



Industry Alert

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Middle East Mobility Alert: Navigating Regional Disruptions

The Middle East is currently experiencing a highly complex and rapidly changing operating environment due to escalating regional hostilities. While personal safety in key Gulf locations remains stable, sudden changes to airspace, maritime routes, and local infrastructure are now realistic planning assumptions.

We and our trusted network of providers prioritize taking care of your people and your business. Although the situation is fluid and rapidly changing, here is a concise summary of the key mobility impacts and what they mean for your relocation program, based on what we know right now.

Key Impacts on Relocation and Logistics

- **Flight cancellations and delays:** Rolling airspace closures across the region have disrupted major hubs (like Dubai and Doha). Assignees face sudden flight suspensions, delayed assignment commencements, and indirect routings that can add 12 to 36 hours to typical travel times.
- **Extended shipping timelines and increased costs:** The ongoing Red Sea security crisis and the closure of the Strait of Hormuz have forced major shipping lines to reroute via the Cape of Good Hope. Expect household goods transit times to increase by 10 to 20+ days, accompanied by higher freight costs and port congestion. Airfreight is also experiencing reduced capacity and increased pricing. Both sea and air transport providers are prioritizing critical and humanitarian cargo.
- **Destination services constraints:** While local destination services remain active, physical appointments may be delayed. Temporary accommodation extensions of two to six weeks can be expected, as assignees await their delayed shipments or face travel bottlenecks.

What this means for global mobility managers

- **Reassess timelines and costs:** Predictability has decreased. You will need to budget for extended temporary housing and elevated shipping surcharges, while building buffer time into all relocation schedules.
- **Prioritize flexibility:** Standard relocation policies may require temporary, flexible interpretation. Empower your employees by utilizing virtual home and school search services to keep the settling-in process moving forward despite physical travel constraints.
- **Enhance communication:** Your relocating personnel need clear, real-time updates. Proactive communication will help manage expectations and reduce anxiety during transit, and we are here to help.



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We are focused on making the relocation process as easy as possible for you, your employees, and their families. Our teams are actively monitoring this fluid situation, working closely with our global network of reliable partners to keep your people safe, your relocation program running, and manage your costs. Our number-one goal is to ensure you and your mobile talent and their families remain supported and informed every step of the way. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns as we continue to monitor developments in the region.

Sincerely,

The Sterling Lexicon Team