

Five months of misery at Mumbai

David Mumford

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Airlines and operators are preparing for **major peak-hour disruption** at VABB/Mumbai Airport, on account of a **partial shutdown of the main runway** over the next five months.

The main runway will be closed for repairs from 4th Nov 2019 to 28th Mar 2020, between 0930-1730 local time, Mondays to Saturdays. The second runway will be operational during this time, but this can only handle 36 flights per hour – which is around 80% of the regular traffic.

The main runway will remain open on all the big festivals and holiday dates during this period: Dec 25, Jan 1 & 15, Feb 19 & 21, Mar 10 & 25.

This is the second time this year that Mumbai airport has enforced a partial runway shutdown. The first instance, which lasted from Feb 7 to March 30, was for repair works at the intersection of the two runways, which lead to peak hour closures.

This new closure has been announced through a combination of Notam (for Nov 4 to Nov 7), and AIP SUP (for Nov 7 to Mar 28).

Other things worth knowing:

- It's not showing on the Notams, but local handlers have confirmed that **VABB/Mumbai is closed to GA/BA flights daily** at the following local times: 0800-1000, 1730-1930, 2115-2315, 0320-0400.
- **VASU/Surat** airport may be a good alternate for VABB/Mumbai (120NM away). It became an international airport of entry in Feb 2019 and has a 2250 metre long runway with ILS. The next nearest airports are VOGO/Goa (230NM away), or VAAH/Ahmedabad (240NM away).
- The **ADS-B mandate** across Indian airspace outlined in AIP SUP 148/2018 that was due to take effect on 1st Jan 2019, has now been **delayed to 1st Jan 2020**. Confirmation of this can be found in Notam G1995/18 (issued for VABF VIDF VECF VOMF).

- Since India introduced **e-visas** back in Feb 2018, they have stopped issuing visas on arrival. **Crew must apply for the 'e-Business Visa'**, and passengers must apply for the 'e-Tourist Visa', on the government website: <https://indianvisaonline.gov.in/>
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Heavy rain affecting ops into VABB/Mumbai

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VABB/Mumbai Heavy rain is affecting flight ops at Mumbai airport for the second day in a row. The main runway (09/27) remains closed after a Spicejet aircraft skidded off last night and got stuck in mud, and it's not expected to be open again until later today – once the aircraft can be recovered.

In the meantime, the other smaller runway is in use. Expect delays until the weather improves!