

SAA cancels flights in midst of industrial action

South African Airways (SAA) has cancelled almost all its domestic, regional and international flights scheduled for Friday and Saturday as a result of industrial action.



MeRyan via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

SAA said the flight cancellation decision was made as a way to minimise the impact of disruptions for its customers.

The cancellations will affect flights scheduled for Friday, 15 November, as well as flights scheduled for Saturday, 16 November 2019.

The cancellations follow an announcement by the South African Cabin Crew Association (SACCA) and the National Union of Metalworkers of South Africa (NUMSA) that their members will embark on industrial action from Friday morning.

“We are putting our customers first and regret the inevitable inconvenience that these cancellations may cause our customers. However, by acting proactively, SAA can certainly help customers find alternatives,” said SAA spokesperson Tlali Tlali.

This is notwithstanding SAA’s repeated proposals to the unions to acknowledge the severity of the current situation facing the airline.

"Unless alternative arrangements are in place, customers are requested not to go to their departure airports during the disruption as SAA will be unable to provide any assistance. Information on the status of our flights will be regularly updated on our website," said Tlali.

The cancellations only affect flights operated by SAA. Flights operated by partner airlines including SA Express, Mango, SA Airlink and all codeshare partners, including flights operated by the Star Alliance partner airlines, will not be affected.

These flights can be identified by their flight numbers and will operate as normal: SA 1000 – 1999, SA 2000 – 2999, SA 7000 – 7999 and SA 8000 to 8999.

Regional and international flights

Meanwhile, SAA will operate flights from selected outstations on Friday, 15 November 2019, back to SAA's base, OR Tambo International Airport.

Regional flights, which will operate on Friday morning, will return from Maputo (SA147), Lusaka (SA067), Harare (SA025), Windhoek (SA073), and Accra (SA210).

International flights, which will operate on Friday evening, will return from Frankfurt (SA261), New York (SA204), Munich (SA265), Hong Kong (SA287), Perth (SA281), and London (SA235).

The airline will assess the situation on an ongoing basis and customers will be kept informed of all operational developments on a daily basis.

Tlali said that during the negotiations with the unions, SAA presented a revised offer for employees delivering a 5.9% increase subject to the availability of funds from lenders.

NUMSA and SACCA are demanding an 8% salary increase. The National Transport Movement (NTM), on the other hand, has not stated whether their members will embark on a strike or not.

SAA attempted to dissuade unions from embarking on industrial action by providing firm commitment dates to SAA's offer of 5.9%.

"SAA will spare no effort to work jointly with the labour unions to find solutions that accommodate the employee demands, safeguard the business and return operations to normal," said Tlali.

Earlier this week, the airline informed all its 5 146 employees that it is embarking on a restructuring process, which may lead to job losses.

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