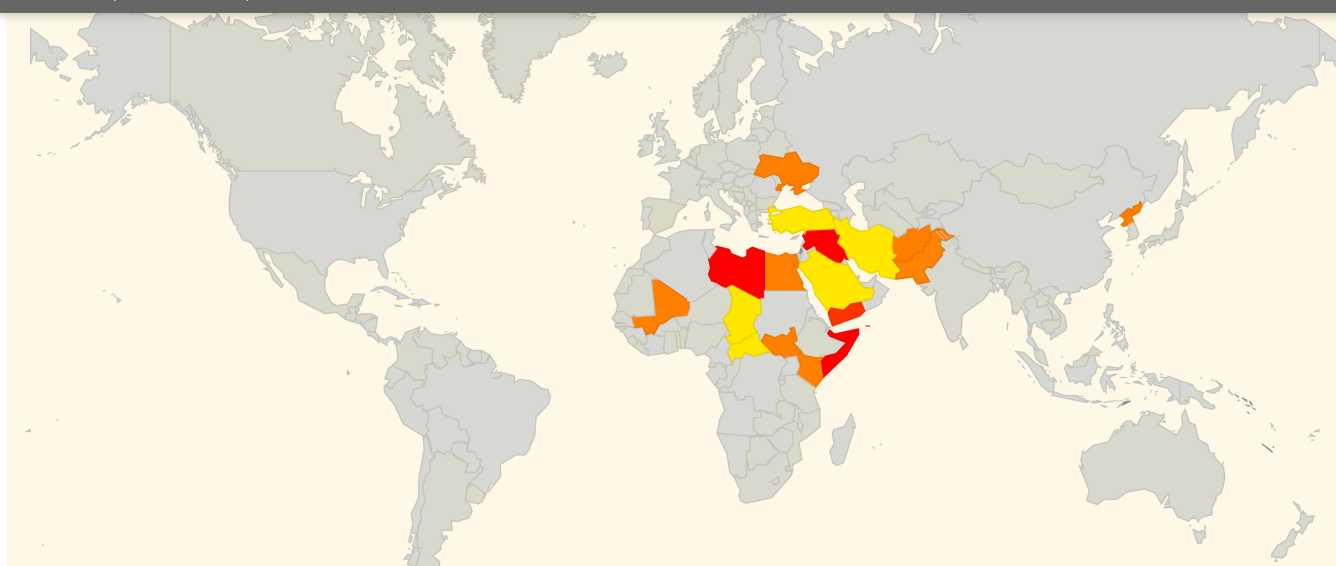
At the same time, Egyptian newspapers are carrying stories that Tourism levels will return to pre-2011 levels within the next few months. Now that's optimistic.

safeairspace.

MAP SUMMARY REPORT IT

World Airspace Risk Map

World AFI ASI EUR NAM CAM SAM





# Monday Briefing: Sinai Airspace avoided, Low Vis creates day of chaos

Declan Selleck  
8 November, 2023

**INTERNATIONAL  
BULLETIN**

**ISSUED BY FLIGHT SERVICE BUREAU**  
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**02NOV2015** HECC/Cairo has requested that traffic through PASOS point on the boundary with LCCC/Nicosia FIR be rerouted, effectively closing airway UL550 and the Sinai peninsula. Shown on radar image above, most traffic is avoiding the area that an A321 crashed in on Saturday. No definite link is being made but Authorities and Operators are naturally cautious.

**02NOV2015** Conditions perfect for fog across the UK and western Europe are causing widespread delays this morning. Unusually, almost all airports from EGCC/Manchester to EDDF/Frankfurt are affected by the same conditions, with many airports down to 100 metres vis. Most not accepting diversions. See below for further.

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**EXXX/Europe** High delays in most Airports in a square containing EGCC/Manchester, EBBR/Brussels, EDDF/Frankfurt, and EDDH/Hamburg. Total of approx 120,000 slot delay minutes in Eurocontrol system. Other high delay airports include EHAM, EGLL, EGKK, EGSS. Check NOTAMs as most are not accepting diversions either. Fog forecast to be similar again overnight.

**VTBB/Bangkok FIR** A minimum departure interval of 4-8 minutes between same direction departures is in force from 30OCT for aircraft departing VTCC VTCT VTUU VTUD VTSP VTSG VTSF VTSB VTSM AND VTSS. Delays during peak hours are expected.

**UUBC/Grabtsevo** New Russian Airport now fully operational with 2200m runway (12/30) and able to accommodate international traffic up to A320/737 size.

**UHSS/Yuzhno Sakhalinsk**, a common Polar alternate, is closed due runway repairs 1200-2100Z until 01DEC and therefore not available as ALTN for Flight Planning.

**NTTA/Tahiti** will be without radar on 03NOV after 1800Z. As with all radar outages there is potential for

delays and restrictions.

**KXXX/USA** Runway current closures: BWI-RWY 10/28, SEA-RWY 16C/34C, LAS-RWY 7L-25R.

**KSFO/San Francisco** will close Taxiway Q and B on 07/08NOV to resolve a pavement issue. This will create a one-in-one-out restriction for aircraft taxiing to and from all gates west of Taxiway Q1. Specifically, this will affect United Airlines, SFOs largest customer, as a majority of its gates are west of Q1. Additionally, the proximity of the closure area to Taxiway B1 will render B1 unusable due to insufficient wing tip and jet blast clearance with the construction area. The loss of Taxiway B1 means that access to the end-around Taxiway Z will be unavailable.

**HKXX/Kenya** No longer possible to obtain a visa on arrival for passengers. Must now be arranged prior to arrival online at <https://account.ecitizen.go.ke/register>.

**SOOO/Cayenne FIR, South Atlantic** – Aircraft not FANS 1A equipped, east of 50W in the Cayenne FIR, can now expect a maximum level of FL310 westbound.

**EXXX/Europe** The European Business Aviation Association (EBAA) is providing a new tool to calculate Passenger Taxes payable in EU countries. The “PaxTax” tool calculates the total passenger tax for the flight, and breaks down the cost for both departure and arrival for the respective national taxing authorities.

**YBBN/Brisbane** New \$45m international terminal opened 28OCT after 18 months of construction. The facility can handle 7.5m pax annually.

**VNxx/NEPAL** Fuel supply update: China will supply fuel to Nepal for the first time ever, in response to a dire fuel shortage caused by disrupted supply lines with India. China will supply 1.3 million liters of gasoline, which will be transported to Kathmandu from the border via 100 tanker trucks. Please continue to check local NOTAMs for fuel availability.

**DNxx/Nigeria FIR** Widespread reports of a strike forcing the closure of Nigeria’s airspace have been deemed unreliable, per the Nigerian CAA. There is unrest and occasional industrial action, but no risk of airspace being closed.

**Timezone Changes** As DST ends in the Northern Hemisphere, series of clock changes completed on 01NOV as US ended Daylight Savings. Most of Europe completed theirs on 25OCT. Most northern countries are now on Standard Time.

**View the complete International Operations Bulletin for 02NOV2015.**