

CUSTOMER ADVISORY

UPDATE: Middle East Conflict Continues to Disrupt Global Transport
10 MARCH 2026



Due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle East, transportation services across the region remain significantly disrupted. Since our previous **update**, conditions have not meaningfully stabilized, and major maritime and air corridors continue to experience severe operational constraints.

The situation has also triggered significant volatility in global energy markets. Brent crude oil prices recently surged above \$100 per barrel, briefly reaching approximately \$119, amid concerns about disruption to global energy supplies. Oil prices have risen by roughly 50 percent since the start of the conflict on February 28, increasing the likelihood of higher fuel costs and additional transportation surcharges.

A key factor driving market uncertainty is the continued disruption of vessel traffic through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical maritime corridor responsible for roughly 20 percent of global oil shipments. Shipping activity in the waterway has been severely restricted following regional security threats and retaliatory actions, contributing to delays, rerouting, and congestion across multiple trade lanes.

Current Operational Impact

Ocean Freight

- Vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz remain heavily restricted, while conditions in the Red Sea and surrounding waters remain volatile.
- Some carriers continue to reroute vessels away from the Suez Canal via the Cape of Good Hope, adding 10–20 days to certain trade lanes.
- Port congestion and equipment imbalances are expected as vessels divert and schedules become irregular.



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Air Freight

- Airspace restrictions across parts of the Middle East remain in place.
- Initial airspace closures and flight cancellations are estimated to have removed approximately 12 percent of global air cargo capacity from the market.
- Major regional hubs including Dubai, Doha, and Abu Dhabi have experienced operational disruption, affecting connecting cargo flows.
- Aircraft are being forced to operate on longer routing paths, reducing effective capacity and placing additional pressure on major corridors such as Asia–Europe air cargo lanes.

Additional Market Effects

The escalation in the region is creating broader supply chain pressure through several indirect effects, including:

- Rising fuel costs and fuel surcharge adjustments as energy markets react to supply risks
- Higher war risk insurance premiums
- Capacity shortages and schedule volatility across global freight networks
- Extended transit times for both air and ocean shipments
- Reduced flexibility for shippers to shift urgent cargo from ocean to air due to limited available capacity

Kintetsu World Express is closely monitoring developments and working with carriers and partners to minimize disruption wherever possible. Our teams are reviewing affected shipments, identifying alternative routing options, and supporting customers with the latest operational guidance.

Customers with shipments to, from, or transiting through the affected region are kindly requested to contact their local KWE representative for shipment-specific support.

We will continue to provide updates as the situation develops. We sincerely appreciate your understanding regarding any inconvenience this may cause.

Sources:

- [Oil soars past \\$100 a barrel, stocks plunge as US-Israel war on Iran rages](#) – Al Jazeera
- [Middle East Conflict](#) - Xeneta



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