

# IMAG INSIGHTS

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## SPECIAL REPORT: INTERNATIONAL AIRLIFT CAPACITY IMPACTS

### U.S. CARRIERS CUT CAPACITY

President Trump on Saturday extended the 30-day passenger travel ban on Europe to include United Kingdom and Ireland, which had been exempted in the initial announcement on March 11. While there is no ban on the movement of goods, cargo, or mail between the United States and Europe, they will be significantly impacted. About [half of the air cargo](#) carried worldwide normally flies in the belly of passenger jets rather than in dedicated freighters.

Airlines announced significant schedule changes on international (and domestic) flights, with huge reductions in European routes. All the below information is from public reports, such as news articles or the airlines' websites. IMAG has asked USPS to use the Industry Alert system to send regular updates on the impact of the novel coronavirus on mail operations, particularly as they apply to international service.

**American Airlines** says it will cut international by 75 percent through May 6 and ground nearly all its widebody fleet. [The news](#) came just hours after the White House said it would widen new travel restrictions on Europeans to include travelers in the United Kingdom and Ireland.

#### American will:

- Reduce international capacity by 75 percent year over year – from March 16 to May 6
- Continue to operate one flight daily from Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) to London (LHR), one flight daily from Miami (MIA) to LHR and three flights per week from DFW to Tokyo (NRT)
- Continue short-haul international flying, which includes flights to Canada, Mexico, Caribbean, Central America and certain markets in the northern part of South America, as scheduled

**Delta** said on March 13 it would cut capacity 40% in the next few months, the largest reduction in its history. It will eliminate most flights to continental Europe for 30 days and will park up to 300 aircraft. See Delta's revised schedule [here](#) which includes only one daily flight between a few U.S. cities and London, Paris, or Amsterdam.

- Atlanta to Amsterdam
- Atlanta to London-Heathrow
- Atlanta to Paris-Charles De Gaulle
- Detroit to Amsterdam
- New York-JFK to London-Heathrow

**United** also announced cuts to European service this week. From the [United website](#): We will continue to fly our regular schedule from Europe to the U.S. through March 20, except Houston-London and Denver-London, which we're suspending after March 16. After March 20,

we will fly three daily flights to London and Frankfurt, two daily flights to Munich, daily service to Dublin, Amsterdam, Brussels, Paris and Zurich, and four flights a week to Lisbon.

Scandinavian Airline [SAS](#) announced it has suspended the majority of its flights and temporarily laid off much of its staff. The article link lists other international airlines that have cut flights.

[Forbes](#) keeps a regularly updated list of countries and their travel restrictions, which gives insights into the impact on airline capacity to and from those countries. [Reuters](#) reports that air freight rates have skyrocketed in the past few weeks.

Air transport is a critical component of the Postal Service's infrastructure, especially so for international services where ground transport isn't an option. Air transport makes up \$2.9 billion of the Postal Service's expenses each year. IMAG members need to know if they should shift volume to cargo carriers or find other solutions if the Postal Service anticipates major service reductions. We continue to work with USPS for an updated and targeted message regarding international mail.

Here is the Postal Service statement from Friday, March 16, which does not explicitly state international products or services:

The Postal Service is continuing to monitor the circumstances around the novel coronavirus, also known as "COVID-19." We are sharing the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) guidance regarding the COVID-19 epidemic to our employees via stand-up talks, employee news articles, messages on bulletin boards, and internal messaging inside USPS workplaces.

Currently, we are not experiencing operational impacts as a result of the COVID-19 epidemic and we are using this time to review/revise our contingency plans should they be needed. Customers can view our most recent media statement and find a link to the CDC guidance at <https://about.usps.com/newsroom/statements/usps-statement-on-coronavirus.htm>.

Regarding the importation of packages, the CDC states there is likely very low risk that the COVID-19 can be spread from products or packaging shipped from China, because of poor survivability of coronaviruses on surfaces. Also, according to the CDC, there currently is no evidence to support transmission of coronavirus associated with imported goods; and there have been no reported cases of COVID-19 in the United States associated with imported goods.

**About IMAG:**

The International Mailers' Advisory Group is the premier representative of the U.S. international mailing sector. Its core mission is to address barriers to the efficient flow of goods and information across borders for companies utilizing postal services.

For more information on IMAG, visit our website [www.internationalmailers.net](http://www.internationalmailers.net) or [www.imag.world](http://www.imag.world). Or contact IMAG Executive Director Kate Muth at [katemuth@comcast.net](mailto:katemuth@comcast.net)

