



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2022/006

Audit of Umoja Employee Self-Service/Manager Self-Service and related processes for uniformed personnel and national staff at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

There is need to update the standard operating procedure on mission subsistence allowance by requiring uniformed personnel to submit their banking information directly to the cashier

**29 March 2022
Assignment No. AT2021-519-01**

Audit of Umoja Employee Self-Service/Manager Self-Service and related processes for uniformed personnel and national staff at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of Umoja Employee Self-Service (ESS)/Manager Self-Service (MSS) and related processes for uniformed personnel and national staff at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of Umoja ESS/MSS in supporting the processes related to uniformed personnel and national staff at UNIFIL. The audit covered the period from January 2020 to November 2021 and included a review of: (a) design, process flows and configurations; (b) master data management; and (c) user access management.

The audit showed the need to update the standard operating procedure on mission subsistence allowance by requiring uniformed personnel to submit their banking information directly to the cashier.

OIOS made one recommendation to update the standard operating procedure on mission subsistence allowance by requiring uniformed personnel to submit their banking information directly to the cashier. The recommendation remains open pending receipt of evidence of implementation.

CONTENTS

I. BACKGROUND	1
II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY	1-2
III. AUDIT RESULTS	2-4
A. Design, process flows and configurations	2-3
B. Master data management	3
C. User access management	3-4
IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	4
ANNEX I	Status of audit recommendations
APPENDIX I	Management response

Audit of Umoja Employee Self-Service/Manager Self-Service and related processes for uniformed personnel and national staff at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of Umoja Employee Self-Service (ESS)/Manager Self-Service (MSS) and related processes for uniformed personnel and national staff at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).
2. Umoja is the single global Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution for the United Nations Secretariat. ESS and MSS are web-based modules within the Umoja suite of applications that allow employees and managers to perform their human resources (HR) management functions. ESS is a central resource that enables staff to update their personal data and information, submit requests and applications for entitlements, and manage their time and attendance, travel and so on. MSS enables managers to access, review and approve requests from staff related to personnel administration, time management and travel. Further, ESS/MSS includes an approval work centre functionality used by certifying officers to certify HR, travel and time related actions.
3. UNIFIL was originally established by Security Council resolutions 425 and 426 in March 1978 to confirm Israeli withdrawal from southern Lebanon, restore international peace and security, and assist the Lebanese Government in restoring its effective authority in the area. UNIFIL is composed of 10,144 peacekeepers from 46 troop-contributing countries, tasked with helping the Lebanese Army keep the south of the country protected.
4. UNIFIL's budget for the year 2020/21 was \$480.6 million, including \$341.3 million for uniformed personnel and military contingents and \$48.4 million for national staff.
5. The Enterprise Resource Planning Solution Division (ERPSD) within the Department of Management Strategy Policy and Compliance (DMSPC) was established on 1 January 2021 to improve and support all deployed Umoja solutions, innovate and introduce fit-for-purpose ERP products, support business process re-engineering, and improve the Umoja user experience.
6. Comments provided by UNIFIL are incorporated in italics.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

7. The objective of the audit was to assess the adequacy and effectiveness of Umoja ESS/MSS in supporting the processes related to uniformed personnel and national staff at UNIFIL.
8. This audit was included in the 2021 risk-based work plan of OIOS due to the risks associated with processes related to uniformed personnel and national staff.
9. OIOS conducted this audit in October and November 2021. The audit covered the period from January 2020 to November 2021. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered risk areas in the use of Umoja ESS/MSS which included: (a) design, process flows and configurations; (b) master data management; and (c) user access management.

10. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews with key personnel; (b) review of relevant documentation; (c) analytical review of data; and (d) sample testing of related transactions.

11. The audit was conducted in accordance with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing.

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Design, process flows and configurations

Manual processes used for uniformed personnel were time-consuming

12. The report of the Secretary-General (A/62/510/Rev.1) on enterprise systems for the United Nations Secretariat worldwide outlined several goals and objectives of developing an ERP system, including to reduce the average time required for administrative processes and to increase organizational efficiency by reducing the amount of staff time spent on manual processes.

