



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

AUDIT REPORT

Air operations in UNAMI

Some key controls over air operations were not complied with resulting in increased aviation safety risk

24 September 2010

Assignment No. AP2010/812/01

United Nations  Nations Unies

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. Ad Melkert
A: Special Representative of the Secretary General
United Nations Assistant Mission for Iraq (UNAMI)

DATE: 24 September 2010

REFERENCE: IAD: 10-00809

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

Fatoumata

SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AP2010/812/01 - Audit of air operations in UNAMI**
OBJET:

1. I am pleased to present the report on the above-mentioned audit.
2. Based on your comments, we are pleased to inform you that we will close recommendations 3 to 5 and 9 to 11 in the OIOS recommendations database as indicated in Annex 1. In order for us to close the remaining 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, particularly those designated as high risk (i.e., recommendations 2 to 4 and 8) in its annual report to the General Assembly and semi-annual report to the Secretary-General.

cc: Mr. Robin Sellers, Chief of Mission Support, UNAMI
Mr. Swatantra Goolsarran, Executive Secretary, UN Board of Auditors
Ms. Susanne Frueh, Executive Secretary, Joint Inspection Unit
Mr. Moses Bamuwanye, Chief, Oversight Support Unit, Department of Management
Mr. Seth Adza, Chief, Audit Response Team, Department of Field Support
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Ms. Eleanor T. Burns, Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Services, IAD, OIOS

INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

FUNCTION

“The Office shall, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations examine, review and appraise the use of financial resources of the United Nations in order to guarantee the implementation of programmes and legislative mandates, ascertain compliance of programme managers with the financial and administrative regulations and rules, as well as with the approved recommendations of external oversight bodies, undertake management audits, reviews and surveys to improve the structure of the Organization and its responsiveness to the requirements of programmes and legislative mandates, and monitor the effectiveness of the systems of internal control of the Organization” (General Assembly Resolution 48/218 B).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Audit of air operations in UNAMI

OIOS conducted an audit of air operations in United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The overall objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls over air operations. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

Some internal controls over air operations were not complied with resulting in increased aviation safety risk in the Mission. The significant findings are as follows:

- The Mission did not have an annual aviation plan of operations showing its major activities, targets and performance indicators. There was thus the risk of inefficiencies in the delivery of aviation services.
- The Mission had not established an Aviation Safety Council in compliance with the Aviation Manual. As a result, the Mission was precluded from properly assessing aviation risks and taking appropriate actions to mitigate the risks.
- The Mission had not developed an aviation emergency response plan. Consequently, it may not be able to effectively respond to aviation emergencies.
- The Mission did not maintain the required documentation for crew members including copies of their licenses, medical certificates and evidence of their skill tests and flying hours. Therefore, it was not clear if the crew members met the qualifications required by the Mission's Aircraft Charter Agreement.
- Non-United Nations passengers were transported on the Mission's aircraft without signing the General Liability Release Waiver Forms. Additionally, Movement of Personnel forms and flight manifests were in many instances not signed and approved. There was thus a high risk that the United Nations would be financially liable for non-UN passengers in the event of accident.

OIOS has made a number of recommendations to address the issues identified during the audit and to further strengthen internal controls in the air operations in UNAMI.

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of air operations in the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

2. The Mission operates in three countries namely: Iraq, Kuwait and Jordan. In Iraq, there are six locations including Baghdad, Erbil, Kirkuk, Basra, Mosul and Ramhadi. The movement of staff and cargo between these locations is accomplished largely by aircraft procured by the United Nations.

3. The Chief, Aviation Section is responsible for all aspects of air and movement control operations including management of United Nations aviation contracts, development and verification of daily and monthly air task orders and monthly flight schedules for Mission aircraft, ensuring compliance with aviation standards and regulations, monitoring of consumption of aviation fuel, management and supervision of budget and staffing of the Section.

4. As of February 2010, the Aviation Section had 39 authorized posts (14 national and 25 international) out of which 33 were encumbered. The biennium (2008-2009) air operations budget was \$22.3 million and the actual expenditure amounted to \$17.9 million.

5. Comments made by UNAMI are shown in *italics*.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVES

6. The main objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of internal controls over air operations.

III. AUDIT SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

7. The audit covered air operations during the period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009.

8. The audit methodology included interviews with personnel, review of relevant documentations and test of controls. An online client satisfaction survey was also conducted. The audit was conducted in Kuwait and field visits were made to Baghdad, Kirkuk, Mosul and Erbil.

