



INTERNAL AUDIT DIVISION

REPORT 2022/086

Audit of air operations in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

The Mission needed to improve its aviation infrastructure, conduct regular drills of its aviation emergency response plan, and timely complete quarterly contractor performance evaluation reports

**22 December 2022
Assignment No. AP2022-633-06**

Audit of air operations in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of air operations in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the management of air operations in UNMISS to ensure reliable and cost-effective air transport services in support of the Mission's mandated activities. The audit covered the period from July 2020 to June 2022 and included a review of aviation support planning, utilization of air assets, management of aviation infrastructure and quality assurance programme.

The Mission had implemented adequate controls to update its aviation support plan regularly, aligned it with operational requirements, and implemented mitigating measures to identify and address risks to its aviation operations. However, UNMISS needed to improve its aviation infrastructure, conduct regular drills of its aviation emergency response plans, and complete quarterly contractor performance evaluation reports.

OIOS made four recommendations. To address issues identified in the audit, UNMISS needed to:

- Conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of the maintenance of airfield runways and ramp areas to ensure efficient and cost-effective air operations, and expedite the construction of helicopter landing sites;
- Ensure that all field offices regularly update and test their aviation emergency response plans;
- Timely complete all contractor performance reviews in the contract performance reporting tool; and
- Request additional budget resources to train staff to effectively perform their duties.

UNMISS accepted all recommendations and has initiated action to implement them.

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Audit of air operations in the United Nations in the Republic of South Sudan

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) conducted an audit of air operations in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS).
2. Air transportation services in UNMISS are integral in supporting the Mission's mandated activities, including troop rotations, special military operations, transportation of passengers and cargo and medical and casualty evacuation of Mission personnel. Air operations are governed by the Department of Operational Support (DOS) Aviation Manual, the United Nations Aviation Standards for Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Air Transport Operations and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) standards. The Air Transport Service in DOS provides technical guidance and support to UNMISS on all aviation-related matters and monitors its aviation activities.
3. As of 30 June 2022, UNMISS deployed 25 aircraft comprising 7 fixed-wing aircraft, 13 commercial and 5 military utility helicopters for aeromedical evacuation, search and rescue, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance, and transportation of passengers and cargo. However, the Mission grounded 11 of its 18 helicopters in September 2022 due to a significant safety concern raised by ICAO to the country of one of the Mission's air carriers, thereby reducing its air asset capacity by 44 per cent.
4. UNMISS operated out of four air regions in the State Capitals of Juba, Bor, Malakal and Wau and six sub-regions (Aweil, Bentiu, Kuajok, Rumbek, Torit and Yambio), used 10 airfields and helipads as its main operating bases and had 529 ad-hoc landing sites. The UNMISS Aviation Section is responsible for all aspects of civilian and military air operations. The Section is headed by a Chief Aviation Officer (CAVO) at the P-5 level who reports to the Director of Mission Support through the Chief of Supply Chain Management Service. CAVO is supported by a team of 138 staff comprising 32 international and 60 national staff and 46 United Nations volunteers. Additionally, the Section is assisted by 18 military staff officers.
5. The Aviation Section's approved budgets for 2020/21 and 2021/22 were \$116 million and \$95 million, respectively. The expenditures for the same periods were \$89.1 million and \$94 million, respectively.

II. AUDIT OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

6. The objective of the audit was to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of the management of air operations in UNMISS to ensure reliable and cost-effective air transport services in support of the Mission's mandated activities.
7. This audit was included in the 2022 risk-based work plan of OIOS because air operations play a critical role in supporting the Mission's mandate implementation.
8. OIOS conducted this audit from July to October 2022. The audit covered the period from July 2020 to June 2022. Based on an activity-level risk assessment, the audit covered higher and medium risk areas in air operations, which included: aviation support planning; utilization of air assets; management of aviation infrastructure; and quality assurance programme.

