= Eilat Airport =

Eilat Airport (Hebrew : ?????? ??????????? ?????? , Namal HaTe 'ufa Eilat ; Arabic : ???? ?????) , also known as J. Hozman Airport (IATA : ETH , ICAO : LLET) , is an Israeli airport located in the city of Eilat , and named for Arkia Airlines founder Yakov Hozman (Jacob Housman) . Eilat Airport is located in the central area of the city , next to Route 90 (The Arava Road) . It mostly handles domestic flights to Tel Aviv and Haifa with international flights operating instead to Ovda International Airport , but a few international flights on aircraft that can handle the relatively short runway use Eilat as well .

The airport is expected to cease civilian operations by 2017 when Eilat 's new international airport , Ramon Airport , should become operational .

= = History = =

Eilat Airport was established in 1949 by the Israel Air Force , following the 1948 Israeli War of Independence . During its early years , the airport aimed to establish a comprehensive set of connections to towns across the country , most notably with Tel Aviv and Haifa . Consequently , a regular route from Eilat to Lod Airport (now Ben Gurion International Airport) was started . Soon after , a route to Haifa Airport became operational . In December 1950 , following their establishment , Arkia Israel Airlines became the largest domestic operator at Eilat Airport , taking the position of the former companies Eilata and Aviron . To this day , they retain this position . Later , in 1964 the runway was expanded to 1500 m , and a passenger terminal was built . Five years later , the runway was further expanded increasing the length to 1900 m . In 1975 , Eilat Airport started to attract Scandinavian airlines . The first international flight arrival to Eilat , of the Danish airline , Sterling Airlines landed in this year . Since then , many international routes have been established directly linking Eilat with Europe , however , the airport is still unable to handle landings of large aircraft which have to fly to Ovda International Airport .

In the 1994 Peace Agreement between Israel and Jordan it was decided that operations were supposed to be transferred from Eilat Airport to Aqaba Airport . The original plan was to rename Aqaba Airport as Aqaba @-@ Eilat Peace International Airport . The agreement was never followed , however , and an agreement between the two countries in March 1997 , stipulated that domestic flights would continue to use Eilat Airport , whilst no further action to move international flights took place .

In August 2005 , a Katyusha rocket fired from Jordan landed near a taxi traveling just 15 yards (14 m) from the airport perimeter fence . On August 8 , 2013 , the Israeli Military instructed the airport to cancel all landings and departures after a security assessment . Militants in Egypt 's Sinai Peninsula had fired rockets towards the city in recent years , but it was not immediately clear if that was the reason for the closure .

= = The airport today = =

Today , Eilat Airport sustains peak loads concentrated into Thursdays , Saturdays , and Sundays . On Thursdays and Sundays , flights are handled in a period of a few hours in the mornings and on Saturdays only the evening hours are used . Often there are days when 10 @,@ 000 passengers on 120 flights are channelled through the 2 @,@ 800 m2 terminal , counting as one of the highest peak loads worldwide in this category .

International passenger traffic decreased from magnitude of 20 @,@ 000 in a year in late 2000s to 5 @,@ 000 in a year in 2010s .

Although the airport is capable of handling Boeing 767 aircraft , for large numbers of these aircraft , significant investment would be needed . Consequently , the largest aircraft regularly flying to the airport are Boeing 757 . The main problem at the airport is the lack of ramp space , with just two parking positions for large aircraft . As a result , El Al operates regular shuttle flights to Ben Gurion International Airport carrying passengers from around the world on 757s and 737s .

The small size of the airport is perhaps best illustrated with the fact that a Boeing 757 cannot taxi past another aircraft to parking positions . As a result , controllers are responsible not only for ensuring that valuable space is utilised , but also ensuring that other aircraft are kept circling until larger aircraft are parked . Despite these limitations , the airport successfully handles ten to twenty times more traffic than airports of a comparable size . It is for this reason that plans to relocate the airport are so important in the short @-@ term scale . In 2006 , a NIS 5 @.@ 5 million renovation programme of Eilat Airport 's terminal and runway was undertaken , designed to sustain the airport until it is replaced in the near future .

= = The future = =

Since the beginning of the 1990s the authorities in Eilat have considered relocating the airport , approximately 20 km north of Eilat , to the Ora Well area near Be 'er Ora . There were numerous reasons behind this idea . Primarily , the fact that safety would be improved as in its current location , there is the chance of aircraft crashing into buildings in the city . Other reasons were the pure value of the land which the airport occupies , and the fact that the airport is dividing the city of Eilat into two parts with the hotels and tourist areas on one side , and the residential buildings on the other .
On 24 July 2011 the Israeli cabinet approved the construction of a new airport to be built in Timna , 18 km (11 mi) north of Eilat , next to Be 'er Ora . It will have a 3 @,@ 600 m (11 @,@ 800 ft) runway , longer than the runway in Eilat , which will allow large aircraft to land . The airport is due to open in 2017 and will be named after the first Israeli astronaut Ilan Ramon and his son Assaf Ramon , who died six years later when his F @-@ 16 fighter jet crashed over the West Bank .

= = Airlines and destinations = =

= = Statistics = =