IV. AUDIT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Planning and organizing of aviation operations

9. According to Chapter 7 of the Department of Field Support (DFS) Aviation Manual (the Aviation Manual), an aviation support plan should be prepared based on the Mission's mandate, concept of operations, operational plan, security phase and geography of the Mission area. The plan must show the major activities, targets, performance indicators and resource requirements. Aviation support plans must be periodically adjusted as necessary to conserve resources.

10. The Mission did not have an aviation support plan. The Aviation Section prepares a weekly status report showing the activities initiated and completed during the week; but it was not clear if these activities had been anticipated by Management and executed as originally intended.

11. The Management of the Mission had not instructed the Aviation Section to prepare the required plan for its review and approval. The preparation of an aviation support plan could further improve the effectiveness of aviation operations.

Recommendation 1

(1) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should ensure that the Aviation Section prepares an aviation support plan in compliance with the Aviation Manual.

12. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 1 but did not provide any comments on the proposed action to be taken.* Recommendation 1 remains open pending the receipt of documentation showing that the aviation support plan has been prepared.

B. Aviation safety and risk management

Aviation Safety Council

13. The DFS Aviation Safety Manual requires that the Mission establish an Aviation Safety Council. The Council is responsible for identifying safety related issues and recommending remedial actions, directing actions to mitigate or eliminate the associated risks, reviewing accident/incident/hazard reports, reviewing safety inspection reports, evaluating the Mission's aviation safety programme, making recommendations for improvement, and educating Mission personnel on aviation safety related issues.

14. As at the date of this audit, the Mission had not established an Aviation Safety Council. The Mission was developing its aviation safety programme with the help of the Senior Regional Aviation Safety Officer (SRASO) based in

Brindisi, Italy. OIOS was informed that the SRASO would establish a group that will perform the functions of the Council. In OIOS' opinion, the Council should be established by Senior Management of the Mission.

Recommendation 2

(2) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should establish an Aviation Safety Council for UNAMI in compliance with the Aviation Safety Manual.

15. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 2 and stated that the first Aviation Safety Council meeting will be held during the next visit of the Senior Regional Aviation Safety Officer.* Recommendation 2 remains open pending the receipt of documentation showing that the Aviation Safety Council has been established.

Review of the trend of aviation incidents

16. According to Section 5.2.3.5 of the Aviation Manual, Aviation Quality Assurance should identify the trends of aviation incidents/occurrences, analyze the causes of incidents, and implement appropriate responses.

17. The Aviation Section maintains different types of documentation such as aircraft use report, aviation risk management checklist, after mission report, flight following log, flight operational plan etc. However, the Section had not documented all aviation incidents/occurrences and analyzed the trends during the last 17 months of operation. Information such as the number of times flights were cancelled, delayed and the reasons for the cancellation/delays was not readily available at the time of audit. The Section focused on the major aviation occurrences or technical problems, which are reported to United Nations Headquarters.

18. The Mission stated that it did not have the staff to perform the tasks during the period covered by the audit; however, a technical compliance and quality assurance staff member was recruited in July 2009 to perform the tasks. In view of the action taken by the Mission, OIOS does not make a recommendation.

Emergency response plan

19. Section 5 of the DFS Aviation Safety Manual requires that each mission develops an aviation emergency response plan (ERP). The purpose of the ERP is to establish procedures for the maximum protection of life and property; ensure coordinated action for a thorough and accurate investigation and provide timely guidance in the event of an aircraft accident within the Mission area. Drill exercises need to be organized to test the functionality of the ERP.

20. At the time of the audit, UNAMI had not developed an aviation ERP. The SRASO was in the process of developing an ERP; but due to the lack of a mission-wide emergency response plan, the aviation ERP had not been

completed. Meanwhile, the Mission relied on the Civil Aviation Authorities in Kuwait, Jordan and Iraq.

21. In the absence of such an ERP, the Mission could be precluded from taking a coordinated action that would give a maximum protection of life and property.

Recommendation 3

(3) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should establish and implement an aviation emergency response plan for the Mission in compliance with the Aviation Safety Manual.

22. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 3 and stated that ERP had been approved and signed by the Chief of Mission Support (CMS). The Mission provided a copy of aviation emergency response plan to OIOS. Based on the action taken, recommendation 3 has been closed.*

Aviation operational risk management

23. The Mission is required to comply with the operational risk management (ORM) policy promulgated by DFS on 10 April 2008. ORM is a continuous, systematic process of identifying hazards and controlling associated risks in all activities according to a set of pre-conceived parameters by applying appropriate management policies and procedures.