9. The audit methodology included: (a) interviews with key personnel involved in air operations, (b) a review of procedures and records related to air operations, (c) an analytical review of data from the Aviation Information Management Suite used for recording and processing flight operations, (d) physical inspection of airfields at the Mission's Headquarters in Juba and field office locations in Bentiu, Bor, Malakal and Wau, and (e) random sample testing of: (i) 93 of 18,463 aircraft utilization reports, air tasking orders, aviation fuel invoices, pre-flight briefing, after-mission reports, aviation risk assessment reports and flight following reports; and (ii) 93 of 1,723 special flight requests.

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

III. AUDIT RESULTS

A. Aviation support planning

UNMISS aviation support planning was adequate

11. The UNMISS aviation plan was based on the Mission's mandate and concept of operations, historical data on aviation activities, troop strength and available aviation infrastructure. UNMISS developed quarterly, weekly and daily flight schedules which were regularly updated to reflect changes in the operating environment.

12. In September 2022, a significant safety concern issued by ICAO to the country of one of the Mission's service providers affected 11 (or 44 per cent of its air capacity) of its 25 aircraft. In response to this, UNMISS promptly: (i) pre-positioned its remaining air assets (fleet and cargo) to meet operational requirements; (ii) worked with the Air Transport Services at the United Nations Headquarters to secure replacement aircraft; and (iii) revised weekly flight schedules and restricted requests for special flights. Furthermore, UNMISS established a consolidated monthly air patrol planning programme to support the dynamic air patrols in field office locations.

13. OIOS review of aircraft utilization statistics showed that the Mission's result-based budget was informed by historical data for aviation activities. The Mission utilized 76 and 87 per cent of the budgeted flying hours in 2020/21 and 2021/22, respectively. The low aircraft utilization in 2020/21 was mainly attributed to COVID-19 related travel restrictions. Furthermore, 4 out of 7 fixed-wing aircraft could only be utilized for an average of 59 per cent of the budgeted flight hours due to poor runway conditions during the rainy season and aircraft unavailability due to extended maintenance issues.

14. To reflect current operational requirements, UNMISS reduced the budgeted flight hours for two of its fixed-wing aircraft from 2,400 flight hours in its 2021/22 budget to 2,100 flight hours in its 2022/23 budget. In addition, to improve aircraft efficiency and reduce operational costs, UNMISS reduced the frequency of flights and the tasking of four aircraft by 368 days during the audit period, averaging four days per aircraft per month.

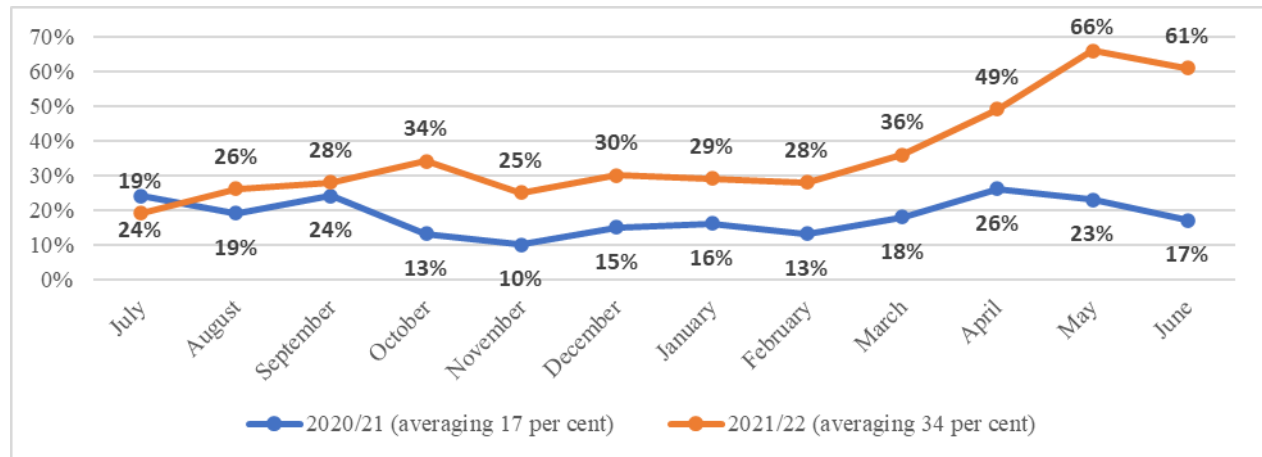
15. Based on the actions taken, OIOS concluded that UNMISS had implemented adequate controls to regularly update its aviation support plan and ensure that it was aligned with operational requirements.

