

# Important Customer Advisory Middle East Operational Update

Date: **02 March 2026**

Dear Customer,

At ECU Worldwide, we understand that your supply chain is the heartbeat of your business. We are writing to you today not just as your logistics partner, but as a committed ally during these incredibly challenging times.

Following the recent military escalations in the Middle East and the subsequent closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the global maritime landscape has shifted overnight. We are monitoring the situation hour-by-hour to provide you with the most grounded and transparent intelligence available.

## 1. Our Service Status

- **UAE/Jebel Ali:** Our gateway remains operational; however, we are limited to handling available containers. Our office teams are currently working remotely to ensure your queries are answered, while our warehouse teams remain on-site to facilitate deliveries where safe
- **Iran & GCC Feeders:** Movements are under extreme scrutiny. Compliance and sanction screenings are now a primary gating item for all bookings

## 2. Current Market & Carrier Intelligence

Major steamship lines have taken decisive action to mitigate risk. As of March 1–2, 2026, the following measures are in effect:

- **MSC:** Has implemented a full suspension of all bookings for worldwide cargo destined for the Middle East. Vessels currently in the region have been instructed to move to safe shelter areas
- **Maersk:** Has suspended all vessel crossings through the Strait of Hormuz and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait (Suez Canal) until further notice. Shipments on the ME11 and MECL services are being rerouted via the Cape of Good Hope
- **CMA CGM:** Has instructed all outbound and inbound Gulf vessels to take shelter and has officially suspended all Suez Canal transits, rerouting cargo around the Cape of Good Hope
- **DP World (Jebel Ali):** While operations briefly paused due to regional security incidents, terminals have begun a cautious resumption. However, significant yard congestion and berthing delays are expected as the backlog clears

## 3. Expected Operational Impacts

The de-facto closure of these primary arteries will result in the following disruptions over the next 7–14 days:

- **Extended Transit Times:** Rerouting via the Cape of Good Hope typically adds 10 to 20 days to standard transit times
- **Equipment & Capacity Crunch:** As vessels take longer to return, we anticipate a tightening of container availability at origin ports
- **Schedule Volatility:** Please expect "blank sailings" (canceled voyages) and last-minute omissions of port calls as carriers prioritize vessel safety

## 4. Surcharges & Cost Adjustments

To maintain service continuity in this high-risk environment, carriers are introducing emergency fees. ECU Worldwide will only pass through these costs where strictly necessary and validated:

- **War Risk Surcharges (WRS):** Applicable to all Gulf/Hormuz transits.
- **Emergency Contingency Surcharges:** Likely to be implemented on very short notice by underlying operators.
- **Insurance Premiums:** Market-wide increases in marine insurance are expected.
- **Freight Rates:** These are expected to increase in the coming days as carriers recalibrate pricing to reflect elevated war risk exposure, longer transit routes, and constrained vessel capacity.

## 5. Information to be shared by us proactively:

- Any confirmed service suspension/blinking impacting ME lanes
- Confirmed carrier surcharge advisories (amount, effective date, scope)
- Congestion indicators (berthing delays/rollover ratios where visible)
- Specific routing constraints impacting GCC/Iran connections

Shipments connected to Iran and certain Gulf destinations are being closely monitored. Additional compliance and carrier acceptance checks are to support the responsible and secure movement of cargo.

We will continue to share updates as soon as they reach us.

We thank you for your patience and trust as we navigate this together. Our focus is on maintaining resilience and continuity while prioritizing the safety and remaining mindful of the broader impact.

For any trade-specific clarification, please coordinate directly with your respective local offices.

Best Regards,