24. As at the date of the audit, the Mission had not implemented the risk management framework and this was attributed to inadequate number of staff in the Aviation Section. The Mission had now filled its key aviation posts and the SRASO had prepared a draft document on how ORM could be implemented in the Mission. In view of the actions taken by the Mission, OIOS does not make a recommendation on the implementation of the ORM.

C. Operations management

General release from liability waiver

25. In accordance with the Aviation Manual Section 3.2.8, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and CMS were authorized to approve the travel of non-United Nations personnel on the Mission's aircraft. Additionally, the traveler must sign a General Release from Liability Waiver form to limit the Mission's liability in the event of injuries or lost of life resulting from accident.

26. A review of 50 out of 330 daily flight reports revealed that, during the audit period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009, 499 non-United Nations personnel were carried on the Mission's aircraft. The Mission did not provide OIOS with the requested signed General Release from Liability Waiver forms for 72 of the 499 passengers. This was attributed to poor filing system. In the

absence of forms, the Mission was exposed to the risk of financial loss in the event of accidents.

Recommendation 4

(4) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should implement appropriate procedures to ensure that all non-United Nations personnel sign the relevant General Release from Liability Waiver form prior to boarding the Mission's aircraft and that these forms are properly maintained.

27. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 4 and stated that filing procedures had been improved and additional staff had been recruited.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 4 has been closed.

Flight following

28. As per Section V, Chapter 3 of the Aviation Manual, all radio communications between aircraft and flight-following should be logged and a written record kept on file.

29. The Mission did not provide OIOS with the requested logs of eight of the 50 sampled flights reviewed and in 18 other instances, the flight-following logs were not appropriately completed.

30. The Mission attributed the lack of flight logs to shortage of staff and the dysfunctional HF radio in the aircraft. In the absence of a flight-following log, the Mission may be precluded from taking necessary actions in the event of an emergency.

Recommendation 5

(5) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should ensure that communication equipment on aircrafts is operational and allocate appropriate amount of resources to maintaining a flight-following log in compliance with the Aviation Manual.

31. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 5 and stated that the SRASO re-inspected flight equipment and the defects had been rectified.* OIOS also noted that a staff member has been assigned to perform the flight following and to maintain the log book. Based on the actions taken, recommendation 5 has been closed.

Policy on air services provided to non-UNAMI personnel

32. For air services provided to non-UNAMI personnel, the Mission had not established a clear policy and/or formal arrangements with beneficiary entities for cost recovery and other purposes. Since the aircraft was deployed, the Mission has transported 1,749 non-UNAMI passengers including employees of

embassies, military personnel, other international organizations, and officials of the Government of Iraq. However, the Mission had not established Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with many of the entities. The Mission provided air services to 16 organizations; however, there were only eight MoUs, and three of them had not been signed.

33. In the absence of a clear policy and MoUs, there were inconsistencies in determining the costs to recover, increasing the risk of financial loss.

Recommendation 6

(6) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should implement an appropriate policy on air services and advise United Nations and non-United Nations entities of such policy on the use of its air services.

34. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 6 and explained that the policy for provision of air services to non-UNAMI staff had been drafted and would be promulgated in October 2010.* Recommendation 6 remains open pending the receipt of the promulgated policy on the provision of air services to United Nations and non-United Nations entities.

Cost recovery

35. The Finance Section is required to invoice United Nations and non-United Nations entities for air services provided to them based on cost recovery reports and related documents provided to them by the Aviation Section.

36. The Aviation Section did not always provide these reports to the Finance Section in a timely manner. For example, the 2008 cost recovery report was sent to the Finance Section a year after the services had been provided. The recovery report for the first half of 2009 was sent to the Finance Section six months after the services were provided. In some instances, the cost recovery reports were incomplete thereby preventing the Finance Section from invoicing the concerned entities. For example, the cost recovery reports for the period July-November 2009 and thereafter did not include the names of passengers although these details were required by the agencies to facilitate their processing of payments to UNAMI. The Aviation Section stated that it was overwhelmed by the administrative burden involved in providing specific passengers' names in the cost recovery reports. Due to the Aviation Section's inability to provide the names of passengers, the Finance Section had not initiated the recovery of the air service costs of \$247,570 as of 18 March 2010.