B. Utilization of air assets

The Mission conducted regular flights on the Juba-Entebbe route to meet operational requirements

16. UNMISS primarily utilized a 50-seat capacity aircraft to transport personnel between Juba, South Sudan and Entebbe, Uganda. However, the seat utilization of this aircraft was low, averaging 17 per cent in 2020/21 and 34 per cent in 2021/22, as shown in figure 1. In 2020/21, UNMISS conducted 450 flights and transported 3,689 passengers between Juba and Entebbe, averaging 8 passengers per flight.

Figure 1: Monthly average seat utilization on the Juba-Entebbe route for the 2020/21 and 2021/22 fiscal years (in percentage)



Source: UNMISS Movement Control Section passenger statistics

17. While COVID-19 travel-related restrictions resulted in reduced air travel operations in 2020/21, the utilization of air assets on the Juba-Entebbe route had not significantly increased in 2021/22 despite easing of travel restrictions in late 2021. In 2021/22, the Mission conducted 618 flights to transport 10,692 passengers, averaging 17 passengers per flight.

18. The high frequency of flights, averaging 52 per month in the Juba Entebbe route, contributed to the low seat utilization. OIOS analysis showed that the number of passengers for 86 (or 28 per cent) of the 312 flights was very low, ranging from 1 to 10, and the aircraft were not being used in the most efficient and economical manner during the audit period. For example: (a) there was only one passenger on a 35-seater aircraft on 10 May 2022 from Juba to Entebbe, and 45 minutes later, another 50-seater aircraft transported 20 passengers on the same route; (b) 8 passengers were transported on a 50-seater aircraft from Entebbe to Juba on 25 January 2022, with only 4 passengers transported on the return leg; and (c) a 15-seater aircraft was used to transport 3 passengers from Entebbe to Juba on 22 February, and returned to Entebbe the same day with 8 passengers.

19. UNMISS management explained that the Mission maintained regular flights on the Juba-Entebbe route for operational reasons, including: (i) conducting critical troop rotations; (ii) providing support to national staff who had relocated family members to Uganda; (iii) facilitating the movement of Mission personnel with medical appointments at the Level III hospital in Kampala, Uganda; and (iv) transporting international staff and United Nations volunteer personnel to the designated rest and recuperation location in Entebbe. In addition, although the total variable costs (fuel and flight hours) of operating the aircraft amounted to \$2.1 million (55 per cent of the total cost) in 2021/22, Mission management explained that reducing the number of flights on the Juba-Entebbe route would not result in efficiency gains as this could

limit the Mission's ability to refer patients for further treatment from the Level II hospital in the Mission to the Level III hospital in Kampala, and would also increase special flights for medical or casualty evacuations.

20. Since UNMISS needed to regularly transport its personnel to Entebbe for operational requirements as described above, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

Requests for scheduled maintenance of aircraft was not submitted in a timely manner, but corrective action was taken

21. To minimize disruption of operations and ensure adequate planning and tasking of aircraft, carriers and the Military Aviation Unit should request approval of scheduled maintenance from the Technical Compliance Unit in the Aviation Section at least five days prior to the intended date of in-mission maintenance and at least 30 days for out-of-mission maintenance.

22. The carriers raised 194 scheduled aircraft maintenance requests during the audit period. However, 113 (or 58 per cent) of the 194 scheduled maintenance requests were not submitted in a timely manner. This happened due to several reasons, including unplanned special flights, which increased the number of flying hours and shortened the notice period for scheduled maintenance. Nonetheless, to ensure adequate planning and tasking of aircraft, the Technical Compliance Unit distributed the daily aircraft status and monthly aircraft forecasted maintenance reports to aviation planners.

