

## DP World calls for second channel in Suez Canal

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Terminal operator DP World has called on Egypt to build a second channel for the Suez Canal to ensure that there is never a repeat of the severe disruption caused globally by the grounding of the Ever Given on March 23rd.

DP World group chairman and CEO Sultan Ahmed Bin Sulayem said at a conference to announce the businesses Q1 results that “the canal is a critical artery for world trade and its blockage last month cost the world economy almost \$9bn a day. Weeks later, we are still giving relief to those who have had cargo delayed across our operations at Jeddah, Sokhna, Egypt and Dubai.”

He noted that smooth world trade flows were “the backbone of small and big business around the world. Egypt should consider investing in another channel into the canal from the Red Sea to avoid future blockages.”

While Egypt and the Suez Canal Authority have put forward a number of ideas that would make any future event less severe, it had remained silent on the prospect of building another channel. Egypt did invest in a second channel at the Mediterranean-end of the canal. This was opened in 2015, but only a single lane remains for the southern part, leading to the Red Sea.

What concerned many port (and ship) operators was that, although the Ever Given incident caused significant delays and was holding up more than 400 vessels at one point, it only lasted for six days and could, indeed, have been far worse.