Recommendation 7

(7) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should implement appropriate procedures to ensure prompt recovery from United Nations and non-United Nations entities the cost of air services provided to them.

37. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 7 and stated that additional staff had been recruited to help in processing the cost recovery report. Recommendation 7 remains open pending the receipt of documentation showing the recovery of \$247,570 in respect of the services provided to United Nations and non-United Nations entities and the description of the procedures for recovering such costs in the future.*

D. Qualifications of crew members

38. The Long Term Aircraft Charter Agreement (LTACA) between the United Nations and Naturelink Aviation requires that the Mission maintains documentation such as licenses, skill tests results, flying hours experience and medical certificates of the crew members.

39. OIOS reviewed the documents of 15 crew members and found that copies of the medical certificates of the seven crew members were not available. Additionally, copies of skills test certificates were not available for 13 crew members and copies of documents showing the minimum flight hours achieved were not available for all 15 crew members. Non-compliance of the requirement to maintain the documents for each crew member compromises aviation safety.

40. OIOS was informed that the relevant documents were reviewed by the respective civil aviation authorities before issuing licenses to the crewmembers and that copies of those documents were not always maintained by the Mission. In OIOS' view, maintaining copies of the documents provide the needed assurances that the crew members meet the minimum requirements.

Recommendation 8

(8) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should take appropriate measures to ensure that copies of all required documents of crew members are maintained in compliance with the Long Term Aircraft Charter Agreement.

41. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 8 and stated that receipt of crew documentation and arrival notice 20 days before deployment has allowed for review of certificates and related documents to ensure compliance with the requirement for such documents. Recommendation 8 remains open pending the receipt of copies of the required documents of crew members.*

E. Aviation Management System

42. Certain reports such as Air Operator's Performance Evaluation (AOPE), Preliminary Aircraft Occurrence (PAO) reports etc, which can be used in evaluating the performance of the air operator and in identifying shortcomings in flights were not always completed. The reports were not regularly reviewed and approved by the designated officials. For example, a review of two AOPE reports covering the period from 1 July to 31 December 2009 revealed that they were not reviewed by the SRASO and the Chief of the Aviation Section and approved by

CMS as required. Similarly, a review of five PAO reports prepared in September 2008 to October 2009 revealed that they were not approved by the CMS.

43. OIOS was informed that the Aviation Management System module used in preparing the reports had not been properly replicated in the Mission thereby denying access to authorized persons on several occasions.

44. The lack of timely review and approval of various reports may preclude the Mission from taking appropriate remedial actions for any deficiencies identified during the flight operation process. This may compromise the safety of air operations in the Mission.

Recommendation 9

(9) The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should ensure that the Aviation Management System works properly and that reports generated from the system are reviewed and approved by the designated officials.

45. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 9 and stated that UNAMI does not control the Aviation Management System and that the system belonged to DFS. However, efforts had been made to ensure that the technical limitations of the system are overcome.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 9 has been closed.

F. Quality of aviation services

46. OIOS conducted an online client satisfaction survey of international staff who frequently used aviation services and received responses from 85 out of a total of 314. The summary of the survey results is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of client satisfaction survey results

Client Satisfaction Issue	Consolidated results	
	Yes (%)	No (%)
Being informed of a cancelled flight on time	55	34
Obtaining guidance, briefing and transit information at airport terminal without difficulties	75	25
No interruption of flight due to bad weather, mechanical failure, etc. after airborne	57	42
Safe delivery of luggage upon arrival	90	10
Schedule flight operated without significant delay	52	48
Convenience of weekly flight schedules	34	61
Flight booking confirmation and communication	90	10
Courtesy, friendliness and responsiveness to enquiries	87	13

47. The responses show that most staff were generally satisfied with aviation services, but there were indications of discontent with some services that needed to be addressed.

G. Other matters

Movement of personnel are not approved

48. According to Section 3.2.5 of the Aviation Manual, all passengers traveling on United Nations aircraft must complete a Passenger Booking Request form and a Movement of Personnel form (MOP). The Movement and Control Section (MovCon) was responsible for processing passengers and for ensuring the accurate completion of passenger documentation including the MOP. MOP is the document that clarifies the purpose for which individuals use the Mission's aircraft. Individual rights may be limited in the event of a loss/damage for which an individual passenger may want to claim malicious act insurance policy when an MOP is not approved.

49. A review of 50 of the 330 daily flight reports prepared during the audit period from 1 January 2008 through 31 December 2009 revealed that 60 of the 2,287 passengers carried on the aircraft were not issued MOPs.