23. Air charter agreements and letters of assist provided an allowance for aircraft unavailability for maintenance and aircrew sickness of up to 40 days per year for rotary-wing and up to 30 days for fixed-wing aircraft. However, monthly aviation reports showed that all aircraft were out of service for a combined period of 791 days annually. This included two aircraft that were out of service for a combined period of 23 months. UNMISS regularly monitored and recorded aircraft unavailability, raised aircraft maintenance issues with the Air Transport Service at the United Nations Headquarters and communicated excessive unavailability days of commercial aircraft to ensure appropriate penalties were levied. In the case of military aircraft, unavailability totaled 756 days, but penalties were not levied in accordance with the letter of assist agreements. However, the Mission ensured that the required minimum number of aircraft were always available for tasking and fully utilized to minimize disruption to operations.

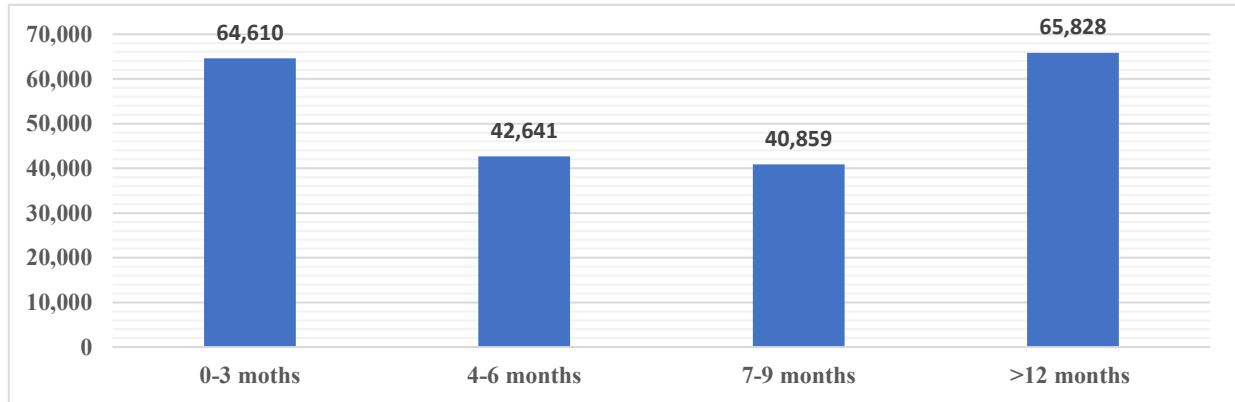
24. In view of the ongoing actions taken by the Mission to report the status of aircraft maintenance, monitor aircraft unavailability and minimize disruptions to operations, OIOS did not make a recommendation.

Need to recover the costs of long outstanding aviation-related receivables

25. UNMISS needed to timely recover the costs of air transport services provided to third-party entities such as United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, contractors and other peacekeeping missions in the region. UNMISS also needed to recover the cost of fuel used by air carriers for non-mission flights.

26. UNMISS provided flight services and aviation fuel totaling \$4.1 million to non-Mission entities during the audit period. However, receivables totaling \$214,000 was outstanding for an average of 531 days as of 30 June 2022. Figure 2 shows the ageing of outstanding receivables.

Figure 2: Ageing of receivables from third-party entities as of 30 June 2022 (in US dollars)



Source: UNMISS Budget and Finance Section

27. UNMISS had made significant efforts to reduce receivables, including regular follow-up with concerned third parties, but recovery efforts for long overdue receivables had not been successful. OIOS previously raised a recommendation on the non-recovery of long outstanding receivables in an audit of fuel management (Report no. 2021/014, dated 17 May 2021), which was still open at the time of audit. Therefore, OIOS did not make a recommendation on this issue.

