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INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

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

TO: Ms. Ameerah Haq, Special Representative  
A: of the Secretary-General  
United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste

DATE: 1 September 2011

REFERENCE: 11-00549

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



SUBJECT: **Assignment No. AP2011/682/05 – Audit of aviation safety in UNMIT**

OBJET:

**Overall results relating to effective implementation and management of aviation safety programme in UNMIT were partially satisfactory**

1. Attached please find the final report on the above-mentioned audit.
2. Annex-I shows the status of recommendations. Please note that OIOS will report on the progress made to implement its recommendations in its annual report to the General Assembly and to the Secretary-General, quarterly for critical recommendations and annually for important recommendations (Nos.1 to 4).
3. Please note that under General Assembly resolution 59/272, a Member State may request that the final report be made available. Also note that pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/263, OIOS has included the complete management response as an appendix to the present report.
4. We wish to express our appreciation to the Management and staff of UNMIT for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

cc: Mr. Amadu Kamara, Chief Mission Support, UNMIT  
Mr. Clark Toes, Chief Integrated Support Services, UNMIT  
Mr. Abrar Hussain Syed, Mission Aviation Safety Officer, UNMIT  
Mr. Swatantra Goolsarran, Executive Secretary, UN Board of Auditors  
Ms. Susanne Frueh, Executive Secretary, Joint Inspection Unit  
Mr. Seth Adza, Chief, Audit Response Team, DFS  
Mr. Moses Bamuwamye, Executive Secretary, IAAC  
Mr. Zachary Ikiara, Chief, Oversight Support Unit, DM  
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Ms. Eleanor T. Burns, Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Service, OIOS  
Ms. Amy Wong, Programme Officer, Internal Audit Division, OIOS

# **AUDIT REPORT**

## **Audit of aviation safety in UNMIT**

### **BACKGROUND**

Management of aviation safety programmes in field missions involves the identification of aviation hazards, evaluation of associated risks and implementation of appropriate risk mitigation measures. In the United Nations Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT), the Aviation Safety Unit (ASU) is responsible for the development and implementation of the aviation safety programme in line with policies established by the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and Field Support (DFS). The ASU is part of the Office of the Chief of Mission Support and the Head of the Unit has a reporting line to the Aviation Safety Section of the Logistics Support Division of DFS on technical matters. The Aviation Safety Section is responsible to provide technical support and regular oversight of the aviation safety programme in the Mission.

As at 30 April 2011, UNMIT had six aircraft including two fixed wing aircraft and four helicopters. The ASU had three authorized aviation safety posts.

This audit was included in the 2011 OIOS' risk-based work plan due to the high risk nature of air operations in peacekeeping missions.

### **OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE**

The audit was conducted to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of UNMIT's 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 UNMIT's activities related to this key control for the period 1 May 2009 to 30 April 2011.

### **AUDIT RESULTS**

In OIOS' opinion, UNMIT's risk management, control and governance processes examined were **partially satisfactory** to provide reasonable assurance regarding the effective implementation and management of its aviation safety programme. The Mission had made progress in addressing aviation safety risks. However, there were unmitigated risks resulting from the functioning of the Mission's Aviation Safety Council, the non-implementation of recommendations from DFS' Aviation Safety Assistance Visits, the partial implementation of the Operational Risk Management framework promulgated by DFS, and the need to up-date the Aviation Emergency Response Plan. Since February 2011, when the ASU was at full strength, there was evidence that UNMIT was making improvements to strengthening aviation safety measures.

#### **The Mission Aviation Safety Council**

The Mission's Aviation Safety Council (MASC) did not meet quarterly as required, as only five of eight quarterly meetings were held. The list of Council members had not been formally established and disseminated to relevant staff. Also, the minutes of three of five meetings held did not establish target dates for implementation of the MASC's decisions. As a result, there were delays in implementing MASC decisions and ASAV recommendations. However, a review of minutes from recent MASC meetings showed an improvement in the quality of the minutes and that meetings were scheduled regularly.

- (1) UNMIT should formally establish a list of Mission Aviation Safety Council members and ensure that meetings are held quarterly as required. Also, the Council should consistently establish action plans with target dates for implementation of its recommendations.**

*UNMIT accepted recommendation 1 and stated that all members prescribed in the Aviation Safety Manual are attending the MASC meetings. In addition, the Mission formally published the list of MASC members on 21 July 2011, and the quality of the recent council meeting minutes will be maintained. Based on action taken, recommendation 1 has been closed.*

### **Implementation of recommendations made by DFS' Aviation Safety Assistant Visits**

DFS conducted two Aviation Safety Assistance Visits (ASAVs) in May 2009 and April 2010, respectively. These visits resulted in 24 recommendations being made to enhance aviation safety measures. Progress had been made to implement DFS' ASAVs recommendations; however implementation was slow. As of May 2011, seven of the 24 recommendations from the ASAVs were still not fully implemented including the staffing of the Aviation Section, testing of the AERP and ensuring adequate fire equipment training was provided to responsible staff.

- (2) UNMIT should establish an action plan with target dates to implement all outstanding aviation safety recommendations made by DFS' Aviation Safety Assistance Team and ensure that the status of recommendations are monitored during MASC meetings.**

*UNMIT accepted recommendation 2 and stated that an action plan has been developed. Also, as reflected in the minutes of the MASC meeting on 19 April 2011, the status of recommendations is being monitored. Based on the action taken, recommendation 2 has been closed.*

### **Aviation Operational Risk Management framework**

UNMIT had established an aviation Operational Risk Management (ORM) framework in accordance with the DFS policy directive, and had developed and implemented standard operating procedures. However, training on aviation safety management had not been provided to all decision-makers, one of the key steps in the implementation of ORM.

- (3) UNMIT should ensure that all decision-makers involved in aviation safety management are fully aware of their responsibilities through initial and continued training as required.**

*UNMIT accepted recommendation 3 and stated that aviation ORM workshop and training for decision-makers has been planned for the third quarter of 2011. Recommendation 3 remains open pending evidence that personnel have been trained on their responsibilities relating to aviation safety management within the ORM framework.*

### **The Aviation Emergency Response Plan**

The Mission's Aviation Emergency Response Plan (AERP), which was an annex to the overall UNMIT Emergency Response Plan, was not in line with the provisions of the Aviation Safety Manual. This was already pointed out to UNMIT after DFS' ASAV in April 2010, and UNMIT was in the process of revising the AERP to incorporate the requirements of the Manual. With the exception of a desk top exercise, no drills or exercises had been conducted to test the effectiveness of the AERP. As a result,

there was an unmitigated risk that in the event of an emergency, relevant staff was not fully aware of related roles and responsibilities.

- (4) UNMIT should ensure that the draft Aviation Emergency Response Plan is finalised and related exercises are conducted to test the validity of the plan, and to ensure that all concerned personnel are aware of their respective roles and responsibilities.**

*UNMIT accepted recommendation 4 and stated that a desktop exercise was conducted on 17 February 2011 to evaluate the practical problems of the draft plan. The AERP will be finalised in the third quarter of 2011, and a full-scale exercise is planned for the fourth quarter of 2011. Recommendation 4 remains open pending confirmation that the AERP has been finalized and a full-scale exercise has been conducted to validate the plan and update it where necessary.*

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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