50. The Mission explained that the Aviation Section was short of staff between late 2008 and beginning of 2009 and as a result the staff were overstretched. However, the Mission did not provide OIOS with any evidence showing the shortage of staff to perform basic, routine but very important procedures such as issuing MOPs. Non-compliance with the established procedures increased aviation safety risk in the Mission.

Recommendation 10

(10) The UNAMI Office of Mission support should implement appropriate procedures to ensure that a Movement of Personnel form is prepared and maintained for each passenger in compliance with the Aviation Manual.

51. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 10 and stated that the Aviation Section had reviewed current procedures and implemented a confirmation system to ensure each passenger is issued with an MOP and that a copy of the MOP is maintained.* Based on the action taken, recommendation 10 has been closed.

Flight manifests not signed

52. In compliance with Chapter 3 Appendix L of the Aviation Manual, UNAMI designed a Passenger Manifest format which requires that the flight manifests be signed by a MovCon personnel and the Pilot-in-Command (PIC). This is to ensure that identities of all passengers are established immediately prior to boarding.

53. In 16 of 50 sample flight reports reviewed, the passenger manifests were neither signed by a MovCon staff nor by the PIC. Therefore, there was increased aviation safety risk in the Mission.

Recommendation 11

(11) The UNAMI Office of Mission support should implement appropriate procedures to ensure that passengers' manifests are consistently signed by Movement Control personnel and the pilot at the time of boarding in compliance with the Aviation Manual.

54. *The UNAMI Office of Mission Support accepted recommendation 11 and stated that the Aviation Section had reviewed current procedures and implemented a confirmation system to ensure manifests are signed at time of boarding. Based on the action taken, recommendation 11 has been closed.*

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

55. We wish to express our appreciation to the Management and staff of UNAMI for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
1	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should ensure that the Aviation Section prepares an aviation support plan in compliance with the Aviation Manual.	Governance	Medium	O	Receipt of documentation showing that the aviation support plan has been prepared.	November 2010
2	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should establish an Aviation Safety Council for UNAMI in compliance with the Aviation Safety Manual.	Governance	High	O	Receipt of documentation showing that the Aviation Safety Council has been established by the Office of Mission Support of UNAMI.	September 2010
3	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should establish and implement an aviation emergency response plan for the Mission in compliance with the Aviation Safety Manual.	Operational	High	C	Action taken.	Implemented
4	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should implement appropriate procedures to ensure that all non-United Nations personnel sign the relevant General Release from Liability Waiver Form prior to boarding the Mission's aircraft and that these forms are properly maintained.	Operational	High	C	Action taken.	Implemented
5	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should ensure that communication equipment on aircrafts is operational and allocate appropriate amount of resources to maintaining a flight-following log in compliance with the Aviation Manual.	Operational	Medium	C	Action taken.	Implemented
6	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should implement an appropriate policy on air services and advise United Nations and non-United Nations entities of such policy on the use of its air services.	Financial	Medium	O	Receipt of the promulgated policy on the provision of air services to UN and non-UN entities.	September 2010
7	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support	Financial	Medium	O	Receipt of documentation showing the	September 2010

Recom. no.	Recommendation	Risk category	Risk rating	C/O ¹	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ²
	should implement appropriate procedures to ensure prompt recovery from United Nations and non-United Nations entities the cost of air services provided to them.				recovery of \$247,570 in respect of the services provided to UN and non-UN entities and the description of the procedures for recovering such costs in the future.	
8	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should take appropriate measures to ensure that copies of required documents of crew members are maintained in compliance with the Long Term Aircraft Charter Agreement.	Operational	High	O	Receipt of copies of the required documents of crewmembers.	September 2010
9	The UNAMI Office of Mission Support should ensure that the Aviation Management System is works properly and that the reports generated from the system are reviewed and approved by the designated officials.	Operational	Medium	C	Action taken.	Implemented
10	The UNAMI Office of Mission support should implement appropriate procedures to ensure that a Movement of Personnel form is completed and maintained for each passenger in compliance with the Aviation Manual.	Operational	Medium	C	Action taken.	Implemented
11	The UNAMI Office of Mission support should implement appropriate procedures to ensure that the passengers' manifests are consistently signed by Movement Control personnel and the pilot at the time of boarding in compliance with the Aviation Manual.	Operational	Medium	C	Action taken.	Implemented

1. C = closed, O = open

2. Date provided by UNAMI in response to recommendations.