The Mission implemented adequate mitigating measures relating to aviation risk management

28. UNMISS developed standard operating procedures in April 2021 to guide aviation risk management. It also established a Risk Assessment Committee, which conducted air threat and risk assessments on 148 regular and 1,577 special flights during the audit period. Furthermore, the Mission completed daily airfield hazard identification checklists to identify potential hazards at helicopter landing sites and ramp areas, which were analyzed, and mitigating measures implemented.

29. OIOS review of 93 of 18,463 flights showed that the aviation risk management checklists and reports were completed and included instructions to pilots on areas to avoid based on the results of air threat assessments. Flight planning risk assessments were also completed and documented for medical and casualty evacuations at night. Furthermore, UNMISS had a Flight Following Unit which maintained regular communication with pilots using VHF and HF radios to report aircraft positions, a satellite tracking system to track the movement of aircraft and used a web-based system for weather forecasts. In addition, the Mission provided regular briefings to aircrew on its zero-tolerance alcohol policy and conducted ad-hoc tests of aircrew alcohol consumption using breathalyzer kits. In May 2022, the Mission grounded an aircraft for eight days due to a failed aircrew breathalyzer test, which resulted in the repatriation of the affected aircrew personnel.

30. Based on the actions taken, OIOS concluded that UNMISS had implemented measures to identify and address risks to its aviation operations.

C. Management of aviation infrastructure

Need to improve aviation infrastructure at field office

31. OIOS physical inspections of aviation equipment and infrastructure at four field office locations showed that the Mission had adequate ground handling equipment and fire-fighting capabilities at its airfields. However, aviation infrastructure needed to be enhanced, as highlighted below.

(a) Poor conditions of runways, helicopter landing sites, aprons and ramps

32. UNMISS had a five-year contract for the maintenance of an asphalt runway in Malakal at the cost of \$1.2 million and had established repair and maintenance programmes for the runways, aprons and ramps at other field office locations. However, the repair and maintenance programme was not very effective as several runways were in poor condition. For example:

- In all field locations, poor runway conditions prevented the operation of fixed-wing aircraft, negatively impacting troop rotations and transportation of Mission personnel, especially during the rainy season. As a result, rotary-wing aircraft with less seat capacity had to be deployed, significantly increasing variable costs such as flight time and fuel. For example, in July 2022, the Mission rotated about 200 contingent personnel in Bentiu by mainly using the 20-seater rotary-wing aircraft rather than its 70-seater fixed-wing aircraft due to the poor runway condition. The use of rotary-wing aircraft required three round trips to transport the same number of passengers carried by a fixed-wing aircraft in a single trip. This led to an increased cost of \$39,400.
- In Bentiu, UNMISS spent \$100,000 annually to purchase gravel to maintain the runway and ramp areas regularly. Despite this, runway and ramp conditions deteriorated significantly during the rainy season, resulting in the cancellation of 61 scheduled flights from 1 July 2020 to 12 September 2022. This, in turn, resulted in reduced utilization of fixed-wing aircraft, and in some cases, additional costs to operate rotary-wing aircraft. For example, during OIOS site visit to Bentiu on 29 August 2022, the Mission cancelled a flight to Bentiu on a fixed-wing aircraft that operated on the Juba-Malakal-Bentiu route because of poor runway/ramp conditions. This resulted in an estimated additional cost of \$5,000 to task a rotary-wing aircraft to transport Mission personnel to the Bentiu field office.
- In Wau, due to poor ramp conditions, the Mission's fixed-wing aircraft was damaged and required 10 days of aircraft downtime to repair. To prevent further damage, the Mission temporarily positioned its fixed-wing aircraft at the local civil aviation ramp, which was not guarded by contingent units, exposing the Mission's assets to physical damage or safety issues.
- The helicopter landing sites at the temporary operating bases were sometimes flooded during the rainy seasons, resulting in approximately 70 per cent of flight cancellations in those locations. While the Mission had an annual approved budget of \$400,000 to construct concrete helipads in 6 of 10 locations for the next three fiscal years starting in 2022/23, no provisions had been made for the construction of helipads in the remaining four airfield locations. However, the Mission had established a mission priority project system to review proposed projects against limited available resources.

