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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. Nicolas Von Ruben,
A: Director of Mission Support, UNMIS

DATE: 25 July 2011

REFERENCE IAD: 11- 00503

FROM: Fatoumata Ndiaye, Director
DE: Internal Audit Division, OIOS

Fatoumata

SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AP2011/632/15 – Audit of aviation safety in UNMIS**

OBJET:

Key controls relating to risk management and strategic planning of aviation safety programmes were satisfactory

1. I am pleased to present the report on the above-mentioned audit.
2. Please note that under General Assembly resolution 59/272, a Member State may request that the final audit report be made available. Also, note that pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/263, OIOS will include the complete management response as an annex to the present report.
3. We wish to express our appreciation to the Management and staff of UNMIS for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

cc: Ms. AnneMarie van den Berg, Chief Integrated Support Services, UNMIS
Mr. Jorge Rodriguez, Mission Aviation Safety Officer, UNMIS
Mr. Rakan Al Quran, Chief Aviation Operations, UNMIS
Mr. Samuel Abrokwa, Chief Aviation Officer, UNMIS
Mr. Swatantra Goolsarran, Executive Secretary, UN Board of Auditors
Ms. Susanne Frueh, Executive Secretary, Joint Inspection Unit
Mr. Moses Bamuwanye, Executive Secretary, IAAC
Mr. Zachary Ikiara, Chief, Oversight Support Unit, DM
Mr. Byung-Kun Min, Special Assistant to the USG-OIOS
Ms. Eleanor Burns, Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Service, OIOS
Ms. Amy Wong, Programme Officer, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

AUDIT REPORT

Audit of aviation safety in UNMIS

BACKGROUND

Management of aviation safety programmes in field missions involves clear identification of aviation hazards, evaluation of associated risks and implementation of appropriate risk mitigation measures. Within each field mission, aviation safety typically falls under the responsibility of the Aviation Safety Unit (ASU), which is part of the Office of Mission Support. The Head of Mission is responsible for the overall safety of air assets and the quality and performance of air carriers. However, some responsibilities are normally delegated to the Director of Mission Support (DMS).

The ASU in the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) is responsible for the development and implementation of the aviation safety programme in line with the draft Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support (DFS) Aviation Safety Manual. The Unit is part of the Office of the DMS and the Head of Unit also has a reporting line to the Aviation Safety Section, Logistics Support Division, DFS on technical issues pertaining to aviation safety. The Aviation Safety Section is responsible to provide technical support and regular oversight over aviation safety matters in field missions, and to develop aviation safety policies and guidelines.

As at 30 April 2011, UNMIS operated 10 fixed-wing and 31 rotary-wing aircraft. The ASU had five authorized aviation safety posts, all of which were encumbered.

OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE

This audit was conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of UNMIS' risk management, control and governance processes in providing reasonable assurance regarding the effective implementation and management of its aviation safety programme. The key control tested for the audit included that related to risk management and strategic planning. The audit covered UNMIS' aviation safety activities related to this key control for the period from 1 July 2010 to 30 April 2011 and its implementation of previous OIOS' recommendations.

AUDIT RESULTS

In OIOS' opinion, UNMIS' risk management, control and governance processes examined were **satisfactory** to provide reasonable assurance regarding UNMIS' effective management of its air safety programme.

UNMIS had implemented OIOS' previous recommendations, and there was an adequate operational risk management framework in place. Also, the Mission's Aviation Safety Council met regularly and it was functioning as intended, periodic risk assessments were done in accordance with the Aviation Safety Manual, and there was an up-to-date Aviation Emergency Response Plan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the Management and staff of UNMIS for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE	1
III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY	1
IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT	1-2
V. AUDIT RESULTS	
A. Risk management and strategic planning	2-3

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of aviation safety in United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS).

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE

2. The audit was conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of UNMIS' risk management, control and governance processes in providing reasonable assurance regarding the effective implementation and management of its aviation safety programme. The key control tested for the audit included that related to risk management and strategic planning. For the purpose of this audit, OIOS defined risk management and strategic planning as that control designed to provide reasonable assurance that risks relating to UNMIS' aviation safety programme are identified and assessed, and that action is taken to mitigate or anticipate risks.

III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

OIOS conducted this audit in May 2011 in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing promulgated by The Institute of Internal Auditors. The audit covered UNMIS' aviation safety activities related to the key control for the period from 1 July 2010 to 30 April 2011 and its implementation of previous OIOS' recommendations. The audit did not cover planning and organization of aviation operations and aviation safety briefings and trainings. In addition, field visits were not conducted to verify/observe maintenance and rehabilitation of airports and airfields.