13. HR processes relating to calculation of the Mission subsistence allowance (MSA) payable to uniformed personnel in UNIFIL were manual. Other activities such as check-in / check-out and movement of personnel were performed in the standalone Field Support Suite (FSS) system and then manually entered into Umoja. UNIFIL HR partners and travel administrators were tasked with performing all transactions on behalf of uniformed personnel which was not an optimal solution because this modality was prone to error and resulted in layers of manual reconciliation efforts, which at times delayed payments. OIOS noted the following:

(a) Due to manual processes, multiple layers of checks were performed on the MSA calculations by Finance, uniformed personnel military HR section, and the uniformed personnel civilian HR partners. This caused duplication of effort. Further, information such as Umoja index numbers for the uniformed personnel were fed manually into FSS. Without automation and integration of information across the entire landscape, there was a risk of data quality and integrity issues.

(b) There were excessive delays in the check-in and check-out process for uniformed personnel. For a sample of 20 staff officers analyzed for the period January 2020 through September 2021, the average check-in processing time was 57 calendar days, ranging from 2 days to 415 days. For eight staff officers in the same sample, the average check-out processing time was 45 calendar days, ranging from 14 days to 148 days. Check-in and check-out processes should be efficient which is only possible with automation and integration with Umoja.

(c) Monthly attendance sheets for uniformed personnel were maintained manually by the military HR officer and forwarded to the civilian HR staff to manually input leave adjustments in Umoja for MSA deductions. This process was prone to error and delays, and it required HR partners to perform manual calculations and adjustments in Umoja. OIOS' review of the MSA sheet for September 2021 showed three cases relating to September/October 2020 for MSA adjustment. Each of the MSA sheets from January to August 2021 contained cases where adjustments in MSA were proposed for a prior period.

14. Manual processes and systems of record outside of Umoja prevent useful analysis of data and cause excessive manual intervention. These are contrary to the Secretary-General's Data Strategy which requires the Organization to build capabilities in data analytics and data management to generate more value from data.

15. There were many features of the Umoja self-service module that could benefit HR processing, time management and travel processing for uniformed personnel on their own, significantly unburdening the functional processors. Further, this will reduce the multiple layers of manual offline processes instituted by UNIFIL that prevent effective business intelligence due to data completeness, integrity and quality issues and also exacerbated by the lack of interface across the ancillary systems in use (e.g., FSS).

16. HRSD/DOS stated that in line with its mandate to support entities in their use of non-staff capacities from the HR side, it conducted a non-staff capacity study in 2020 that looked at the use and administration of non-staff personnel in the United Nations Secretariat and, inter alia, touched upon aspects of the administration of uniformed personnel. The implementation of recommendations from the study is currently underway. Since those recommendations are under implementation, OIOS did not make any additional recommendation in this area.

UNIFIL needs to institute additional controls over bank accounts of uniformed personnel

17. Bank account details are considered personally identifiable information that should be visible only to staff members, uniformed personnel and staff responsible for processing the bank payments (e.g., cashier's office) to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the information.

18. ESS functionality was not available at UNIFIL to update bank account details. While staff submitted their bank details directly to the cashier's office, this was not the case for uniformed personnel. The standard operating procedure for payment of MSA to uniformed personnel required them to provide their bank account details to the uniformed personnel HR section which then forwarded it to UNIFIL's cashier for input into Umoja. As the process revealed bank account details to personnel other than the cashier, it did not provide adequate protection of privacy and confidentiality. UNIFIL needed to update the SOP requiring the uniformed personnel to directly submit the banking information to the cashier.

(1) UNIFIL should update the standard operating procedure on mission subsistence allowance by requiring uniformed personnel to submit their banking information directly to the cashier.

UNIFIL accepted recommendation 1 and stated that the standard operating procedure on MSA has been updated and is being circulated for final review and approval by the Director of Mission Support.

B. Master data management

Master data for local salary scales and MSA relating to UNIFIL was accurate

19. Master data defines the data in Umoja that is used to facilitate transactions and is used across the Umoja solution. The master data is maintained centrally, and the same data is used across Umoja. Self-service related master data relevant to UNIFIL included data pertaining to local salary scales for national staff and MSA for uniformed personnel. OIOS' review of the accuracy of the local salary information in Umoja for 12 local staff and MSA for six uniformed personnel did not identify any discrepancies.

