

**Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command**

**Customer and Carrier Advisory**

**February 8, 2024**

**CA-24-02-08/0016**

**Subject:** Impacts of Ramadan and Eid Al Fitr on CENTCOM Area of Operations (AOR) Cargo Shipments

**Purpose:** To inform the shipping community of the disruption of cargo movement expected to occur during Ramadan and Eid Al-Fitr Holiday.

**Be Advised:** Each country will observe Ramadan and Eid Holidays based on moon sighting locally. Dates are tentative and may vary in each country subject to respective local Government's guidance that typically issues official circular for Ramadan timings and Eid holidays. This year, Ramadan is expected to start on/about **11 March 2024** and end around **09 April 2024** followed by the Eid Al-Fitr holiday celebration, which marks the end of Ramadan. The Eid Al-Fitr is celebrated for 3 or 4 days and may be extended thru the weekend.

The movement of cargo will continue during Ramadan at a lower velocity due to reduced working hours, reduced staff, and meal/prayer breaks. Cargo movement will stop during Eid Al-Fitr due to Customs Office and Border Closures in the region.

**IMPACT ON CENTCOM AOR:**

**BAHRAIN**

**Ramadan:** Customs processes are expected to be minimally delayed, but not enough to affect normal operations. All ports will be operational during Ramadan (24/7). Gate operations will be impacted due to reduced working hours by customs officials for inspection of cargo. There are no anticipated delays in handling export bookings.

**Eid Al Fitr:** Customs and Government offices will be closed for Eid holidays. A skeleton staff will be available to address urgent issues. All ports will be operational during Eid Holidays (24/7).

**EGYPT**

**Ramadan:** Anticipate minimal impact due to reduced schedules.

**Eid Al Fitr:** Customs will be closed during Eid holidays.

## **IRAQ**

**Ramadan:** Import cargo movements will continue though slower movements at customs border. Cargo in transit will continue without staging but the process will be slower than usual due to limited number of trucks per convoy. The JOC-I ensured that the TMR process of submitting packets and receiving approvals will not be affected by Ramadan.

**Eid Al Fitr:** Cargo will only be staged at the port if clearance process and permissions are not received. K-Crossing border might be closed on the first two (2) days of the Eid holiday.

## **ISRAEL**

No impact during Ramadan and Eid Al Fitr.

## **JORDAN**

**Ramadan:** Customs office will be working on reduced hours during Ramadan. Obtaining approvals from Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF) will be delayed during Ramadan. JAF working hours are between 0900 until 1400.

**Eid Al Fitr:** General Headquarters (GHQ) will be closed from 09 Apr to 11 Apr 2024, as it will be the end of Ramadan and Eid. There will only be support on emergency request and not moving equipment. The Imported cargo can be staged or loaded directly on trucks for en-route to the inland points during Ramadan and Eid.

**TAN:** Import cargo will continue to move but loading of trucks at the port and transiting through the border crossing will be slower due to reduced staff. Cargo operations will continue but at a slightly slower speed. Export cargo in transit will continue without staging but the process will be slower than usual due to limited number of trucks per convoy.

## **KUWAIT**

**Ramadan:** Customs office hours during Ramadan is usually from 0900–1230 from Sunday thru Thursday. Delays with documentation activities and backlog with clearance of containers are anticipated. All containers with approved AK302 will be delivered as normally done for Ash Shuwaikh port (PN1) and Ash Shuaibah port (PN2) depending on the availability of customs personnel. No impact on cargo that has approved AK302. However, AK302 must be complete before the Eid holidays. No impact on export cargo. Cargo will be picked up only if AK302 is approved and will be loaded on vessel as normally done.

**Eid Al Fitr:** Port operations likely to remain suspended on the first day of Eid. Customs will remain closed throughout the Government declared holidays. Any documents approved prior to Eid holidays can be cleared from the port after the 1st day of the holiday. Anything else will be processed after the holidays. Projected dates for normal operations will be affected from 09-11 April 2024. Any containers

arriving during the holiday period is discharged at the port and remains there until customs is back to normal functioning. Similarly, on export cargo, no loading activities can be planned from 09-11 April 2024.

## **OMAN**

**Ramadan:** Customs processes are expected to take longer than normal since Omani government offices will work on a reduced, 6-hour work schedule during Ramadan.

**Eid Al Fitr:** During Eid holidays, all clearance processing will stop as both the Ministry of Defense (MOD) and Royal Omani Police (ROP) administrative staff will be off duty. ROP Operations will still be conducted, but at much lower staffing levels than normal. Borders will be open for personal travel and approved shipments only. Additional unannounced delays should be anticipated. Cargo shipments not completely cleared through the Bayan system prior to the start of Eid will likely not be processed until after the Eid Holiday.

Contractors should limit or cease US government cargo movements to and from all ports during the Eid Holiday.

## **QATAR**

**Ramadan:** Impacts to government cargo movements are expected to be minimal. Delays during prayer time and shift changes should be anticipated. Getting gate passes for trucks at all ports will likely take 1-2 hours due to the lengthy pass procedures and reduced staffing levels. Additionally, vessel loading operations will likely take longer to accommodate reduced work hours by stevedores. All ports observe a two-hour break time in the evening from 1800–2000 to allow port personnel to break their fast before returning to their place of duty. Cargo will be staged at the port until the officials and employees resume their work.

Online Transit Bayan clearances may be delayed by reduced customs office operations. Permission to proceed with U.S. government cargo can only be provided by customs officials at each port. Export cargo should be loaded at the origin in the morning hours to ensure drivers reach and clear cargo at all ports before the start of the evening break identified above.

**Eid Al Fitr:** The port will be closed during the Eid holiday. General Headquarters (GHQ) approvals will be delayed for a minimum of 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after Eid Holidays. Carriers should apply for GHQ customs approval letters on a 5-6 weeks' timeline instead of the standard 30-day timeline.

Carriers should refrain from lifting cargo from the shipper's site during the Eid Holiday. Containers that are lifted (if any) will have to be staged at the nearest secured yard.

### **SAUDI ARABIA**

**Ramadan:** Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA) government offices will operate at a significantly reduced staffing during this time and will only be open for six hours a day. Operationally, the shippers can expect longer Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) processing times; however, Diriyah Joint Operations Center (DJOC) requests will likely remain uninterrupted. The Customs office will also be working on reduced hours during Ramadan. Obtaining approvals for Joint Operations Center (JOC)/MOFA in KSA will be delayed during the Ramadan.

**Eid Al Fitr:** All government offices will be closed on/about 09 April 2024 to 11 April 2024. Borders might be closed on the first two days of the Eid holidays.

### **UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (UAE)**

**Ramadan:** All UAE government organizations will observe a 6-hour workday for administrative and operations personnel. Additionally, vessel loading operations will likely take longer to accommodate reduced work hours by stevedores. All ports observe a two-hour break time in the evening from 1800–2000 to allow port personnel to break their fast before returning to their place of duty. Cargo will be staged at the port until the officials and employees resume their work. Overtime charges at all ports may be applicable for operations exceeding 6 hours.

Delays are expected to affect all exemption approvals including Value Added Tax (VAT) and hazardous/dangerous materials. All ports will be open during standard hours of operation during Ramadan.

**Eid Al Fitr:** Import cargo movements requiring a UAE military police escort will be put on hold for 7 days prior to the Eid holiday and will resume 5-7 days after Eid has ended.

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