3. To gain a general understanding of the processes of UNMIS risk management and strategic planning over its aviation safety programme, OIOS interviewed the Mission Aviation Safety Officer, Chief Aviation Operations, and Chairperson of the Aviation Safety Council. OIOS reviewed the draft Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Department of Field Support (DPKO/DFS) Aviation Safety Manual (ASM) and the DPKO/DFS policy directive on aviation Operational Risk Management (ORM) and other operational documentation including aviation safety risk assessment indicators, minutes of the Mission Aviation Safety Council (MASC), the Mission's Aviation Emergency Response Plan (AERP) and the reports and recommendations made after the Aviation Safety Assistance Visits (ASAV) by the Logistics Support Division (LSD), DFS.

4. The audit team conducted an activity-level risk assessment to identify and evaluate specific risk exposures, and to confirm the relevance of the key control in mitigating associated risks.

5. Through interviews, analytical reviews and tests of controls, OIOS assessed the existence and adequacy of written policies and procedures, and also whether they were implemented consistently.

IV. OVERALL ASSESSMENT

7. In OIOS' opinion, UNMIS' risk management, control and governance processes examined were **satisfactory** to provide reasonable assurance regarding UNMIS' effective implementation and management of its air safety programme. UNMIS had implemented OIOS' previous recommendations, and there was an adequate operational risk management framework in place. Also, the Mission's Aviation Safety Council met regularly and it was functioning as intended, periodic risk assessments were done in

accordance with the Aviation Safety Manual, and there was an up-to-date Aviation Emergency Response Plan.

V. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Risk management and strategic planning

The Mission Aviation Safety Council was functioning as intended

8. The MASC is a forum for discussing aviation safety issues and is a vital part of the Mission's aviation safety programme.

9. The Mission had in place a properly constituted MASC, and it was functioning as intended. The MASC met five times during the period from 1 July 2010 and 30 April 2011 and discussed matters related to aviation safety in the Mission as required by the ASM. Key stakeholders on aviation safety in the Mission were represented in the MASC and attended all meetings. The minutes of the previous meetings of MASC were reviewed and adopted by all members. Discussions of the MASC included the implementation status of action points from previous meetings and aviation safety hazards and occurrences, as well as other matters of general importance to aviation safety in the Mission.

ASAVs were not conducted due to difficulties to enter Sudan, but the Mission implemented monthly risk assessments

10. The ASAV is an essential oversight mechanism used by the Aviation Safety Section of the Logistics Support Division (LSD/DFS) for aviation safety programmes in field missions. ASAVs make detailed assessment of factors influencing the Mission's aviation safety programme and represent the basis critical aviation safety risk mitigation measures.

11. Primarily due to visa restrictions, LSD/DFS was unable to conduct the anticipated ASAVs. However, as a compensatory control, the Mission's ASU conducted risk assessments/surveys on a monthly basis.

The Operational Risk Management framework was in place

12. The implementation of the aviation ORM policy is an integral part of the aviation risk management framework and entails a decision-making process to address risks associated with aviation operations. The risk management framework provides for an accident prevention methodology, assessment of the types of hazards and risks and implementation of appropriate risk mitigating measures.

13. The Mission has complied with the risk management framework. It has established and implemented standard operating procedures (SOPs) on aviation ORM in compliance with the DPKO/DFS policy directive and guidelines on aviation ORM. The SOPs outline general and specific aviation hazards prevalent in the Mission area, risks associated with each identified hazard, controls put in place to mitigate identified risks, and those responsible to implement the controls. They also identify officials responsible and accountable for making risk management decisions, and contain risk management procedures to be performed prior to commencement of each flight. These were being completed by pilots prior to each flight, and were subsequently approved by the Aviation Section.

14. As part of the risk management process, airfield risk assessments/surveys were conducted by the ASU. The relevant risk assessments guidelines, which require the assessment of aviation safety risk indicators were used during the assessments/surveys. On a quarterly basis, the Mission prepared reports on aviation safety indicators, which were reviewed and approved by the Director of Mission Support (DMS) and subsequently submitted to LSD/DFS in compliance with the ASM.

A desk-top Aviation Emergency Response Plan had been tested and was subsequently updated

15. The AERP provides the basis for a systemic approach to managing the Mission's affairs in the aftermath of events such as aircraft accident. AERP exercises should be conducted on a regular basis to test the validity of the AERP, identify areas of concern, and ensure that all personnel are prepared for prompt actions in case of an aviation emergency.

16. The Mission has in place an AERP, which was prepared in compliance with the ASM and approved by the DMS on 21 March 2010. Two desktop exercises of the AERP were conducted in Sectors 1 and 3 on 25 January 2011 and 20 January 2011 respectively. Full drills had not been carried out due to the security situation and lack of support by the host Government. There were two actual aviation incidences whereby the AERP was activated successfully. Both incidences occurred during the audit period and involved emergency landings of helicopters.