Africa air cargo volumes increase by 5.7% in June

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has released its latest global air cargo market analysis, based on traffic and capacity data collected in each region, worldwide, during June 2022.

Image source: Gallo/Getty

These results are include global demand and capacity.

Global demand, measured in cargo tonne-kilometres, was 6.4% below June 2021 levels (-6.6% for international operations). This was an improvement on the year-on-year decline of 8.3% seen in May. Global demand for the first half-year was 4.3% below 2021 levels (-4.2% for international operations). Compared to pre-Covid levels (2019) half-year demand was up 2.2%.

Capacity was 6.7% above June 2021 (+9.4% for international operations). This was an increase on the 2.7% year-on-year growth recorded in May. Capacity for the first half-year was up 4.5% (+5.7% for international operations) compared to first half-year of 2021. Compared to pre-Covid levels demand was up 2.5%.

Several factors impacting air cargo performance

• Trade activity ramped up slightly in June as lockdowns in China due to Omicron were eased. Emerging regions (Latin America and Africa) also contributed to growth with stronger volumes.

• New export orders, a leading indicator of cargo demand and world trade, decreased in all markets, except China.

• The war in Ukraine continues to impair cargo capacity used to serve Europe as several airlines based in Russia and Ukraine were key cargo players.

"Air cargo demand over the first half of 2022 was 2.2% above pre-Covid levels (first half 2019). That’s a strong performance, particularly considering continuing supply chain constraints and the loss of capacity due to the war in Ukraine. Current economic uncertainties have had little impact on demand for air cargo, but developments will need to be closely monitored in the second half," said Willie Walsh, Iata’s director general.

June regional performance

Asia-Pacific airlines saw their air cargo volumes decrease by 2.1% in June 2022 compared to the same month in 2021. This was a significant improvement over the 6.6% decline in May. Demand for the first half-year was 2.7% below 2021 levels.

Airlines in the region have been heavily impacted by lower trade and manufacturing activity due to Omicron-related lockdowns in China, however, this continued to ease in June as restrictions were lifted. Available capacity in the region fell 6.2% compared to June 2021. This contributed to capacity being 0.2% below 2021 levels for the first half of 2022.

North American carriers posted a 6.3% decrease in cargo volumes in June 2022 compared to June 2021. Demand for the first half-year was 3.3% below 2021 levels. High inflation is affecting the region. Demand in the Asia-North America market is falling and Europe – North America market has started to decline. Capacity was up 5.6% in June 2022 compared to June 2021 and up 6.1% for the first half-year of 2022.

European carriers saw a 13.5% decrease in cargo volumes in June 2022 compared to the same month in 2021. This was the weakest performance of all regions. It was, however, a slight improvement over the previous month’s performance, which saw the sharpest fall in demand since early 2022. This is attributable to the war in Ukraine. Due to Omicron, labour shortages and lower manufacturing activity in Asia also affected volumes. Capacity increased 5.6% in June 2022 compared to June 2021. Demand for the first half-year was 7.8% below 2021 levels while capacity was 3.7% above.

Middle Eastern carriers,!> experienced a 10.8% year-on-year decrease in cargo volumes in June. Significant benefits from traffic being redirected to avoid flying over Russia failed to materialize. Capacity was up 6.7% compared to June 2021. Demand for the first half-year was 9.3% below 2021 levels, the weakest first half performance of all regions. The first half-year capacity was 6.3% above 2021 levels.

Latin American carriers reported an increase of 19.6% in cargo volumes in June 2022 compared to June 2021. This was the strongest performance of all regions. Airlines in this region have shown optimism by introducing new services and capacity, and in some cases investing in additional aircraft for air cargo in the coming months. Capacity in June was up 29.5% compared to the same month in 2021. Demand for the first half-year was 21.8% above 2021 levels and half-year capacity was 32.6% above 2021 levels. This was the strongest first-half performance of all regions.

African airlines saw cargo volumes increase by 5.7% in June 2022 compared to June 2021. As with carriers in Latin America, airlines in this region have shown optimism by introducing additional capacity. Capacity was 10.3% above June 2021 levels. Demand for the first half-year was 2.9% above 2021 levels and half-year capacity was 6.9% above 2021 levels.