C. User access management

Excess Umoja roles granted to the HR partner for uniformed personnel need to be reviewed

20. User access should be restricted to the roles required by the user for performing his/her duties, while also ensuring segregation of duties. One civilian staff in the uniformed personnel HR Section was

tasked with administering and processing uniformed personnel related transactions including MSA in Umoja based on the manual information received from military HR Section. The staff member was granted excessive roles in Umoja which allowed the staff member to perform end-to-end transactions related to uniformed personnel such as requesting index numbers, raising personnel actions, maintaining leave for MSA deductions and payments, sending bank details to the cashier, and performing travel related functions. The staff member had HR roles not only for uniformed personnel but also for UNIFIL's civilian staff, even though the staff member did not perform any activity related to civilian staff. UNIFIL stated that the staff member's travel related roles will be removed while the internal controls surrounding the processes performed by the staff member would be reviewed. UNIFIL provided evidence that the excessive Umoja roles have been removed with effect from 30 October 2021.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

21. OIOS wishes to express its appreciation to the management and staff of UNIFIL for the assistance and cooperation extended to the auditors during this assignment.

(Signed) Eleanor T. Burns
Director, Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

**Audit of Umoja Employee Self-Service/Manager Self-Service and related processes for uniformed personnel
and national staff at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical¹/ Important²	C/ O³	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date⁴
1	UNIFIL should update the standard operating procedure on mission subsistence allowance by requiring uniformed personnel to submit their banking information directly to the cashier.	Important	O	Receipt of SOP on mission subsistence allowance requiring uniformed personnel to submit the banking information directly to the cashier.	30 April 2022

¹ Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

² Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.

³ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁴ Date provided by UNIFIL in response to the recommendation.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

425/19-03-22

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UNITED NATIONS

INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON



NATIONS UNIES

FORCE INTERIMAIRE AU LIBAN

Office of the Head of Mission / Force commander

Inter Office Memorandum

TO: Ms. Eleanor T. Burns, Director
A: Internal Audit Division, OIOS

DATE: 21 March 2022

REFERENCE:

FROM: Major General Aroldo Lázaro Sáenz
DE: Head of Mission and Force Commander, UNIFIL

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "A. Sáenz", written over a grid pattern.

SUBJECT: Response to audit recommendations for the draft report of an
OBJECT audit of Umoja ESS/ MSS and related processes for uniformed
personnel and national staff at UNIFIL (Assignment No. AT2021/
519/01)

1. We refer to your memorandum on the draft report of an audit of Umoja Employee Self-Service/ Manager Self-Service (ESS/ MSS) and related processes for uniformed personnel and national staff at UNIFIL, reference No. OIOS-2022-00320 dated 07 March 2022 and Appendix I.
2. Please find attached, UNIFIL's response to the recommendations contained in the Appendix I for the draft report of the subject audit.
3. In following the usual procedure, copies of any supporting documents will only be provided to Middle East Regional Audit Office (MERO) based at UNIFIL HQ and will not be transmitted to you with this Mission's response.

Cc: Mr. Chaste Abimana, Acting Director, HRSD
Mr. Henri Fourie, DOS
Mr. Zachary Ikiara, DMSPC
Mr. David Nyskohus, OIOS
Ms. Maya Fridman, OIOS
Ms. Melva Crouch, Director of Mission Support, UNIFIL
Mr. Effendi Syukur, Chief CARB and ARU, UNIFIL

17/7

Management Response

**Audit of Umoja Employee Self-Service/Manager Self-Service and related processes for uniformed personnel
and national staff at the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon**

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ⁵ / Important ⁶	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	UNIFIL should update the standard operating procedure on mission subsistence allowance by requiring uniformed personnel to submit their banking information directly to the cashier.	Important	Yes	CHRO and Uniformed Personnel	30 April 2022	<p>The SOP on mission subsistence allowance has been updated and cleared by CHRO and CFO and it's being circulated for final review and approval by DMS.</p> <p>The Uniformed Personnel Cell confirmed that the requirement to submit the banking information directly to the cashier <u>has been implemented as of 01 February 2022</u> upon agreement with the Finance and Budget Management Section.</p>

⁵ Critical recommendations address those risk issues that require immediate management attention. Failure to take action could have a critical or significant adverse impact on the Organization.

⁶ Important recommendations address those risk issues that require timely management attention. Failure to take action could have a high or moderate adverse impact on the Organization.