

Airlines amend Cape Town service amid Covid-19

The spread of Covid-19 has had an unprecedented impact on the global travel industry and Cape Town is not isolated from the effects of this crisis. The aviation industry has been one of the hardest hit. To manage costs and the potential economic fallout, as well as limit the spread of the virus, airlines are cancelling routes, limiting capacity and altering their operations.

Travel restrictions have been imposed by governments in major markets across the globe, which has also had a significant impact on the aviation industry as a whole - Cape Town Air Access, therefore, regrets to announce that most airlines have amended their Cape Town service due to Covid-19.



©Jaromír Chalabala via [123RF](#)

This crisis has had significant implications for the global economy with the OECD forecasting the world's economy to grow at its slowest rate since 2009 (Jones et al, 2020).

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) further emphasised this sentiment by stating that dependent on the extent of the Covid-19 global reach; the industry could see a loss of \$63-113bn or 11%-19% of global revenue in 2020.

The Cape Town Air Access team - a partnership between Wesgro, City of Cape Town, Western Cape Government, Airports Company of South Africa, Cape Town Tourism, South African Tourism - has committed themselves to minimise the overall impact of Covid-19 on Cape Town's route network where possible.

The team has remained active in ensuring that airlines are supported, particularly in meeting new regulations set by the South African Government, as they work towards transporting passengers to their home destinations.

David Maynier, Western Cape Minister of Finance and Economic Opportunities, says:

"The Air Access team has done great work since inception to expand flight routes to Cape Town so that more visitors can experience the best that the Western Cape has to offer. We are working hard to stop the spread of Covid-19 and its impact on the economy. This includes a recovery plan to ensure we will be ready to welcome visitors to the Western Cape when we overcome this challenge."

The airlines supported by Cape Town Air Access will remain clients throughout this crisis and the team will continue to provide as much support as possible until airline services are recovered. We believe that this will be a temporary measure until the current situation stabilises and the global outlook becomes more positive.

Alderman James Vos, Mayoral Committee Member for Economic Opportunities and Asset Management within the City of Cape Town, adds:

The aviation economy is a vital part of Cape Town's economy, with many spin-off industries supported by the economic activity. In 2019, the Cape Town International Airport welcomed 11 million passengers. The Cape Town Air Access project, responsible for promoting direct flights into Cape Town airport, has added an estimated R6 billion in direct tourism spending to the economy since its inception in 2015. In 2010, when flights were suspended due to the eruption of Iceland's Eyjafjallajökull volcano, we saw the severe impact on global trade due to the disruption to aviation.

Unfortunately, there is no escaping the short-term effect of the flight cancellations we are now witnessing due to the Covid-19 pandemic. That is why, now more than ever, we must focus on our support and recovery plans.

Connectivity forms part of my departmental strategy to connect Cape Town with key destinations in Africa and globally. More efficient connections between our city and key source markets are crucial if we are to capitalise on global business. At the end of the day, more connections create jobs and deliver trade and tourism opportunities.

The Air Access team has a wealth of experience and has achieved much to attract visitors and to secure new and expanded flight routes to the Cape. The City is proud to have contributed to this success. I am confident that by focussing on action plans to recover the flights lost and reinvigorate the spin-off sectors, that we will come through this global crisis.

The Cape Town Air Access team remains responsive to assist airlines when the time comes to resume their services. We will keep the industry updated as we face this economic challenge together.

To reach out to any of the Cape Town Air Access team email: airaccess@wesgro.co.za.

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>