



SAUDI ARABIA OFFICIALLY OPENS DOMESTIC AVIATION MARKET TO INTERNATIONAL CHARTER FLIGHT OPERATORS

News / Business aviation



Saudi Arabia General Authority of Civil Aviation has officially removed cabotage restrictions on charter flight operations, with several international business and private jet operators already applying for permits to operate flights within the Kingdom. The decision, effective 1 May 2025, marks a major milestone in GACA’s strategy to transform Saudi Arabia into a global aviation hub and drive growth of the private aviation and business jet sector.

Imtiyaz Manzary, General Manager for General Aviation at GACA, commented: “GACA is excited to welcome international operators to fly within Saudi Arabia. This policy change will build real opportunities for growth, create jobs, and make the Kingdom a more connected, accessible place for business and private travel. We believe this step will unlock huge potential for operators and passengers alike.”

This policy change is a key pillar of the General Aviation Roadmap, first announced in May 2024, which outlines a comprehensive plan to develop the private aviation sector into a \$2 billion industry by 2030. In addition to regulatory reforms like lifting cabotage and removing empty-leg restrictions, the roadmap includes major infrastructure investments across the Kingdom.

Since the initial announcement of the cabotage removal in February, GACA has received several applications from international and regional operators expressing interest in entering the Saudi market. This early momentum reflects growing investor confidence in the Kingdom's aviation vision and the attractiveness of its evolving general aviation landscape.

The opening of the domestic charter market supports Saudi Arabia's broader Vision 2030 and Saudi Aviation Strategy objectives, positioning the Kingdom as a more open, competitive, and investor-friendly destination for aviation.

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