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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM INTERIEUR

OFFICE OF INTERNAL OVERSIGHT SERVICES · BUREAU DES SERVICES DE CONTRÔLE INTERNE
INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION · DIVISION DE L'AUDIT INTERNE

TO: Mr. Ashraf Jehangir Qazi
A: Special Representative of the Secretary-General
United Nations Mission in Sudan

DATE: 23 December 2009

REFERENCE: IAD: 09- **03256**

FROM: Fatoumata Ndiaye, Acting Director
for: Internal Audit Division, OIOS



SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AP2009/632/12 - Audit of the accident prevention plan and programme in UNMIS**
OBJET:

The Mission implemented appropriate measures to reduce the rate of vehicular accidents, but these measures have not been fully effective

1. I am pleased to present the report on the above-mentioned audit which was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.
2. In order for us to close the recommendations, we request that you provide us with the additional information as discussed in the text of the report and also summarized in Annex 1.
3. Please note that OIOS will report on the progress made to implement its recommendations in its annual report to the General Assembly and semi-annual report to the Secretary-General.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Audit of the accident prevention plan and programme in UNMIS

OIOS conducted an audit of the accident prevention plan and programme in the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). The overall objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the ground transport accident prevention plan and programme in the Mission. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

The Mission has implemented measures to minimize the rate of vehicular accidents. However, these measures have not been fully effective as 95 per cent of the 619 accidents during the period covered by the audit were caused by preventable human error. OIOS identified the following areas where further improvements are required:

- A more structured traffic safety enforcement programme will further educate staff on dangerous driving and ensure that measures are in place to detect and prevent irresponsible driving; and
- Improved investigation of accidents will ensure that negligent drivers are held accountable for their actions.

OIOS made four recommendations to strengthen the Mission's ground transport accident prevention programme.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of accident prevention plan and programme in United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).
2. There were 2,214 vehicles and 2,549 staff with active driving permits in the Mission. The Road Safety Unit of the Transport Section is responsible for collecting data and handling traffic accidents involving Mission personnel. The Unit is also responsible for promoting safe driving in the Mission.
3. The Mission also has an Advisory Committee on Traffic Safety (ACTS), which is responsible for reporting to the Director of Mission Support (DMS) on the causes and effects of accidents. Accordingly, the ACTS is responsible for investigating accidents and for recommending sanctions against drivers. The DMS has the sole authority for issuing and withdrawing UNMIS driving permits.
4. The statistics on the number of accidents, fatalities and cost of repair works for the period from July 2007 to May 2009 are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Traffic accidents involving UNMIS personnel

Period	Major Accidents	Minor Accidents	Total Accidents	Total Cost of Repairs (\$)	Fatalities
July-Dec 2007	28	148	176	109,965	0
Jan-Dec 2008	66	256	322	396,357	10
Jan-May 2009	14	107	121	141,831	0
Total	108	511	619	648,153	10

Note: Statistics prior to July 2007 were not made available.

5. Comments made by UNMIS Office of Mission Support are shown in *italics*.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVES

6. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of the ground transport accident prevention plan and programme.

III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

7. The audit covered the accident prevention plans and programmes for ground transport in UNMIS and focused on related activities for the period from July 2007 to May 2009.
8. The audit involved reviews of accident case files and interviews with key personnel involved in vehicle accident prevention at UNMIS.

IV. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Internal control mechanisms

9. In compliance with the Surface Transport Manual Procedures for the Field issued by the Department of Field Support, the Mission has implemented measures to reduce the rate of vehicular accidents. For example, the Mission established the Road Safety and Accident Prevention Unit within the Transport Section, promulgated a traffic safety and accident prevention policy and established the ACTS. The Mission also administers a mandatory driving test for all UNMIS personnel and provides training in defensive driving skills to all drivers. Speed limits for UN-owned vehicles are monitored using the car-log system, and the speed limits of contingent-owned vehicles are monitored by the military police.