33. Runways, aprons, ramps and helicopter landing sites in most field locations were made of gravel, which was not sustainable during the rainy season, resulting in potholes and pools of water. A more sustainable option would require the use of asphalt and concrete, but the Mission considered this to be an

expensive option. However, UNMISS had not conducted a cost-benefit analysis to determine the most economical and effective option for constructing/maintaining its runways, aprons, ramps and helicopter landing sites vis-a-vis additional costs incurred due to frequent cancellation of flights as a result of inadequate aviation infrastructure.

34. Frequent cancellations of flights due to the poor runway and helipad conditions had resulted in delays in performing mandated tasks and delivering cargo, as well as negatively impacted staff leave, medical evacuations and flights for troop rotations.

(b) Tall grass and trees around runway and ramp areas in the airfields

35. The ramp, taxiway, parking and apron areas in Wau, Malakal and Bor were surrounded by tall grass and trees, which obstructed the view of air traffic control personnel. This increased the presence of bird activities, a hazard to air operations. There were at least six incidents of bird strikes during the audit period that rendered aircraft unserviceable for 41 days. OIOS noted that the contractors' personnel in Malakal and Wau were not adequately equipped to cut down trees and grass regularly. The presence of tall grass and trees in airfields was included in daily hazard reports prepared by the Aviation Section, and bird strike occurrences were discussed during the quarterly Mission Aviation Safety Council meetings. In addition, in July 2021, the Director of Mission Support issued a memo to heads of field offices and field administrative officers on bird reduction measures to be implemented in the field offices and appointed a focal point to work with relevant Mission components to implement the measures.

36. There were also large quantities of gravel heaped around the ramp area in Bor, obstructing the view of air operations personnel that provided aerodrome flight information services. Although the air operations personnel had raised the issue with the field administrative office in Bor, no action had been taken to address it. Furthermore, OIOS observed the presence of cattle around the runways in Bentiu, Bor, Malakal and Wau due to inadequate fencing of the airfield perimeter and lack of military personnel to secure the runways during flight take-off and landing, which was a hazard for air operations.

37. To ensure safety and quality of air operations, UNMISS needed to take prompt action to address the issues identified.

(1) UNMISS should: (a) conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of the maintenance of airfield runways and ramp areas to ensure efficient and cost-effective air operations; (b) expedite the construction of helicopter landing sites; (c) take action to ensure that contractor personnel regularly cut down tall grass and trees around runway and ramp areas; and (d) ensure that military personnel provide security at airfields to prevent animal incursions at runways and landing sites.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 1 and stated that: (a) the Air Terminal Unit in the Aviation Section would lead the cost-benefit analysis exercise in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders; (b) the budget for the relevant construction projects was approved and necessary actions would be taken for constructing helicopter landing sites; (c) the field administrative officers would be regularly reminded of monitoring the contractors responsible for cutting grass at their stations; and (d) formal communication would be sent to Force Headquarters to instruct contingents to ensure that military personnel provide security at airfields.

Need to conduct regular aviation emergency response drills in the Mission's field offices

38. UNMISS is required to prepare aviation emergency response plans (AERPs) for all its field offices and conduct regular drills to effectively respond to unexpected situations such as an aircraft

accident. UNMISS had developed a mission-wide AERP and local AERPs for each field office. While the mission-wide AERP is regularly updated and tested, local AERPs in 8 of 9 field offices had not been updated or tested since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, including in Bor, where the last AERP drill was conducted in December 2017. Lack of testing of local AERPs could result in ineffective response to aviation-related emergencies.

(2) UNMISS should ensure that all field offices regularly update and test their respective local aviation emergency response plans.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 2 and stated that it would ensure that the aviation emergency response plans are regularly updated, and drills are conducted to test the validity of the plans.

