

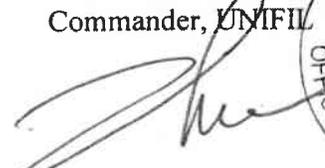
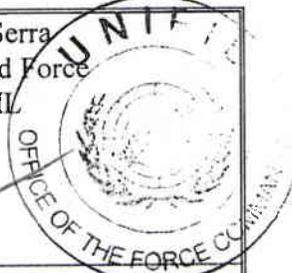


TELEFAX TRANSMISSION

TRANSMISSION FACSIMILE

Date: 25 April 2012

Reference:

<p>TO: Ms. Eleanor T. Burns, Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Service Internal Audit Division, OIOS</p> <p>ATTN:</p> <p>INFO:</p>	<p>FROM: MajGeneral Paolo Serra Head of Mission and Force Commander, UNIFIL</p>  
<p>FAX NO: 1212 963388</p>	<p>FAX NO: 00 961 182 1450</p>
<p>SUBJECT: Assignment no. AP2011/672/03 – Audit of demining activities in UNIFIL</p>	

Total number of transmitted pages including this page: 4

1. UNIFIL is in receipt of your memorandum dated 11 April 2012, transmitting the above draft audit report.
2. The Mission would like to convey our appreciation for taking into consideration our comments to the detailed audit results dated 6 December 2011 as well as during a meeting with the Chief Resident Auditor on 8 February 2012 and reflecting such in the draft audit report.
3. Looking holistically at all aspects of Blue Line (BL) demining and taking into consideration UNIFIL's previous comments/inputs as well as the reality on the ground, the Mission is of the opinion that the assessment of control objectives of efficient and effective demining operations regarding project and coordination management should be changed from "*partially satisfactory*" to "*satisfactory*", since no demining assets were underutilized at any stage due to insufficient management.
4. UNIFIL recommends the above change of rating resulting from the evolvement of demining activities in the Mission. In September 2007, two demining teams were established and deployed for humanitarian Battle Area Clearance (BAC) and Manual Clearance activity. From April 2009, due to a change in the strategic and political imperatives, the demining assets were re-tasked from area to access lanes clearance. Critical safety requirements and the size of access lanes did not allow for the deployment of all deminers, which had an inevitable impact on productivity. Notwithstanding, the Mission has taken all possible steps to conduct demining operations in the most efficient and effective manner. This must be viewed in terms of existing realities at specific stages/times and not according to the number of BL points cleared.
5. Additionally, the instances of lower demining productivity of the teams should be associated with the political reasons beyond UNIFIL's control. At the time of limited BL points availability, the demining teams, with the exception of two MCTs which were only working on BL, had been utilized for force protection and engineering tasks in support of the Mission's mandate.

6. The above is substantiated by Chart 1 of the draft audit report. Chart 1 demonstrates that in fiscal years 2007/08 and 2008/09 the number of cleared BL points was low, i.e. 16 and 26 respectively due to the focus on humanitarian BAC. In fiscal year 2009/10, the number of points increased to 70 due to the shift of strategic and political priorities. This was followed by a sudden drop to 32 points in fiscal year 2010/11 resulting from unavailability of additional points due to a political stalemate between Israeli and Lebanese authorities from October 2010 to May 2011. Once agreement was reached, 56 BL points were cleared for the first nine months of the fiscal year 2011/12.

7. The above illustrated increase in number of BL points after an almost year long hiatus to proceed with marking of agreed points is a clear demonstration of the efficient and effective management of demining activities.

8. Two reviews and one study, namely Joint DPKO-UNIFIL Technical Review (JTR), Strategic Review (SR) and Military Capability Study (MCS) were conducted, including review of demining activities. The Mission is committed to continue with the efficient and effective management of its demining resources, taking into consideration the recommendations of these reviews/study. In the absence of points to be cleared, MCTs will be utilized for other mandated tasks such as Force Protection.

9. Finally, the Mission also observed that the safeguarding of assets was assessed as "*partially satisfactory*" in the draft audit report, which was reflected as "*not applicable*" in the detailed audit results. According to the Mission's opinion, this objective should not be evaluated as it is not applicable to this audit.

10. Attached please find Mission response in respect of the recommendations contained in the subject draft report.

11. Copies of the supporting documentation will only be provided to the Resident Auditor's Office and not accompany this facsimile.

12. Your understanding will be appreciated.

Thank you and best regards.



Drafted by: Jacoba Genis, AO O/DMS

Authorised by: BrigGeneral Sant'Antonio, DFC

Cleared by: Maj Isabelle Fabregoule, MA/DFC

Internal Distribution: DFC, DMS, ODMS/Compliance Unit, MERAO, UNMAST PM

AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS
Audit of demining activities in UNIFIL

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / important ² ?	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	UNIFIL should assess the number of mine clearance teams that it requires to clear the remaining points along the Blue Line within a prescribed time period to improve the cost effectiveness of the Mission's demining resources.	Important	Yes	UNIFIL J-3 and J-5 in cooperation with J-3-CES	Implemented	The number of mine clearance teams was part of the reviews by the Joint DPKO-UNIFIL Technical Review, Military Capability Study and Strategic Review and the Mission is committed to work in close coordination with DPKO/OMA with regard to the implementation of the recommendations. The Mission will also continue to reassess the situation on the ground to ensure the utilization of all Mine Clearance Teams (MCT). It should be noted that it is difficult to make a detailed study of the MCT requirements compared to the available Blue Line Points. Each point has its own characteristics. The "easy" points have been demined and what is remaining, are the problematic points with varying durations and particular difficulties.

¹ Critical recommendations address significant and/or pervasive deficiency or weakness in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance cannot be provided regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

² Important recommendations address important deficiencies or weaknesses in governance, risk management or internal control processes, such that reasonable assurance may be at risk regarding the achievement of control and/or business objectives under review.

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical/ ¹ important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
2	UNIFIL should improve its monitoring and analysis of the utilization of mine clearance teams with the aim to identify ways to improve productivity and cost effectiveness of its demining assets.	Important	Yes	UNIFIL J-3-CES	31 May 2012	Furthermore, meteorological conditions have an influence on clearance operations. Thus exact time periods cannot accurately be assessed. The number of remaining points should be cleared by the available teams. In the absence of points to be cleared, MCT's will be utilized for other tasks such as Force Protection. UNIFIL will improve its reporting system for MCT's to include the activities of the teams which are not utilized for clearance tasks. Simultaneously, J3-CES will also analyze its planning to look into the possibility of combining effort and utilization of teams on the same clearance site.
3	UNIFIL should establish standard operating procedures to guide the planning and management of demining activities in order to improve efficiency and consistency in applying procedures.	Important	Yes	N/A	Implemented	Two SOP's have been promulgated: - HOMPOL 12-08 – Organization and coordination of Demining / EOP Operations (Exhibit A); HOMPOL 12-09 – Validation and quality management of UNIFIL Operational demining (Exhibit B). All administrative and operational aspects of demining activities are addressed in these documents.