

Middle East update

9th of March 2026

Santa Fe Relocation continues to monitor developments affecting logistics activity across parts of the Middle East. Our operations remain active and our teams across the region continue to support clients and partners. The safety and wellbeing of our employees, customers, clients and suppliers remains our highest priority.

While services continue, conditions remain unpredictable and may affect regional logistics and shipping activity. Shipments currently in transit may experience delays, rerouting, temporary holds or schedule adjustments as shipping lines, airlines and port authorities introduce precautionary operational measures. We are working closely with carriers and regional partners to minimise disruption and maintain continuity wherever possible.

Clients should be aware that additional operational costs are increasingly likely as a result of these developments. These may include carrier surcharges, routing adjustments, storage, handling or related charges imposed by transport providers or local authorities. Shipments already in transit may be impacted. Our teams will communicate directly where adjustments or cost implications arise and will continue to provide updates as further information becomes available.

We also recognise that some clients may require additional support during this period, particularly where employees need to leave the region or adjust relocation plans at short notice. Santa Fe can assist with practical arrangements such as temporary accommodation, property handovers or lease closures and other relocation support where required.

There is No Clear Resumption of Normal Vessel Movement.

Carriers are still unable to confirm normal vessel calls to Jebel Ali / Upper Gulf ports, and schedules continue to remain uncertain. While some vessels are calling at Khorfakkan / Fujairah under force majeure arrangements, these calls are currently being prioritised for imports and cargo already on water, with limited or no acceptance of fresh export volumes.

Straits of Hormuz – Current Status

The 'Straits of Hormuz' continues to be closed and evidently, all the insurance entities (including all the P&I Clubs, Underwriters etc.) have chosen to withdraw the insurance cover with immediate effect.

Containers Already at Port

For containers already gated-in at Jebel Ali, carriers are maintaining the following position:

- Containers may remain in port until vessel operations resume, with all storage / detention / port charges for customer account, or
- Customers may arrange to withdraw cargo and return empty containers, with all related transport and handling costs for customer account.

Carriers have clearly stated that, as this is a force majeure situation, they will not absorb or waive any charges arising from delays, diversions, or operational restrictions.

Alternative Routing – Limited & Under Review

Options via Khorfakkan / Fujairah / Jeddah / Salalah / other regional ports are being evaluated, however:

- Capacity is extremely limited
- Infrastructure constraints exist at alternate ports
- Priority is being given to imports and cargo already in transit
- Export acceptance remains subject to case-by-case approval

Some carriers have also indicated that combined import/export handling at diversion ports is currently not feasible due to operational pressure.

We make it easy

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Emergency Surcharges / Revised Freight Levels

Carriers continue to impose Emergency Freight Increase / Contingency / Force Majeure surcharges, applicable to:

- Cargo already in transit
- Containers at port awaiting shipment
- New bookings
- Diversions / rerouting / change of discharge
- These charges are being applied under force majeure clauses and are not subject to waiver at local level.

Current Position

At this stage:

- No carrier has issued a firm long-term operating plan
- Vessel schedules remain subject to change without notice
- Export execution from UAE cannot be guaranteed
- Additional costs and delays should be expected

We are in continuous dialogue with all major carriers and will immediately advise if any reliable export solution becomes available.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do reach out.

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