D. Quality assurance programme

Need to conduct quarterly contractor performance assessments in a timely manner

39. The Aviation Section had a quality assurance programme to assess all aspects of the carriers' performance, including the functioning of its aircraft and aircrew, the validity of various documentation, leadership, operational performance and maintenance and safety issues. As part of the assessment of operators' performance, the Mission completed aircraft inspection checklists and conducted quarterly contractor performance reviews using the contract performance reporting tool (CPRT)¹.

40. However, the quarterly performance reviews of commercial operators and military aviation units were not always completed in a timely manner. OIOS review of all 87 quarterly contractor performance evaluation reviews conducted in CPRT during the audit period showed that: (i) it took an average of 157 days to complete 52 performance reviews; and (ii) the remaining 35 performance reviews were pending for an average of 287 days as of 15 September 2022. This included one review pending more than one year after the termination of the operator's services at the end of the contract.

41. The above occurred because the Mission did not prioritize the completion of the quarterly performance reviews in the CPRT system. As a result, contractor performance issues may not be identified and addressed timely.

(3) UNMISS should take action to complete all contractor performance reviews in the contract performance reporting tool in a timely manner.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 3 and stated that it would ensure that contractor performance reviews are completed in a reasonable timeframe.

Need to provide regular mandatory training to all Aviation Section staff

42. UNMISS provided mandatory three-day training to new aviation staff and additional orientation training on areas specific to their operations. However, only 65 (or 47 per cent) of 138 staff in the Aviation Section had participated in online training in fire safety, air operations, airport rescue and ground handling management during the audit period. OIOS interviews with air operations staff during site visits showed that while online training was essential, it was not very effective because the training

¹ The CPRT is a web-based performance evaluation tool for contracts and contractors. It ensures uniform, consistent and efficient monitoring, evaluation and reporting of the performance of contractors providing aviation services to the Organization.

mainly focused on theoretical aspects of air operations and less on practical experience that is typically gained from in-person training. There was no in-person training during this period due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in the non-utilization of \$17,800 (39 per cent) of the total approved training budget for 2021/22. As a result, the Mission significantly reduced the Aviation Section training budget from \$45,000 in 2021/22 to \$23,000 in 2022/23, preventing the Section from resuming in-person training.

43. The fluid nature of the Mission’s operations demands that staff take additional responsibilities out of their areas of expertise. This requires regular cross-functional training to enable staff to perform effectively in any assigned task. With the gradual easing of COVID-19 related travel restrictions, there was a need for additional training budget resources for Aviation Section staff to attend regular in-person training to keep them abreast with changes in aviation technology and associated regulations.

(4) UNMISS Aviation Section should request additional training budget resources in its next budget submission to ensure that its staff receive the required training to perform their duties effectively.

UNMISS accepted recommendation 4 and stated that it would ensure the request for additional funding for relevant face-to-face training for its aviation personnel would be submitted in the 2024/25 budget proposal.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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

Internal Audit Division
Office of Internal Oversight Services

STATUS OF AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Audit of air operations in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ² / Important ³	C/ O ⁴	Actions needed to close recommendation	Implementation date ⁵
1	UNMISS should: (a) conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of the maintenance of airfield runways and ramp areas to ensure efficient and cost-effective air operations; (b) expedite the construction of helicopter landing sites; (c) take action to ensure that contractor personnel regularly cut down tall grass and trees around runway and ramp areas; and (d) ensure that military personnel provide security at airfields to prevent animal incursions at runways and landing sites.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that: (a) the Air Terminal Unit in the Aviation Section, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, has conducted the required cost-benefit analysis; (b) necessary actions have been taken for the construction of helicopter landing sites; (c) the field administrative officers are regularly reminded of monitoring the contractors responsible for cutting grass at their stations; and (d) formal communication is sent to Force Headquarters to instruct contingents to ensure that military personnel provide security at airfields.	31 July 2023
2	UNMISS should ensure that all field offices regularly update and test their respective local aviation emergency response plans.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that local aviation emergency response plans are regularly updated and tested.	30 September 2023
3	UNMISS should take action to complete all contractor performance reviews in the contract performance reporting tool in a timely manner.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that quarterly performance reviews are timely completed.	31 July 2023
4	UNMISS Aviation Section should request for additional training budget resources in its next budget submission to ensure that its staff receive the required training to perform their duties effectively.	Important	O	Receipt of evidence that the Mission has requested for additional training budget resources.	31 October 2023

² 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.