10. The above-mentioned measures of the Mission generally conform to the Surface Transport Manual Procedures for the Field. However, the Mission's traffic safety and accident prevention policy does not provide for an incentive scheme intended to encourage responsible driving. The Surface Transport Manual Procedures for the Field recommend missions to consider awarding a bonus to those specifically employed as drivers that have not been convicted of a traffic violation in a calendar year as an incentive to encourage compliance with the provisions of the traffic safety policy put in place by the Mission.

Recommendation 1

(1) The UNMIS Office of Mission Support should introduce a safe driver recognition scheme for staff that are hired as functional drivers to encourage compliance with the UNMIS Traffic Safety and Accident Prevention Policy.

11. *The UNMIS Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 1 and stated that it will address this after evaluating the practice by other UN agencies, programmes and funds operating in Sudan.* Recommendation 1 remains open pending submission of an action report on the implementation of the "safe driving bonus" scheme.

B. Traffic safety enforcement

Monitoring of speed limits

12. Since August 2008, the UNMIS Transport Section has been monitoring speed limits using the Car-log System. From November 2008 to June 2009, the driving permits of 75 drivers were withdrawn for exceeding the relevant speed limits. A total of 24 driving permits were permanently withdrawn in the year 2008 and two other permits were permanently withdrawn in 2009 for very serious violations of the UNMIS Traffic Safety and Accident Prevention Policy. These measures may have helped to reduce the number of major accidents from an average of 5.5 per month in 2008 to 2.8 per month in 2009.

Traffic safety enforcement

13. A review of the traffic safety enforcement programmes found that they have not been well structured, planned and implemented in the Mission to detect violations such as: (a) driving under the influence of alcohol; (b) operation and use of vehicles by unauthorized

driver and passengers; (c) safety risks due to faulty equipment; (d) dangerous driving habits such as the use of mobile phones while driving. Of the 619 accidents that occurred during the period covered by the audit, 95 per cent of these accidents were caused by preventable human errors.

14. OIOS suggested, and the Mission agreed, to plan and implement safety enforcement programmes in an effort to reduce the number of accidents.

C. Accident case documentation, filing and records management

Custody of accident case files

15. Out of 119 major accidents covering the period from July 2007 to March 2009, OIOS selected a sample of 30 for review. However, the Mission was only able to provide OIOS with five of the selected files. For the remaining 25 accidents for which the relevant files were not available, the accident had not been recorded by the Road Safety and Accident Prevention Unit. In OIOS' view, this indicates the lack of proper reporting and investigation of accidents.

16. The Transport Section was unable to provide OIOS with the relevant statistics of accidents that took place prior to July 2007; the reason being the lack of proper filing and records management during that period. Effective August 2008, the ACTS requires its Secretary to maintain a database of all accident cases deliberated by ACTS. However, the database had not been adequately maintained as at the date of the audit. On follow-up, the Mission stated that a comprehensive database will be created to ensure proper monitoring on receipt and follow-up of all accidents taking place in the Mission.

Recommendation 2

(2) The UNMIS Transport Section should ensure proper filing and safe custody of all case files pertaining to investigations of traffic accidents.

17. *The UNMIS Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 2 and stated that a new system is being put in place to ensure that all accident reports are catalogued and securely maintained by the Driving Test Unit. Recommendation 2 remains open pending submission of a sample of the case files that were missing during the conduct of this audit for OIOS' verification.*

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

18. We wish to express our appreciation to the Management and staff of the UNMIS Transport Section, and in particular Road Safety Unit, for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

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STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
1	The UNMIS Office of Mission Support should introduce a safe driver recognition scheme for staff that are hired as functional drivers to encourage compliance with the UNMIS Traffic Safety and Accident Prevention Policy.	Compliance	Medium	O	Submission of an action report on the implementation of the "safe driving bonus" scheme.	31 Mar 2010
2	The UNMIS Transport Section should ensure proper filing and safe custody of all case files pertaining to investigations of traffic accidents.	Compliance	Medium	O	Submission a sample of the case files that were missing during the conduct of this audit for OIOS verification.	31 Dec 2009

1. C = closed, O = open

2. Date provided by UNMIS in response to recommendations.