³ 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.

⁴ Please note the value C denotes closed recommendations whereas O refers to open recommendations.

⁵ Date provided by UNMISS in response to recommendations.

APPENDIX I

Management Response

UNITED NATIONS

United Nations Mission
in South Sudan



NATIONS UNIES

Mission des Nations Unies
en Soudan du Sud

Date: 20 December 2022

To: Mr. Kemal Karaseki
Acting Chief, Peacekeeping Audit Service
Internal Audit Division, OIOS

From: Mr. Guang Cong 
Officer-in-Charge
United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Subject: **Draft Report on an Audit of Air Operations in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (Assignment No. AP2022-633-06)**

1. UNMISS acknowledges receipt of the draft report from OIOS on the Audit of Air Operations, dated 12 December 2022.
2. Please find attached the Mission's Management Response to the audit recommendations as indicated in Appendix I.
3. Thank you for your consideration and support.

cc: Ms. Victoria Browning, UNMISS
Mr. Matthew Carlton, UNMISS
Mr. Samuel Abrokwa, UNMISS
Ms. Elizabeth Gregory, UNMISS
Mr. Jeffrey Lin, OIOS

Management Response

Audit of air operations in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
1	UNMISS should: (a) conduct a comprehensive cost-benefit analysis of the maintenance of airfield runways and ramp areas to ensure efficient and cost-effective air operations; (b) expedite the construction of helicopter landing sites; (c) take action to ensure that contractor personnel regularly cut down tall grass and trees around runway and ramp areas; and (d) ensure that military personnel provide security at airfields to prevent animal incursions at runways and landing sites.	Important	Yes	Chief Aviation Officer	31 July 2023	The Mission accepts the recommendation. With regard to recommendation (a) the Air Terminal Unit in Aviation Section shall lead the cost-benefit analysis exercise in cooperation with the relevant stakeholders. Concerning recommendation (b) the budget for the relevant construction projects was approved and the necessary action to landing sites shall be taken. For recommendation (c) the FAOs shall be reminded regularly as they are accountable for the contractors who are responsible for the grass cutting in their stations. Lastly, (d) Formal communication shall be sent to the Force Headquarters to instruct their Contingents to ensure that Military personnel provide security at airfields. All the above recommendations shall be implemented by 31 July 2023.
2	UNMISS should ensure that all field offices regularly update and test their respective local aviation emergency response plans.	Important	Yes	Chief Aviation Officer	30 September 2023	The Mission accepts the recommendation and shall ensure that the AERPs are regularly updated, and drills are conducted to test the validity of the plans. The recommendation shall be implemented by 30 September 2023.

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.

Management Response

Audit of air operations in the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan

Rec. no.	Recommendation	Critical ¹ / Important ²	Accepted? (Yes/No)	Title of responsible individual	Implementation date	Client comments
3	UNMISS should take action to complete all contractor performance reviews in the contract performance reporting tool in a timely manner.	Important	Yes	Chief Aviation Officer	31 July 2023	The Mission accepts the recommendation and shall ensure that the performance reviews are completed in a reasonable timeframe. The recommendation shall be completed by 31 July 2023.
4	UNMISS Aviation Section should request for additional training budget resources in its next budget submission to ensure that its staff receive the required training to enable them perform their duties effectively.	Important	Yes	Chief Aviation Officer	31 October 2023	The Mission accepts the recommendation and shall ensure that additional funding for relevant face to face training for its aviation personnel will be submitted in the Budget proposal for 2024/25; the Mission notes the deadline for 2023/24 training budget submission was prior to the issuance of this recommendation. The recommendation shall be implemented by 31 October 2023.